ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the literary and cultural context of Frances Brooke's The History of Emily Montague (1769) in order to establish a basis for the evaluation of its Canadian content. The introduction shows that Canadian criticism, on the whole, has ignored such a context when discussing the novel's "Canadianism." Chapter I focuses on the literary and cultural dimensions of the age of sensibility and Mrs. Brooke's relationship to this cultural phenomenon. Chapter II explores the author's moral vision and its artistic expression as found in The Old Maid, a moral weekly published by Mrs. Brooke from 1755 to 1756. Chapter III studies Mrs. Brooke's conception of sensibility as it takes artistic form in Julia Mandeville (1763), a conventional love story set entirely in rural England. Chapter IV contrasts Mrs. Brooke's pre-tourist work with Emily Montague. The novel is primarily a book about sensibility and not about Canada; however, Mrs. Brooke has exploited the landscape as a characterizing device and the colony itself as a literary image of a place of exile.

SETTING AND SENSIBILITY:

A STUDY OF TWO NOVELS

BY FRANCES BROOKE

by

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CONTENTS

Chapter Page

INTRODUCTION..... 1

I. THE BACKGROUND..... 12

1. Frances Brooke and the Popular Novel, 1750-1769.

2. "Sensibility" and "Sentimental": Some Definitions.

3. The Age of Sensibility: Some Characteristics.

II. MESSAGE AND METHOD IN THE OLD MAID PAPERS..... 45

1. The Old Maid and the Periodical Tradition.

2. The Art of Moralizing.

3. The Social and Moral Ideal in The Old Maid.

III. SENSIBILITY IN ENGLAND: THE HISTORY OF JULIA MANDEVILLE..... 65

1. The Plot.

2. The Apotheosis of Sensibility.

3. Raillery: the Function of the Coquette.

4. The Idyllic Country Life: Symbol for a Moral and Social Order.

5. Nature in Julia Mandeville.

(cont'd)

CONTENTS (cont'd)

IV. SENSIBILITY IN CANADA: THE HISTORY OF EMILY MONTAGUE.... 92

1. The Advance in Formal Realism.
2. The Hero of Sensibility: Ed Rivers.
3. The Coquette as Historian: Arabella Fermor.
4. Sensibility and the Indians.
5. The Literary Vision: Canada as a Landscape Painting.
6. The Literary Vision: Canada as Image.

CONCLUSION.....134

APPENDICES.....137

LIST OF WORKS CONSULTED.....139

INTRODUCTION

In this study, I attempt to recover an artistic vision which even to its contemporaries was second-rate. I do not want to popularize Mrs. Brooke's work, nor do I suggest that she was a genius who should be given a prominent place in literature. Mrs. Brooke was a serious writer, but her novels are unappealing to present literary tastes. However, The History of Emily Montague has a place in Canadian literary history in that it is the first English novel to contain significant amounts of Canadian material, material which Mrs. Brooke collected through direct experience. I believe it is worthwhile to evaluate this material, and that such an evaluation must take into account the literary context in which the Canadian references occur as well as the eighteenth-century intellectual background which produced Mrs. Brooke's vision. This study records my attempt to understand what Mrs. Brooke was trying to accomplish; it is a summary of research, research done with the final purpose always in mind—that of evaluating the Canadian content of Emily Montague.

First, a review of what Canadian critics have said about Mrs. Brooke and her novel appears necessary. Such a review provides a frame of reference and a convenient starting-point for this thesis. It helps to define the kind of problem that an early Colonial writer presents to an indigenous criticism, showing the inadequacy of applying critical paradigms (which developed at a later time in response to nationalism) to an

author who wrote long before the political existence of this country.

Writing in the British Canadian Review of January, 1863,. an anonymous Casca urges readers to be "initiated into Quebec society as it existed in the good olden times." Casca claims to have read the only copy of Emily Montague in the colony, having obtained it by means of a newspaper advertisement. Casca's assessment, that it is "a racy description of Canadian scenery, a most romantic account of colonial courtships and flirtations,"[1] has been most influential. The adjective "racy" appears in at least five subsequent reviews.

Three other nineteenth-century reviews discuss Emily Montague. Henry J. Morgan includes Brooke in his Bibliotheca Canadensis (1867), but he makes no comment other than citing the gist of Casca's review. J.M.LeMoine (Picturesque Quebec, 1882), dealing with Montague Cottage built in 1880, introduces the first negative commentary when he satirizes the colonial snobbery and sentimental effusiveness of the novel. He complains that its "couleur de rose" treatment of Quebec life induced several families to emigrate from Britain with too great expectations.[2] His criticism places the novel in the tradition

[1] "Emily Montague; or, Quebec A Century Ago," British Canadian Review, I (January, 1863), p. 87.

[2] LeMoine, Picturesque Quebec (Montreal: Dawson Publishers, 1882), p. 377.

of illusion-inducing accounts of life in the colonies. Writing in The Dominion Illustrated of 1890, Wilfrid Chateauclair offers a similar criticism. He is the first critic to describe Emily Montague as the first Canadian novel, but he condemns it roundly for being written "in the style of a flighty girl, a worshipper of wealth and fashion." He accuses the hero, Rivers, of "moralizing and making love" instead of going about his proper business of colonizing. Chateauclair continues what I might define as the documentary fallacy:

> Considered otherwise than as a novel, the book has much interest. It reflects something of the atmosphere of an obscure and most interesting period.[3]

The next review of Emily Montague appeared in The Canadian Magazine of January, 1907. Under the title of "An Old-Time Novel," Ida Burwash regrets that Frances Brooke missed a "rare opportunity" to describe "the life of a new world vivid in its contrasts." Having said this she praises the novel as a "first attempt to reflect the social life of Canada in the days of English rule" and, after quoting descriptive passages, he concludes with a panegyric:

> Best of all, perhaps, to the present day Canadian is the suggestion of the growth even then of the settler's love for the home of his adoption—for "Canada the sweetest country in the world."[4]

Having recognized the novel's inadequacies as a documentary, Burwash succumbs to patriotism and accepts Brooke's rhapsodies

[3] "The First Canadian Novel," The Dominion Illustrated, IV (1890), p. 31.

[4] Burwash, "An Old-Time Novel," The Canadian Magazine, 28 (January, 1907), p. 256.

over landscape as realistic descriptions of the "sweetest country in the world." The descriptions may well be genuine, but, to anticipate my argument somewhat, they can be evaluated properly only in their literary context.

T.G.Marquis wears patriotic spectacles as well. In Canada and its Provinces (1914), he writes:

> Mrs. Brooke was a bird of passage in Canada, but her romance faithfully depicts Canadian life and glowingly pictures Canadian scenes, and it is essential that every student of Canadian literature should have some acquaintance with it. . . . In an age when literature was broad, and vulgar jests often marred the printed page, the first Canadian novel made its appearance—a strong, clean, healthy performance.[5]

To state that a romance "faithfully depicts Canadian life" is like suggesting that Superman comic books accurately portray urban problems. Yet the citation does imply the central critical problem, that of clarifying the relationship between the sentimental love story and its realistic, here-and-now setting.

R.P.Baker's A History of English-Canadian Literature To Confederation (1920) makes use of the information (and numerous errors) contained in the entry under Brooke in the British Dictionary of National Biography (1909). Baker identifies Brooke as one of those early colonial writers who "looked to the motherland for inspiration." He finds her descriptions

[5] Marquis, "English-Canadian Literature," Canada and Its Provinces, Volume 12 (Edinburgh, 1914), pp. 534-535.

of Canadian scenery to be "flamboyant" and "extravagant," associating them with "the English Romantic Movement." He concludes that "It is unwise . . . to consider Mrs. Brooke's novels as in any way connected with the development of Canadian literature."[6] Baker searches for the beginnings of an indigenous Canadian tradition; consequently, he banishes Mrs. Brooke from Canadian letters entirely. Lorne Pierce echoes many of Baker's conclusions in his Outline of Canadian Literature (1927). Pierce describes Mrs. Brooke as "a real Britisher" writing in the tradition of Samuel Richardson. Emily Montague, for him, is an example of the derivative nature of English-Canadian literature. Yet he, too, finally accepts the novel as "an important record of the social life in and around Quebec at the time."[7]

To Charles Blue goes the credit of giving Frances Brooke the first reasonably accurate and scholarly treatment in Canadian critical history. He takes advantage of his access to Sir James Murray's unpublished letters and applies his knowledge of eighteenth-century English literature to write an informative biographical account of Frances Brooke. Her novel, Blue finds, has only "a touch of reality," and gives only "a glimpse of life in Quebec in the early days of British rule."[8] He correctly identifies Emily Montague as a romance of sentiment to be read for its inculcation of morals.

[6] Baker, A History of English-Canadian Literature to Confederation (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1920), p. 16.

[7] Pierce, Outline of Canadian Literature (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1927), p. 10.

[8] Blue, "Canada's First Novelist," The Canadian Magazine, 58 (November,1921), p. 3.

In these early notices of the novel, two critical positions dominate. One of them, Lawrence Burpee re-states in his introduction to the 1931 Canadian edition:

> The novel . . . is valuable today chiefly because of the glimpses it gives us—one could wish that they were more than glimpses—of life in Quebec in the first years of British rule.[9]

The novel has been reprinted and read in Canada mainly because it was understood to have value as a document, a judgement which Carl Klinck supports both in A Literary History of Canada (1965) and in his introduction to the McClelland and Stewart editions (1961, 1969). The other position sees the novel as an English book in the tradition of Richardson and denies that Emily Montague has anything of value to say about Quebec at all.

The beginnings of a proper perspective on Frances Brooke and her work, however, can be found in Desmond's Pacey's article of 1946 and, even more significantly, in William New's analysis of 1972. Pacey writes that Emily Montague can be read profitably from two points of view:

> as an embodiment of the literary forces at work in the second half of the eighteenth century, particularly in the field of fiction, and as an early impression of Canadian colonial society on a sensitive and cultivated observer.[10]

Pacey notes that the "cult of sensibility" plays an important part in the novel and speaks of the "deliberate exploitation

[9] Lawrence Burpee, editor's introduction, The History of Emily Montague (Ottawa: Graphic Publishers, 1931), p. 3.

[10] Pacey, "The First Canadian Novel," Dalhousie Review, 26 (July, 1946), p. 145.

of the sentimental aspects of experience."[11] Yet he feels able to conclude with an orthodox position, that "In spite of its weaknesses, which for the most part are those of its time, it is an effort to deal honestly in fiction with the contemporary Canadian scene." Professor Pacey has recognized that the novel should be read in its literary context. He has failed to emphasize that the novel's descriptive scenes belong, in part, to an eighteenth-century literary convention. To list descriptive scenes from the book without considering their conventional or structural context can result only in superficial and misleading conclusions.

William New delves more deeply into the novel's background. He cautiously agrees with Klinck that Emily Montague is an English book, but he finds that "the energy in the book derives from the author's contact with Quebec . . . and that as a result, there is a tension established between nature and society that is never wholly resolved."[12] He has given the book a close reading, paying attention to its thematic structure. He suggests that Brooke has deliberately introduced a conflict between the natural wilderness and civilization, a conflict which allows her to explore current ideas about nature and society. New's analysis focuses on the role of Arabella Fermor, the coquette of the novel. He finds that Fermor speaks directly for Frances Brooke and argues that Arabella Fermor shows an awareness of an unresolvable tension between appearance and

[11] Pacey, p. 145.

[12] William H. New, "Frances Brooke's Chequered Gardens," Canadian Literature, 52 (1972), p. 25.

reality, that her experience in Quebec forced her to re-examine received opinions and her own conventional beliefs. A drawback to New's article, one which this study seeks to remedy, is that New apparently has not read other works of this author. He tends, consequently, to ascribe certain insights to Brooke which she is highly unlikely to have achieved. His analysis ignores the importance of "sensibility" in Brooke's world-view. Yet New is the first Canadian scholar to begin with the necessary assumption that the setting of the novel and its descriptive passages can be understood only through the novel's structure and after a consideration of its intellectual background in eighteenth-century England.

This study, then, proposes to examine the interaction of setting and sensibility in Lady Julia Mandeville and in The History of Emily Montague, the two most important of Brooke's novels. Its purpose is to reassess the impact of colonial experience upon the conventions with which Brooke was working. It will examine the way in which the paradigm of sensibility, an all-inclusive world-view, assimilated the crude reality of the colony. The faithful of sensibility believed in the innate benevolence of man and in the essential harmony of the physical universe. However, as Voltaire so forcibly demonstrated in Candide, some empirical facts did not support the optimistic belief in a divinely-ordered universe. When the fictional Candide became a tourist, his optimism was severely tested and found to be wanting. Frances Brooke became a tourist in Canada, and the evidence will show that she withdrew from the reality she encountered.

In eighteenth-century English fiction there were perhaps two main kinds of novels with two kinds of settings. Fielding and Smollett, freeing their characters from the garrison of society, took to the open road, shattering conventions as they did so. Other more "moral" writers dramatized virtue rather than vitality. Their characters remained obedient to the conventional social morality. Frances Brooke, a writer belonging to the latter group, became through force of circumstance a diffident member of the former. The accident of her husband's appointment to the chaplaincy of Quebec forced the change, and it resulted in a tension in Emily Montague which nothing else can explain.

The author wrote Julia Mandeville, her best-received novel, without having seen Quebec. She published The History of Emily Montague after spending about four years with her husband in Lower Canada. (See Appendix 1.) The conditions which brought forth these two novels take on the qualities of a controlled literary experiment. I believe that by comparing Brooke's pre-tourist work with Emily Montague I will be able to demonstrate certain significant differences, a variation of treatment which can be traced only to Brooke's experience in Quebec. Having made such a contrast, I hope to be able to draw some valid conclusions about the novel's "Canadianism."

Subject of some debate in Canadian criticism are the criteria used to establish a novel's national credentials. The problem appears in its most acute form when pre-Confederation literary works confront the nationalistic scholar. As has been shown, critics tended either to read Emily Montague as

a documentary and to brand it "Canadian" because of its descriptive passages, or to reject the novel because of its "Englishness." The problem is, of course, to a large extent artificial.

In the conclusion to A Literary History of Canada, Northrop Frye warns against projecting Canadianism into the pre-Confederation period. He emphasizes that "the mystique of Canadianism was especially the cultural accompaniment of Confederation and the imperialistic mood that followed it."[13] In 1763 the word "Canadian" meant a French-speaking citizen of Canada, that is of the Quebec colony. Frances Brooke uses the word in this sense throughout Emily Montague, and there is no reason why critics, in discussing a pre-Confederation novel, should loosely apply the word to mean a characteristic of a literary work.

This study assumes that it is nonsense to expect an early colonial writer like Frances Brooke to demonstrate that vague literary quality called "Canadian consciousness." An embryonic society cannot be expected to bring forth, aboriginally as it were, an indigenous literary tradition. The beginnings of Canadian literature must be, of necessity, derivative.

One profitable approach to the study of a regional off-shoot from an established tradition, such as our literature in its colonial beginnings inevitably must be, is to examine the impact of the primitive upon the cultured, to analyze the extent to which the regional experience upsets the conventions

[13] Frye, "Conclusion," A Literary History of Canada, ed. Carl Klinck (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965), p. 846.

and prejudices of the sophisticated writer. I have already pointed out that Frances Brooke represents a reasonably pure example of such an interaction. A study of her two novels, consequently, presents a rare opportunity to examine this important aspect of the literary process.

The most important literary convention in Mrs. Brooke's novels is that of sensibility. I will, then, first examine the cultural and literary background of this central theme in order to define its main characteristics. After that, I will proceed more inductively with a study of Mrs. Brooke's moral weekly, The Old Maid, in which her beliefs and their marriage with artistic techniques are readily apparent. Lady Julia Mandeville shows the interaction of setting and sensibility in rural England, and my analysis of this novel will show the main characteristics of Mrs. Brooke's novelistic practice. With this foundational study out of the way, I will attempt an assessment of the impact of Canada upon The History of Emily Montague.

Chapter I

THE BACKGROUND

Mrs. Brooke's importance to Canadian literary history is that she was the first writer of fiction to live in Canada and to write a novel containing significant amounts of new-world experience. In the British context, she was one of the better-known and more respected suppliers of the circulating libraries. A study of her work leads into that vast and often dreary tract of second-rate sentimental fiction of which there was such a flood after 1760. However, such an investigation will establish Mrs. Brooke's relationship to the cultural energies of her time.

1. Frances Brooke and the Popular Novel, 1750-1769.

Mrs. Brooke manipulated the themes and techniques of the great sentimental novelists like Richardson and Rousseau to produce her own model of what she wished the world to be. Her achievement was minor, and, with the exception of The Excursion (1777), all her novels are in the conventional epistolary form. However, very few novelists writing after the big four—Richardson, Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne—made any startling innovations in form. After Smollett's death, thirty years passed before Jane Austen broke any new ground in novelistic technique.

Mrs. Brooke published her first three novels during the decade 1760-1769. Her translation of Madame Riccoboni's The Letters of

Juliette Catesby appeared in 1760; Julia Mandeville, her first original novel, in 1763; The History of Emily Montague in 1769; and The Excursion in 1777. Since my purpose is to investigate Mrs. Brooke's pre-tourist work, I will refer to The Excursion only occasionally; I have been unable to obtain The History of Charles Mandeville[1] which was issued posthumously in 1790.

The 'fifties and 'sixties were times of intense activity in the writing of popular novels. Lionel Stevenson speaks of "a flood of sentimental fiction" and of "a mania" for novel-reading.[2] During the same period, the great innovators in prose fiction were being read everywhere. Fielding and Richardson had published their best works before 1750, Smollett his first three major novels by 1753, and Sterne his first volumes of Tristram Shandy by 1759. These superior works encouraged innumerable imitations, causing a proliferation of novels perhaps best described by Clara Reeve. In her Progress of Romance (1785) she looks back to the year 1752:

> Romances at this time were quite out of fashion, and the press groaned under the weight of Novels, which sprung [sic] up like mushrooms every year. . . . Every work of merit produced a swarm of imitators, till they became a public evil, and the institution of Circulating libraries, conveyed them in the cheapest manner to every bodies [sic] hand.[3]

[1] For a summary and evaluation of The Excursion, see James Foster, History of the Pre-Romantic Novel in England (New York, 1949), pp. 149-150. For commentary on Charles Mandeville, see F. G. Black, The Epistolary Novel in the Late Eighteenth Century (Oregon Monographs, 1940), pp. 6, 32; Godfrey Singer, The Epistolary Novel (Philadelphia, 1933), pp. 116-117.

[2] Lionel Stevenson, The English Novel (Cambridge, 1960), p. 133.

[3] Reeve, The Progress of Romance (New York, 1930), II, 7.

Novels were so popular that as early as 1760 George Colman satirized the unstable girl whose imagination had been "over-heated" from reading too many. In the oft-quoted prologue to Polly Honeycombe, Colman laughed at the average novel's sentimentality.[4] He attached a list of over a hundred novels to the preface of the play, a list which abounded with "Histories," "Adventures," "Letters," "Memoirs," and which included Richardson's Pamela (1740) as well as Eliza Haywood's Anti-Pamela (1741). Colman claimed that the list was the catalogue of a well-known circulating library. Needless to say, Colman's satire did not prevent novels from being written and read in ever-increasing numbers.

Modern bibliographers give further evidence, if any is needed, of the growing popularity of the novel. Jerry Beasley lists more than three hundred titles for the decade 1740-1749 alone,[5] a period in which the novel's popularity was just beginning. Frank Black has graphed the explosive rate of increase of fiction in English after 1750; and, of course, Andrew Block's catalogue lists titles too numerous to be readily counted.[6]

[4] Colman, Polly Honeycombe (London, 1762), first acted 1760.

[5] Beasley, A Check List of Prose Fiction Published in England, 1740-1749 (Charlottesville, 1972).

[6] Black, The Epistolary Novel in the Late Eighteenth Century (Oregon Monographs, 1940), p. 174; Andrew Block, The English Novel, 1740-1850 (London, 1939).

The sentimental letter novel became a fad after Richardson's publication of Pamela in 1740. Frank G. Black writes that after Pamela "an unbroken succession of novels in letters appeared for nearly a century before the form dropped into virtual disuse."[7] He goes on to show that until 1790 epistolary fiction made up from one-quarter to one-half of all novels published in English. In a different article, Black breaks down the production of letter novels into five-year periods.[8] According to these statistics, there were approximately only thirty epistolary novels in existence when Frances Brooke started contributing to the pile in 1760. It is perhaps to her credit that she turned to the letter novel well before the fad reached its first peak in 1770.

Mrs. Brooke was a popular and respected novelist. There were six editions of Julia Mandeville by 1775 and at least four of Emily Montague by 1784. To her contemporaries, she was one of the more distinguished imitators of Richardson and Rousseau. In 1763 when Julia Mandeville was published, a reviewer wrote that Frances Brooke was "as sentimental as Rousseau and as interesting as Richardson, without the caprice

[7] Black, The Epistolary Novel in the Late Eighteenth Century (Oregon Monographs, 1940), p. 1.

[8] Black, "Techniques of Letter Fiction in English from 1740-1800," Harvard Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature, 15 (1933), p. 293.

of the one, or the tediousness of the other."[9] Professor Poole has gone through the reviews in the British Museum Library and has found in them further evidence of Brooke's popularity: "Henceforward Mrs. Brooke's name is coupled with those of Richardson and Frances Sheridan, author of Sydney Bidulph, when the reviewers require a standard by which to compare the productions of less illustrious novelists."[10] Brooke's novels also satisfied the strict moral criteria of Clara Reeve. She gave Mrs. Brooke one of her best recommendations when she wrote: "Mrs. Brooke's works hold a very high rank in the Novel Species. . . . Her stories are interesting and pathetic, her language highly polished and elegant."[11] The little scribbler, Fanny Burney, testified that Mrs. Brooke was "the celebrated authoress," and ran on with: "She is very short and fat, and squints; but has the art of showing agreeable ugliness. She is very well bred, and expresses herself with much modesty upon all subjects; which in an authoress, a woman of known understanding, is extremely pleasing."[12]

Today these remarks tell more about the critical assumptions

[9] The Critical Review, cited by E. Phillips Poole in his introduction, Lady Julia Mandeville (London, 1931), p. 31.

[10] Poole, p. 31.

[11] Reeve, The Progress of Romance, II, pp. 33-34.

[12] Frances Burney, The Early Diary of Frances Burney, ed. Annie R. Ellis (London, 1907), I, p. 283.

held by the speakers than about the work of the author in question. Nevertheless, these testimonials support my main point, that Frances Brooke was not a "Grub-Street Hack."[13]

Those twentieth-century scholars who have read widely in the popular fiction of the eighteenth century also give her some praise. She figures prominently in any history of the popular novel. Godfrey Singer describes her as "an author of considerable competence." He criticizes Julia Mandeville because "the men and women alike write in the same feminine view," but his conclusion is positive: "Though we may disagree with the mode of her writings . . . we must admire the sincerity, plodding and forthright, and the pluckiness of this woman, in writing so many volumes so competently."[14] Lovett and Hughes write that Mrs. Brooke had "considerable critical taste" and that she had been introduced to the "French school of sensibility" by Madame Riccoboni. They consider Mrs. Brooke's regional detail in Emily Montague "a real contribution to the art of fiction."[15]

[13] Mrs. Brooke was a member of Johnson's literary circle. One day she asked Johnson to look over her tragedy, The Siege of Sinope, pleading that she had too many "irons in the fire" to do so herself. The Doctor told her to put her tragedy in along with her irons. Reported in Memoirs of Mrs. Hannah More, ed. W. Roberts (London, 1834), I, p.201. Another story involving the two is reported by Mrs. Piozzi, Anecdotes of the Late Samuel Johnson, ed. S. C. Roberts (Cambridge, 1925), p. 169.

[14] Singer, The Epistolary Novel, pp. 115-117.

[15] Robert Lovett and Helen Hughes, The History of the Novel in England (Cambridge, 1932), pp. 101-102.

Lionel Stevenson finds that Brooke's Julia Mandeville rivalled Frances Sheridan's Miss Sydney Bidulph in popularity. He describes Emily Montague as "the first novel of local colour."[16]

James Foster gives five pages to Mrs. Brooke. The following passage best represents his evaluation:

> Mrs. Brooke was a writer of talent [who] knew how to combine French and English sentimentality into a smooth and pleasing blend. . . . [She] avoids sentimental effusiveness and theatricality, and there is an air of distinction as well as good taste and grace in her style, which is admirably suited to her finely observed and natural portrayals of the moderately elegant society of her time.[17]

It is interesting to note that where several Canadian critics have complained of the "effusiveness" of Brooke's style, Foster observes the opposite, probably because he has read a great number of eighteenth-century popular novels and knows how bad they can be.

Joyce Tompkins has a similar acquaintance with many of the ephemeral and sentimental novels of the eighteenth century, and she praises Brooke even more than Foster does. Tompkins writes of the "gentle Mrs. Brooke" and describes her as "a woman of spirit and conscious literary bent." She regrets that Brooke did not have more influence upon later writers and her assessment of the plots appearing in the novels of

[16] Stevenson, The English Novel (Cambridge, 1960), pp. 135, 143.

[17] James Foster, The History of the Pre-Romantic Novel in England (New York, 1949), pp. 147-148.

the last three decades of the eighteenth century places those of Mrs. Brooke in a positive perspective:

> The reasonable plots of Mrs. Brooke and Miss Burney, though the future lay with them, are insignificant beside the unreasonable ones; their example penetrated but slowly; and during the whole of our period [1770-1800] critics complain of the abuse of the marvellous in motive and incident.[18]

The consensus among these critics is that Mrs. Brooke, although not a genius or a great innovator, had more artistic integrity than the majority of the popular novelists. She was in harmony with the age's taste for the new sentimentalism in the novel, not because she was a hack pandering to the public's desires, but because of sincere artistic and moral impulses. She believed in the feminine novel of sensibility.

Most literary histories and surveys of prose fiction divide eighteenth-century novels into two general classes. The first class, and most important according to the future development of fiction, is the novel of intellectual realism,[19] involving travel, satire, roguery, and the picaresque. These masculine novels[20] usually have an episodic structure and are tough-minded in their frank presentation of reality. Critics quite correctly place the love stories of Frances Brooke in the other class of novels, usually under such chapter headings as "the novel of sentiment," "the novel of sensibility," "the

[18] Joyce Tompkins, The Popular Novel in England, 1770-1800 (London, 1932), p. 60.

[19] Ernest Baker's title for Volume IV of The History of the English Novel. His title for Volume V is The Novel of Sentiment and the Gothic Romance.

[20] Stevenson, The English Novel, p. 28.

pre-romantic novel," or even "the new romantic novel." Novels belonging to this second class tend toward idealism and didacticism, having a more feminine interest in improving conduct and refining manners. These general classifications are perhaps most useful to the literary historian, but here they serve to point to the "cult of feeling" as an important characteristic of Mrs. Brooke's two novels.

2. "Sensibility" and "Sentimental": Some Definitions.

"Sensibility" and "sentimental" are important words in the literary history of the eighteenth century, referring as they do to a phenomenon in cultural taste, to a literary practice, and in a philosophical sense, to an emotional foundation for moral judgement. According to Walter Wright, Frances Brooke played a noteworthy role in the literary expression of this cultural complex,[21] and everything that she wrote was coloured by the doctrine of moral sentimentality. For this reason, it will be useful to define the two words more precisely and to give a summary of their history and aesthetic significance.

"Sentimentality" and "sensibility" are closely related, so closely that James Foster has concluded that in their eighteenth-century usage "they were virtually synonymous," and that "there seems to be no point in differentiating

[21] Walter F. Wright, "Sensibility in English Prose Fiction, 1760-1814," Illinois University Studies in Language and Literature, 22 (1937), p. 39.

between them."[22] However, as a derivation from "sensible," "sensibility" has had a longer history than the derivations "sentimental" and "sentimentality" from the root "sentiment," although both "sensibility" and "sentimental" underwent similar semantic shifts sometime in the middle of the eighteenth century.

The OED notes that "sensibility" was rare before 1750. When the word was used, it meant the ability to receive information through the senses. Dr. Johnson defined the root "sensible" as "perceptible by the senses, perceived by the mind."[23] His third and fourth meanings for "sensible" already carry hints of the coming change in the word's connotation; he gives "having moral perception" and "being easily and strongly affected." For "sensibility," the Doctor gives "quickness of sensation, of perception" and then, significantly, "delicacy," citing Addison's usage. The passage to which Johnson refers in The Spectator is one in which Addison is discussing modesty, describing it as "a kind of quick and delicate Feeling in the Soul . . . it is such an exquisite Sensibility, as warns her [the soul] to shun the first appearance of everything which is hurtful."[24] Almost everything that "sensibility" meant to Frances Brooke was already present in this early usage of it by Addison. It is significant that

[22] Foster, History of the Pre-Romantic Novel, p. 5n.

[23] Samuel Johnson, Dictionary (London, 1812).

[24] The Spectator, No. 231 (Dublin, 1812), I, 458-459.

Addison (and Brooke) relate quickness of moral perception to feeling and not to reason, and that he gives the soul feminine and delicate characteristics. Usage such as Addison's indicates the beginning of a semantic shift, an emotional colouring of the word which was to continue until "sensibility" became the most popular catch-word in the sentimental novel after the mid-century. In Brooke's Julia Mandeville and Emily Montague, the word appears on every third or fourth page.

C. S. Lewis sums up its popular eighteenth-century meaning:

> Sensibility . . . always means a more than ordinary degree of responsiveness or reaction; whether this is regarded with approval (as a sort of fineness) or with disapproval (as excess). . . . The more than normal responsiveness which sensibility connotes need not be responsiveness to beauty. Often it is a tenderness towards the sufferings of others, so that it covers most of what would once have been described as pity or even charity. The important difference is that the idea of a merely temperamental vulnerability has replaced that of habit in the will, achieved by practice and under Grace, as the thing admired in the merciful.[25]

Lewis's summary is important because it emphasizes the moral but anti-Puritan direction of the new meaning of "sensibility."

Referring to the popular use of the word in fiction, Joyce Tompkins describes "sensibility" as "a significant, an almost sacred word" to the last half of the eighteenth century. She, too, discusses the word's connotation:

> It would be wasted labour to attempt to confine to distinct and precise meaning the words delicacy, sensibility and sentiment. They are not exactly synonymous, —sentiment, for instance, implies more of conscious thought and principle than the other two, and sometimes signifies

[25] Lewis, Studies in Words (Cambridge, 1960), pp. 159-160.

> an ennobled or even platonic affection as distinguished from appetite, while delicacy, besides being a less comprehensive word, is often used in a purely moral sense, —but they overlap inextricably, and no novelist troubled to be precise about them. Sensibility was the most popular word, as it was the only one to be degraded by its popularity. . . . We hear of sensibility as a means by which the unphilosophical mind can know virtue, an instinctive moral tact; we also hear of it as a dangerous elegance. . . . Its constant quality was an immediacy of sensation outrunning thought.[26]

To simplify somewhat, there were three stages in the connotation of sensibility in the eighteenth century: its original meaning was to have physical consciousness; its second meaning was the ability to perceive moral concepts (first rationally and later on in the century intuitively), this faculty being associated with instinctive sympathy and benevolence; its third meaning was the superior ability to feel, especially to love and to suffer. In this stage, the capacity to feel came to be separated from morality and to be valued for its own sake, the moral connotation having been lost in the pleasure of tears and of "interesting" melancholy. Edith Birkhead writes: "During the latter half of the Eighteenth Century [sensibility] came to be regarded as essential to emotional respectability. It led to a form of spiritual snobbery."[27]

Before going on to the definition of "sentimental," I will cite a few examples of the emotional use of "sensibility." The first is Laurence Sterne's famous apostrophe to his newly

[26] Tompkins, The Popular Novel, pp. 92-95.

[27] Birkhead, "Sentiment and Sensibility in the Eighteenth Century Novel," Essays and Studies, XI (1925), p. 97.

discovered god.

> Dear sensibility! source inexhaustible of all that's precious in our sorrows! Thou chainest thy martyr down upon his bed of straw—and 'tis thou who lifts him up to Heaven—eternal foundation of our feelings!—and 'tis here I trace thee—and this is thy divinity which stirs within me. . . . I feel some generous joys and generous cares beyond myself—all comes from thee, great—great Sensorium of the world! which vibrates, if a hair of our heads but falls upon the ground, in the remotest desert of thy creation.[28]

Sterne's ability to feel has become his most valuable faculty, for it somehow verifies, almost mystically, the existence of God as well as his own humanity.

The other example is a panegyric delivered by the hero of Emily Montague, Ed Rivers:

> What a charm . . . is there in sensibility! 'Tis the magnet which attracts all to itself: virtue may command esteem, understanding and talents admiration, beauty a transient desire; but 'tis sensibility alone which can inspire love.[29]

Rivers dismisses passion as "transient desire" and praises sensibility because it inspires a spiritual understanding between lovers.

The history of "sentimental" is almost identical to that of "sensibility." Erik Erämetsä has made an exhaustive linguistic study of the word, listing its eighteenth-century occurrences and analyzing its changes in meaning. He finds that the word was coined from the root "sentiment" sometime in the 1740's, and that its frequency of occurrence slowly increased until

[28] Laurence Sterne, A Sentimental Journey (London, Oxford Press, 1968), p. 117. First published 1768.

[29] Frances Brooke, The History of Emily Montague (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1961), Letter 12, p. 44.

Sterne published A Sentimental Journey (1768) after which its use (with Sterne's new meaning) became a fad.[30] I reproduce Erämetsä's conclusion, his suggested dictionary entry for "sentimental" as it was used in the period 1740-1800. I omit his impressive examples and interpretations. He identifies five connotations:

1. Pertaining to sentiment (opinion, thought, judgement of mind).
   a. of opinion, of thought.
   b. capable of thought, possessing judgement, sensible.
   c. used in contrast to 'body": of mind, idea, thought.

2. Pertaining to sentiment in the sense of 'moral sentiment' or 'moral sense' as used by the Moral Sense School Philosophers and typical of the eighteenth century enlightenment: 'moral' (in the above sense), 'morally virtuous', 'sententious'.

3. Arising from or determined by reason as well as feeling, sometimes the one, sometimes the other dominating.

4. Characterized by refined feeling or elevated mental attitude.
   a. Of persons and their dispositions.
   b. Appealing to refined feeling or elevated mental attitude.

5. Pertaining to sentiment meaning refined and tender emotion; exercise or manifestation of 'sensibility'; emotional reflection or meditation, often involving amatory feelings.[31]

According to Erämetsä, the last meaning was Sterne's in The Sentimental Journey. The important development to notice is the shift in the adjective's reference from rational virtue

30 Erik Erämetsä, A Study of the Word 'Sentimental' and of other Linguistic Characteristics of Eighteenth Century Sentimentalism in England (Helsinki, 1951), pp. 22ff.

31 Ibid., pp. 146-148.

(morality associated with thought) to emotional virtue (morality associated with the feelings, with the heart, with sensibility). I have already emphasized a similar shift in the meaning of the noun "sensibility." In Erämetsä's words, "the source of virtue and moral conduct was being transferred from the Head to the Heart."[32]

The conception of the eighteenth century as being a transitional period between the "Age of Reason" and the "Age of Romanticism" has been a useful one to scholars, although recently some have warned against the inaccuracies and over-simplifications inherent in such a distinction.[33] Nevertheless, there was a cult of feeling, especially in the post mid-century novel, and it was associated with the general philosophical shift from Descartes' "cogito, ergo sum" to Rousseau's "je sens, donc je suis."[34] Erämetsä's study shows that there was a definite shift to a more emotionally-charged language.

Here I give the qualification fairly obvious to anyone familiar with the period. Even during the so-called Enlightenment, "reason" did not refer to a cold logic, but to a sort

[32] Erämetsä, p. 37.

[33] "Our students . . . are graduated with a vague notion that the age of sensibility was the time when poetry moved from a reptilian Classicism, all cold and dry reason, to a mammalian Romanticism, all warm and wet feeling." Northrop Frye, "Towards Defining an Age of Sensibility," Eighteenth Century English Literature, ed. James Clifford (New York, 1959), p. 311.

[34] Among countless other sources, see Basil Willey, The Eighteenth-Century Background (London, 1946), pp. 108, 111, 208, et passim.

of inner light whereby man could perceive the truth. Hoxie Fairchild describes how this doctrine became more subjective during the eighteenth century:

> The 'Inner Light' ceases to be even a nominally Christian idea and becomes part of the sentimentalist's creed. It is then merely reason, nature, the moral sense, or whatever we please to call the voice with which we assure ourselves that we are particularly good parts of a good universe.[35]

The distinction between head and heart, which even earlier did not mean two opposite faculties of man but different aspects of the same human capacity to identify the truth, became even more blurred in the sentimental novels. The "feeling"-element tended to become the more important part of the complex, although paradoxically enough it was often considered "rational" to follow the feelings of benevolence and charity, in short, to follow the motions of the heart.

The development of the cult of feeling is part of a vast complex of social and cultural changes which took place during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but it is beyond the scope of this essay to trace such a development. I will attempt, however, to isolate some of the chief characteristics of this trend, especially as they relate to the novels of Frances Brooke and to the feminine sentimental novels in general.

[35] Fairchild, Religious Trends in English Poetry: 1700-1740 Protestantism and the Cult of Sentiment (New York, 1939), Volume I, p, 556.

3. The Age of Sensibility: Some Characteristics.

> The history of the English novel between 1760 and 1814 . . . is that of the development of a spirit. It is the feelings which animated the novelists rather than the materials which the writers employed that reveal the nature of the development of fiction from the age of Walpole and Mrs. Brooke to that of Mrs. Radcliffe and Matthew Lewis.[36]

The emphasis was on the internal rather than on the external; and the practitioners of sensibility valued above all the psychological capacity to empathize, to respond to the souls of others. In practice, this involved a general benevolence and tolerance; for lovers, the ability to be in harmony with each others minds. Historically, the social aspects of sensibility had long been advocated by the Latitudinarians, as Ronald Crane has shown. From the Restoration on to the eighteenth century, the Latitude-men had preached the doctrine that virtue was universal benevolence, that benevolence was a feeling "natural" to men, and that there was pleasure to be derived from doing good. The doctrine was explicitly anti-Puritan, anti-Stoic, and anti-Hobbesian.[37]

Sentimentalism was a Protestant, Whiggish, and middle-class phenomenon with its roots in popular church doctrine. Fairchild has pointed out this connection in his first volume of Religious

[36] Walter F. Wright, "Sensibility in English Prose Fiction," Illinois University Studies in Language and Literature, 22 (1937), p. 149.

[37] Ronald S. Crane, "Suggestions Toward a Genealogy of the 'Man of Feeling,'" ELH, I (1934), pp. 207f.

Trends in English Poetry:

> In the great majority of cases . . . the sentimentalists are either bourgeois Whigs or men who have readily accepted the standards of a bourgeois and Whiggish civilization. . . . In studying the works of the sentimentalists we have repeatedly observed the breakdown of strict Protestantism into Latitudinarianism, and sometimes the breakdown of Latitudinarianism into Deism. This trend, a definitely Protestant phenomenon, is much more strictly evidenced by Low Churchmen and Dissenters than by Catholic-minded Anglicans.[38]

This shift to Latitudinarian tolerance hinged mainly upon the belief that benevolence and compassion were innate human qualities. An early literary expression of the increasingly subjective basis for Christian values is Richard Steele's The Christian Hero (1701) in which Steele, after deploring that "the Heathen struts, and the Christian sneaks in our Imagination," tries to make Christianity appear imaginatively exciting. The sentimental and subjective aspects of this apology are especially apparent in the following citation:

> By a secret Charm we lament with the Unfortunate, and rejoice with the Glad; for it is not possible for a human Heart to be averse to any thing that is Human. . . . Man's eyes . . . when the Heart is full, will brighten into gladness, and gush into Tears: From this Foundation in nature is kindled that noble Spark of Celestial Fire, we call Charity or Compassion, which opens our Bosoms, and extends our Arms to Embrace all Mankind, and by this it is that the Amorous Man is not more suddenly melted with Beauty, than the Compassionate with Misery. Thus are we fram'd for mutual Kindness.[39]

This corrective propaganda, with its emphasis on innate compassion and on the passions as a motivation for proper conduct, defines

[38] Hoxie Fairchild, Religious Trends, Volume I, p. 539.

[39] Richard Steele, The Christian Hero (London, 1932), pp. 77-78.

the "rational piety" of the bourgeois class to which Mrs. Brooke belonged.

Shaftesbury and Hutcheson, among others, gave philosophical legitimacy to the doctrine by postulating an innate "Moral Sense." Of the many passages in Characteristics which illustrate Shaftesbury's idea of innate goodness, I cite one which also indicates the factors which might corrupt this original faculty:

> Sense of right and wrong therefore being as natural to us as natural affection itself, and being a first principle in our constitution and make, there is no speculative opinion, persuasion or belief, which is capable immediately or directly to exclude or destroy it. That which is of original and pure nature, nothing beside contrary habit and custom (a second nature) is able to displace. And this affection being an original one of earliest rise in the soul or affectionate part, nothing beside contrary affection, by frequent check and control, can operate upon it, so as either to diminish it in part or destroy it in the whole.[39]

This doctrine gave rise to some strange combinations of meliorism and primitivism, as Lois Whitney has shown.[40] However, Shaftesbury's "Moral Sense" was really an aesthetic capability, a principle of good taste. He argued that human evil was the result of either a corrupted or an inadequately refined taste: hence the world could be improved by developing and educating people's aesthetic perception.[41] Slightly corrupted, this idea became the aesthetic rationale motivating much of the literature of sensibility. The novels taught the reader's

[39] Shaftesbury, "An Inquiry Concerning Virtue or Merit," Characteristics (New York, 1964), III, i, p. 260.

[40] Whitney, Primitivism and the Idea of Progress in English Popular Literature of the Eighteenth Century (New York, 1965).

[41] Shaftesbury, "Advice to an Author," Characteristics, II, 155f.

emotions to respond to the "natural" goodness of the characters which they presented.

The novelists may or may not have read Shaftesbury, but his vocabulary shows up everywhere in the age of sentiment.[42] A contemporary of Mrs. Brooke's, Mary Collyer, writes in one of her novels:

> The moral sense, Madam, is a taste for what is amiable; that distinguishing faculty of the mind which makes us feel, sensibly and strongly feel, the harmony and discord of actions. It is the touch, the ear of the soul; while reason is the eye to regulate the exertions of this sympathetic faculty" [Collyer's italics]. [43]

The passage agrees completely with Shaftesbury's philosophy, and similar expressions can be found in almost all novels of sensibility.

The view of nature and the cosmos implicit in the novels of sensibility was an optimistic one. The idea that harmony and proportion were the moral criteria of human action had its roots in the popular belief that the physical universe showed everywhere principles of order.[44] The logical consequences of this "best of all possible worlds" view should have been a

[42] "If there were a central current in the Romantic movement, it may well have been this enthusiasm for the restoration of humanity through cultivation of sensibility and awareness of natural harmony. If so, Shaftesbury may well be a major prophet. But even if the claim is exaggerated, there is no doubt that we track him everywhere in the Age of Sensibility." Ernest Tuveson, "Shaftesbury and the Age of Sensibility," Studies in Criticism and Aesthetics, eds. Anderson and Shea (Minneapolis, 1967), p. 93.

[43] Cited by Foster, History of the Pre-Romantic Novel, p. 1.

[44] Willey, The Eighteenth Century Background, p. 57 et passim.

fatalism like that of the physico-theologians, or at least a deep pessimism when confronted with human suffering and with inexplicable catastrophe. But the attitude of the Whiggish middle class was optimistic, out of which arose a faith in meliorism, an urge to strip society of its corrupt artificialities and to open man's heart to his "natural" faculty of moral taste.

The ideal was cultivation—of the physical macrocosm and of man's own nature, his manners, feelings, and his moral taste—in order to bring out the harmony believed naturally inherent in man and in the cosmos. Nature in the raw was called either the "great" or the "natural sublime" depending upon how much awe it inspired. Tuveson describes this eighteenth-century cliché as "that obsessive form of romantic sensibility" and as "the symbolic projection of the new model of the universe."[45] Popular novelists paused to note the sublime, and then returned to the practical task of refining manners and of improving moral taste.

Mrs. Brooke and many of her contemporaries were dealing in a domesticated sensibility. They approved of the "feelings" only in so far as they led to socially sanctioned behaviour. The logical extremes of their doctrine was Methodism in religion and "Shandyism" or "Wertherism" in literature. Indulgence of the feelings could easily prove a threat to many aspects of conventional morality and of the social status quo. They were aware of the dangers, and they consistently attacked Deism,

[45] Ernest Tuveson, The Imagination as a Means of Grace (Los Angeles, 1960), p. 2.

religious enthusiasm, and any eccentric or individualistic behaviour originating in radical subjectivity.

For instance, Clara Reeve admires Henry Brooke, author of The Fool of Quality (1765-1769), for his "genius, taste and sensibility," but finds that "unhappily these fine talents were overshadowed by a veil of Enthusiasm, that casts a shade upon every object."[46] (It will be remembered that John Wesley bowdlerized The Fool of Quality and published it for his own evangelistic purposes.) This rejection of the extreme manifestations of the cult of feeling was typical of Shaftesbury, Addison, Mrs. Brooke, and here of Clara Reeve. She goes on to define the position more clearly:

> Between Deism on one hand, and fanaticism on the other, people of rational piety and moderation, are in no very good situation, for they are anathematized by the zealots of both parties.[47]

The way in which the majority of English readers responded to Rousseau's La Nouvelle Héloïse[48] further illustrates the position of what I have labelled domesticated sensibility. Clara Reeve is again representative. She writes:

> It is a book that speaks to the heart, and engages that in its behalf, but when reflexion comes afterwards, and reason takes up the reins, we discover that it is dangerous and improper.[49]

Reeve's chief criticism was that Eloise should not have had

[46] Reeve, The Progress of Romance, II, 42.

[47] Ibid., II, 44.

[48] See James Warner, "English Reactions to the Nouvelle Heloise," PMLA, 52 (1937), 803-819

[49] Reeve, The Progress of Romance, I, 13-14.

sexual intercourse with Saint-Preux before her marriage to someone else. She concludes that Héloïse would have been a perfect book but for this dangerous transgression of the moral code.

The "people of rational piety and moderation" consistently maintained the connection of sensibility with morality, the connection noted in my previous discussion of the word's etymology. Edith Birkhead makes an important distinction when she writes:

> The novels of sensibility appear in so many different disguises that they almost defy classification, but they fall mainly into two groups, those which are approved by the moralists and those which are condemned.[50]

As late as 1810, Mrs. Barbauld is still speaking the language of domesticated sensibility when she observes that "Werther's delirium of passion may be seducing," and that Sterne "affects the heart . . . by light electric touches which thrill the nerves of the reader who possesses a correspondent sensibility of frame," but finally that "the indelicacies of these volumes are very reprehensible."[51] In the same place, Mrs. Barbauld summarizes the theory behind the moral novel of sensibility. Novels have as their legitimate end entertainment, but they must also have "a strong effect in infusing principles and moral feelings. They must waken a sense of finer feelings than the commerce of ordinary life inspires . . . [and] if they soften

[50] Birkhead, "Sentiment and Sensibility in the Eighteenth Century Novel," Essays and Studies, XI (1925), p. 109.

[51] Anna Barbauld, "On the Origin and Progress of Novel-Writing," British Novelists (London, 1810), Volume I, pp. 30ff.

the heart, they also refine it." She concludes: "Benevolence and sensibility are almost always insisted upon in modern works of this kind."

The eighteenth-century debate regarding the introduction of profligate characters[52] had its roots in this didactic literary theory. The "moral" novelists disapproved of including too many bad characters, and Mrs. Brooke preferred having none at all. This aspect of domesticated sensibility operates in Clarissa Harlowe. Having brought to life the evil Lovelace, Richardson finds it necessary to attack his own character in footnotes, lest readers admire Lovelace too much.[53]

The watch-word of the novelists of domesticated sensibility was delightful instruction, and they gave this classical dictum a bourgeois and utilitarian twist. Shaftesbury had said that "virtue and interest may be found at last to agree,"[54] and novelists like Mrs. Brooke had no doubts on the matter. The function of the novel was to inculcate morality by example; in Joyce Tompkins' words, "to teach those who by nature and upbringing [are] unqualified for serious study."[55] Consequently, the practitioners of moral sensibility showed life to be under

[52] See, for instance, Dr. Johnson's criticism of "low" material, The Rambler, No. 4 (31 March 1750), Works, I, 17-19.

[53] Samuel Richardson, Clarissa Harlowe (London: J. M. Dent, 1932), Letter 71, p. 353n.

[54] Shaftesbury, "An Inquiry Concerning Virtue or Merit," Characteristics, II, 44.

[55] Tompkins, The Popular Novel, p. 71.

the yoke of moral laws. Virtue might be shown to suffer, as in Clarissa Harlowe or in the catastrophic ending of Julia Mandeville, but then only in the interest of its apotheosis. When the novelists depicted virtue as an innocent victim, they tightened the screws of emotional empathy, producing a tearful reader participation as never before in literary history.

Another characteristic of the age of sensibility was the spectacular increase in the number of female novelists. Joyce Tompkins has traced the history of their relationship to the eighteenth-century novel, showing how they soon overcame the prejudice that women should be pretty dilletantes and not professional writers.[56] They made the novel of sensibility their special domain and wrote hundreds of stories expressly devoted to improving the manners and ideals of society, with special emphasis on the relationships between the sexes. Their reading public they found in the middle-class, newly literate and avid for information about how to be polite. The women-novelists fostered a feminist doctrine, believing that women had superior sensibilities which should be used to sharpen the emotional sensitivity of the men. The following citation from Mrs. Brooke's The Excursion is representative of an argument which can be found in every novel of sensibility: "I think love the most likely means to refine the heart, and

[57] Tompkins, The Popular Novel, pp. 116ff.

soften the manners; but I think the more estimable the object the more forcibly the means will operate on the mind."[58] The women-novelists supplied endless examples of "estimable objects"; they believed sincerely in the cult of sensibility, and they hoped that their fictional examples of refined relationships would encourage the brute male in real life to be more emotionally respectable.

The heroines of sensibility and their almost effeminate soul-partners perhaps expressed a genuine social need of the time, the desire of the now educated woman to be less of a victim in the eighteenth-century marriage. For instance, Emily Crosby has found that Madame Riccoboni's heroines are usually victimized by male brutality. Crosby concludes:

> Les ouvrages des femmes plus que ceux des hommes reflètent, en général, le caractère de l'époque, puisque le talent d'une femme, comme sa destinée, est toujours soumis à l'influence de la société.[59]

Women novelists often depicted a vigorous, wealthy, and youthful widow whose brutish husband had died, as Anne Willmot's husband had died in Julia Mandeville, from "overheating himself at a fox chase."[60] The energy of these depictions suggests that women writers were seeking, either consciously or subconsciously, a certain degree of liberation for their sex.

[58] Frances Brooke, The Excursion (London: T. Cadell, 1777), Volume I, p. 206.

[59] Emily Crosby, Madame Riccoboni: Une Romancière Oubliée (Genève: Slatkin Reprints, 1970), p. 64.

[60] Frances Brooke, Lady Julia Mandeville (London: R. and J. Dodsley, 1763), Volume I, p. 13. (Susequent references to this edition.)

Most female novelists of Brooke's period were consciously imitating Samuel Richardson. However, they gave "sensibility" a special emotional colouring which it had not had in Richardson's novels. Richardson's Clarissa did have a delicate sensibility, but it was of a special kind. For instance, in describing her evil sister, Clarissa writes:

> Bella has not a feeling heart [Richardson's italics]. The highest joys of this life she is not capable of: but then she saves herself many griefs, by her impenetrableness—yet, for ten times the pain that such a sensibility is attended with would I not part with the pleasure it brings with it.[60]

Here, sensibility refers to the capacity of being pleased and troubled by fine moral perceptions. Clarissa's perceptiveness brought her the friendship with Anna Howe and the pleasure of virtue. It did not find her a perfect soul-mate. Her sensibility was notably deficient in this respect.

It may be hard to believe, but the female imitators of Richardson set out to correct this deficiency. In general, they mated Clarissa-type heroines with Grandisonian heroes. In doing so, they placed more emphasis on amatory sensibility than on moral sensibility. These heroines of spiritual love faced fewer and less sensational difficulties than had Clarissa. Less melodrama was necessary if novelists like Brooke were to shift the emphasis onto ideal love without sacrificing the moral integrity of either the heroine or the novel. In hundreds of post-Richardson novels written by women, Clarissa was

[60] Samuel Richardson, Clarissa Harlowe, Letter 42, pp. 218-219.

finally rewarded, over and over again, with the soul-mate that the women felt she really deserved.

This shift away from Richardsonian moral sentimentalism to a more amatory (although still moral) sensibility may well have had its roots in the novelists' urge to portray the male-female relationship in a more refined way, a simple case of feminine wish-fulfilment. However, there is little doubt that the French kind of sensibility was making its influence felt.

The French-English cross-influences have been much discussed, especially with reference to the novel during the seventeen-fifties and 'sixties.[61] In Mrs. Brooke's case, the influence is direct and easily established. In 1760 she translated Madame Riccoboni's Lettres de Milady Juliette Catesby. Emily Crosby has written the story of Riccoboni's influence upon English literature and of her relationship with Mrs. Brooke. Consequently, I limit my discussion to a few aspects of Juliette Catesby in order to illustrate the kind of sensibility that was involved. I have been unable to obtain Brooke's translation so my remarks refer to Riccoboni's original, which I have read.

[61] Ernest Baker, The History of the English Novel (London, 1930), Volume V, chapter VI; George Saintsbury, A History of the French Novel (London, 1917), Volume I, chapter XII; James Foster, "The Abbe Prevost and the English Novel," PMLA, 42 ((1927), 443-464; Wright, "Sensibility in English Prose Fiction," Illinois Studies, 22 (1937), 21ff; Emily Crosby, Madame Riccoboni; Paul Van Tieghem, "La Sensibilité et la Passion dans le Roman Européen," Revue de Littérature Comparée, 6 (1926), 423-435; Georges May, "The Influence of English Fiction on the French Mid-Eighteenth-Century Novel," Aspects of the Eighteenth Century, ed. Wasserman, pp. 265-280.

Juliette Catesby and Lord Ossery had fallen in love. Ossery had previously been disappointed in love, and Juliette had been married at sixteen and widowed at eighteen. They were "soul-mates"[62] and were about to be married when Ossery disappeared. Juliette soon finds out that Ossery has married Jenny Montfort, whom he had made pregnant. Jenny conveniently dies in childbirth, and friends of Ossery demonstrate that he is reasonably innocent. Drunkenness and the plotting of Jenny's brother had brought about his "fall."[63] Juliette's sensibility is outraged, and she spends the first half of the book (which wisely begins after the fact and brings out the story in epistolary flashbacks) refusing to hear any excuses for Ossery. He has betrayed their great spiritual love. The tone of the presentation suggests that Juliette must remain insulted and show "interesting" distress as long as possible in order to establish the purity of her love. The novel focuses mainly on

[62] For instance: "Je trouvois Milord d'Ossery si digne d'être aimé; l'agrément de son esprit, les graces de sa personne, son air, ses traits, la noblesse de ses sentiments, milles qualités aimables . . . tout en lui me parut propre à augmenter ma tendresse & la justifier." Riccoboni, Lettres de Juliette Catesby (2nd ed., Amsterdam, 1759), p. 47.

[63] Ossery's description of the rape: "Livré tout entier à mes sens, j'oubliai mon amour, ma probité, des loix qui m'avoient toujours été sacrées, la soeur de mon ami. Une fille respectable ne me parut dans cet instant qu'une femme offerte à mes désirs, à cette passion grossiére qu'allume le seul instinct. Un mouvement impétueux m'emporta, j'osai tout; j'abusai cruellement du désordre & de la simplicité d'une jeune imprudente, dont l'innocence causa la défaite. A peine ce moment d'erreur fut-il passé, que ma raison reprenant tous ses droits, je vis ma faute dans toute son étendue. Miss Jenny revenue à elle-même, remplissoit l'air de ses cris, gémissoit, fondoit en larmes, & par sa juste douleur ajoutoit encore à la mienne." Ibid., pp. 146-147. (Archaic spelling retained in both citations.)

the quality and sanctity of her feelings. Consequently, the amount of pleading that Ossery must do in order to placate her offended sensibility is incredible and must be read to be believed.

Only Ossery's delicate sensibility finally restores Juliette's respect for him and allows for the happy ending. He has not committed the great sin of being insensitive. He was "not himself" when he raped Jenny; he recognized how he had betrayed Juliette's pure love; he did his duty to Jenny, meantime suffering horribly. For these reasons, Juliette can finally forgive him.

Richardson's sentimentalism had always reinforced social prudence and the moral code. In La Nouvelle Héloïse, Rousseau had given the feelings of love a greater authority than the demands of plain duty, at least in the earlier parts of the book. Although Juliette Catesby is more offended by Ossery's sin against sensibility (he should have trusted her love enough to tell her his difficulty) than by his transgression of the moral code, Madame Riccoboni does leave conventional morality intact. Ossery does marry Jenny. It is this compromise between love and social prudence that Mrs. Brooke must have found appealing in the work of Madame Riccoboni. Of course, Mrs. Brooke dropped the "French indelicacies." None of her heroes could ever have been guilty of rape. Mrs. Brooke's bourgeois achievement was to make amatory sensibility compatible with moral sentimentalism.

A few other characteristics of Juliette Catesby are important with respect to Mrs. Brooke's later work. The book is significantly short, only one hundred and seventy-two small pages. The characters are of a high social class, thus providing an atmosphere of material independence and mannerly conduct rarefied enough for their refined sensibilities.[64] Significantly, both of these characteristics appear in Julia Mandeville and, to a certain extent, in Emily Montague.

After all this discussion of exalted feeling, it may seem far-fetched to write about the realistic qualities of the novel of sensibility. Nevertheless, many of the characteristics of what Ian Watt describes as "formal realism"[65] were present in the kind of novels that Frances Brooke wrote. After all, the novel was most popular with the middle-class, and this group of readers demanded characters and situations with which they could identify.

Mrs. Brooke called her two main novels "Histories" and gave her characters real names and specific positions in upper middle-class life. She used events which conceivably might have happened to characters having the rank she gave them. Although the readers of sentimental novels demanded verisimilitude, they did not want too much of it. Novelists like Brooke considered that they had to set a proper example, and

[64] When Riccoboni translated Fielding's Amelia, she gave all of Fielding's characters a higher social rank and omitted most of Fielding's social criticism. Crosby, Madame Riccoboni, p. 122.

[65] Ian Watt, The Rise of the Novel (London, 1957), pp. 34ff.

they also took into account the social aspirations of their readers. For these reasons, the action in their novels was slightly "above" that of ordinary life. Then too, the ideals of sensibility would have had some difficulty surviving the harsher environment of "low" life and the inevitable humour that went with such a setting. This is one reason why Richardson once referred to Fielding as a stableman.[66]

The epistolary form added to the illusion of imminence and of actuality as well. The letters were dated and often contained references to actual events, as in Emily Montague. Of course, the primary advantage of the form was that it allowed for the analysis of sentiment and of conscience, and for the conveying of opinion and feeling. This was the reason why the majority of sentimental novels used the letter form. Nevertheless, the letter novels did carry an authentic air, even though the credulity of the reader was often strained when he was asked to believe that the heroine could dash off twenty pages while being abducted in a fast-moving carriage.

Frances Brooke avoided melodramatic action and made her letters shorter, thereby achieving greater verisimilitude with the form than even Richardson had, although she obviously did not reach his depth of psychological analysis. One must remember that the novels of sensibility were much nearer to

[66] Dr. Johnson: "Richardson used to say, that had he not known who Fielding was, he should have believed he was an ostler. Sir, there is more knowledge of the heart in one letter of Richardson's, than in all of Tom Jones." Boswell, Life of Johnson, ed. Birkbeck-Hill (London, 1971), II, 174-175.

middle-class life than the romances they superseded, and that Frances Brooke, like Samuel Richardson, did not doubt she was following "nature." She believed her stories to be true-to-life. She would have agreed with Doctor Johnson, that all aspects of nature should not necessarily be imitated,[67] if for no other reason than for the moral "good" of her readers.

The main characteristic of the novel of sensibility was a bourgeois compromise, the justification of social virtues by appealing to the emotions. It was, perhaps, an example of a kind of artistic decadence. Writers were more concerned about the emotional (and therefore moral) effects upon the consumer than they were about the organic demands of the art form. Art was utilitarian, and the "rational and moderate" writers considered the inculcation of practical virtue more important than making fine distinctions, either theological or metaphysical. They were propagating a social mythology, seriously attempting to bring readers up to a particular social and moral norm. They deplored individual and eccentric behaviour, and they presented their characters as ideal members of a social group.

In this chapter, I have attempted to establish some of the important characteristics of the novel of sensibility and of the age to which it belonged. I turn now to a more specific study of Mrs. Brooke's work in order to establish her beliefs and artistic practice with a more inductive procedure.

[67] The Rambler, No. 4, Works, Volume I, p. 18.

Chapter II

MESSAGE AND METHOD IN THE OLD MAID PAPERS

Frances Brooke's first major publication was The Old Maid, a typical moral weekly of the kind which flourished in the post-Spectator period. It appeared in thirty-seven numbers every Saturday from 15 November 1755 to 24 July 1756. These papers define Mrs. Brooke's position with regard to the doctrine motivating the literature of sensibility. At the same time, the essays show the moral vision beginning to take on an artistic form.

1. The Old Maid and the Periodical Tradition

The periodical essay had vigorously maintained its popularity long after the time of its greatest success. Albert Baugh in A Literary History of England emphasizes the vogue and influence of The Spectator when he writes:

> If one wishes to know what the eighteenth-century Londoner thought about, one can do no better than to read The Spectator: it both conditioned and freshened the minds of its readers, and it was read throughout the century. The collected editions sold far better than did the original sheets.[1]

The Whig essayists, Addison and Steele, were so much in sympathy with the major tendencies of the age, both moral and artistic, that their publications retained their significance throughout the century. According to C. S. Lewis, "[Addison] appears to

[1] Albert Baugh, A Literary History of England (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1967), p. 878.

be (as far as any individual can be) the source of a quite astonishing number of mental habits which were still prevalent when men now living were born."[2] The success of The Tatler and The Spectator encouraged at least two hundred imitations up to the year 1800, but these imitations rarely achieved the diversity or the distinction of their great predecessors, although most of them followed their models closely in doctrine and in technique.[3]

The fortunes of the eighteenth-century periodical were linked to the growing participation of women in literature. As I have pointed out, this phenomenon was related to the emergence of sensibility as a literary cult. The benign piety of Addison and Steele attracted the "gentle readers," and The Female Tatler (1709-1710) came out almost immediately to satisfy this newly-established female market. Eliza Haywood, "an Addison in petticoats,"[4] brought out The Female Spectator (1744-1746), the first women's periodical written by a woman. The second female Addison was Frances Brooke, and she imitated The Spectator in message and method even more closely than Haywood had done.

[2] C. S. Lewis, "Addison," Eighteenth-Century English Literature: Modern Essays in Criticism, ed. James Clifford (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), p. 155.

[3] Baugh, A Literary History of England, pp. 880-881.

[4] J. B. Priestley's phrase in his introduction to Eliza Heywood [sic], The Female Spectator, ed. Mary Priestley (London: John Lane, 1929), p. vii.

That Frances Brooke should have copied The Spectator will surprise only those unfamiliar with the eighteenth-century milieu. The theory of art implicit in Addison's statement of purpose, "to enliven morality with wit, and to temper wit with morality,"[5] was not particularly new. Most critics from Aristotle to Samuel Johnson would have agreed that art should make people better. However, Addison and Steele applied art to popular eighteenth-century values, values which C. S. Lewis defines as "Rational Piety," "Polite Letters," and "Simplicity." He describes them as being "the hallmarks of the age which Addison was partly interpreting but partly also bringing into existence."[6] It is perhaps only a minor exaggeration to say that the Whig essayists invented the middle-class literary market, and that later and lesser writers like Frances Brooke continued to satisfy the desire of this market for literary titillation combined with moral respectability.

2. The Art of Moralizing.

The Old Maid papers do not boast much artistic innovation. The task of the essayist was to make morality fashionable by attaching precepts to an artistic vehicle, and Frances Brooke conservatively follows the techniques so successfully developed by Addison and Steele.

[5] The Spectator, No. 10 (Dublin: P. Wogan, 1810), I, 23.

[6] Lewis, "Addison," Eighteenth-Century English Literature, p. 147.

The editorial personality of The Old Maid is Mary Singleton, a fifty-year old spinster. She relates a fictional history of having been disappointed in love and then announces her intention of writing chiefly for the amusement of her own sex, "to animadvert upon fashions, plays, masquerades, or whatever else happens to fall within observation."[7] The old maid then shows her wit by inviting readers to "try" her purity by submitting letters. The anonymous and fictional editorial personality was an established formula of the periodical essay. It was used as a means of giving the writer authority to speak with some hope of being taken seriously, and to give his moral doctrine the anonymity that revelation of any kind needs in order to be credible. Brooke's only contribution to the formula was the choice of the worldly-wise and benevolent spinster, a choice which made her advice appear more serious and which presumably gave her the right to speak on feminine matters.

Mrs. Brooke also used the devices of wit and of satire, but subordinated them to her didactic purposes. I have already noted the suggestive wit of the editor's invitation; such wit served to attract attention and to demonstrate the editor's easy tolerance. However, tolerance and raillery were artistic techniques which helped the "rationally pious" to convince others of the superiority of their values.

[7] Frances Brooke, The Old Maid, No. 2 (London: A. Millar, 1764). (Subsequent references incorporated in the text.)

Only twice in The Old Maid does Mrs. Brooke spice her moralizing with an erotic appeal which is, at the same time, combined with satire. In a series of letters, an "Antigallican" makes an ingenious suggestion for defending England against the threatened French invasion:

> Let little parties of our fair country women be cantoned along the sea-coast . . . by laying open to [French] eyes those fatal Bosoms [Brooke's italics], which have already committed merciless slaughter on friends and countrymen, immediately disarm them, and lead the willing captives in silken cords . . . in triumph to London . . . I am even confident your generous breast, Mrs. Singleton, will be ready to display itself on this occasion (No. 27, 15 May 1756).

Brooke carries on the farce of the topless feminine army for three numbers and only drops it when the "Antigallican" reports that the French would defend themselves by carrying "magnifying spectacles" (No, 33, 26 June 1756). This stratagem would turn the English breasts into Brobdignagian objects of disgust, the reference to Gulliver's Travels being explicit. The satire attacks effeminate London ""beaux" who hide behind women's skirts and refuse to join the army, as well as those women who as artful seducers are "open and determined assassins of men."

Brooke's second use of satire occurs in Number 32, where she imitates Swift's A Modest Proposal. She wishes to make paganism the national religion of "the people of quality," directing her satire at free-thinking aristocrats who apparently were not regular in church attendance. At the same time, she

criticizes drinkers, gamblers, and self-serving politicians, predicting that "the politicians will have their Jove, the topers their Bacchus, and the gamesters their Mercury." Swift attacked specific political grievances with his satire and disciplined his genuine moral outrage with his art. Brooke's satire suffers because its target is too abstract—the general immorality of aristocrats. "Free-thinking descends from fashionable people," she states and urges the titled to set a proper example by going to church. The argument occurs often in the eighteenth and the nineteenth century, especially in the literature of "improvement" emanating from the clerical class, and it always reminds the modern reader of how the Church of England clergy had a direct and material interest in getting the nobility into their churches. Brooke's two grandfathers were clergymen, her husband was a clergyman, and her son became one. Her didactic intent again peeps out from behind the mask of her satire. Brooke's desire to improve the world was sincere, but the tone of her essays often suggests the more narrow social aspirations of her class.

The tone of Brooke's satire and eroticism tends to be blatantly moralistic; the low material fits uncomfortably with the sustained virtue of the rest of the essays.

In the light of Brooke's later work, the most significant technique to note in The Old Maid is the creation of characters who represent either a typical mental attitude or some particular

social vice or virtue. These characters represent a kind of domestic allegory, an attempt by the moralist to give artistic life to a moral doctrine. Each character gives the old maid a chance to censure or to praise some aspect of manners or of morality. For instance, "Suky Bosombare" shouts like a man when she wants her maid. Brooke tells her to ring with the proper lady-like decorum (No. 34). "Marian Doubtful" debates the advantages and disadvantages of marriage (No. 9). In a pure example of a morality tale, "Sarah Whispercomb" confesses her life history. She has lost an eye while peeking through a key-hole, and she has grown a beard as a consequence of her insatiable curiosity about shaving (No. 24). "Tom Bumper" advises "If you have a mind to write anything worth reading, take your bottle" (No. 6). She rejects the advice, telling him politely that she drinks only water. With equally complacent virtue, she refuses a famous "Puffer," who had offered to "silence the voice of censure, and blow Miss Singleton to fame in an instant" (No. 4).

Most of these characters are short-lived; none are as good or last as long as Addison's Sir Roger de Coverley. However, Mrs. Brooke creates two characters who are more ideal than the others, and who do survive throughout the papers. In Number 2, the spinster introduces her fictional niece Julia to her readers. Julia is beautiful, virtuous, rich, and careful. She has a rural friend Rosara, who is innocent, simple "romantic," and "unacquainted with life;" hence, she is likely

to be seduced. Both are creatures whom Brooke uses to give instructions on how to bring up daughters, to exemplify the morals and manners of courting, and to debate the relative merits of city sophistication and rural innocence. For instance, Brooke repeats one lesson she must have learned from Richardson's Clarissa, warning parents not to be too severe with their daughters lest they encourage clandestine meetings. The two girls never speak for themselves, and their love affairs do not progress beyond a series of well-chaperoned meetings. They are heroines of sensibility in embryo, and here in The Old Maid their existence as personifications of middle-class ideals is especially apparent.

The techniques which Frances Brooke used in the essays show her to be an able formula writer, an imitator who cared less about artistic innovation than about the application of established methods to the propagation of certain moral and social ideals. An axiom of critical theory is that satire depends upon a generally accepted standard of conduct. A similar consensus supports the moral essay and the didactic novel. These social values, with their fairly consistent ordering of man and society, pervade all of Brooke's writings. They are especially apparent in The Old Maid papers.

3. The Social and Moral Ideal in The Old Maid.

"When one is in search of an age," George Boas has said, "one ends with human beings."[8] The advantage of extracting the beliefs of an age from the essays of a lesser writer is that the beliefs are present in a more rigid, less qualified form than in the works of greater artists. Brooke's essays are closely linked with public taste; therefore they often contain the commonly-understood versions of the more complicated theological and philosophical theories of the period.

In the second number of The Old Maid, Brooke follows Addison and abjures partisanship in both politics and religion. This modest disclaimer identifies her immediately as a Whig and as a supporter of the Church of England. The contents of the essays support this conclusion. For example, Number 22 is a serious reflection on how the "True and Rational" differs from the "Enthusiastic or Superstitious Persuasion." Making her allegiance quite explicit, she defends "the amiable and rational profession of the church of England" and attacks both the Catholics and the dissenting evangelists. The latter group she describes as "that upstart tribe of fanatics." The Catholic Church she finds to be "the parallel phrenzy [sic] of our homebred enthusiasts" and opposes to both groups "the truly sober and rational piety which animates not only the whole liturgy and

[8] George Boas, "In Search of the Age of Reason," Aspects of the Eighteenth Century, ed. Wasserman (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1965), p. 95.

ritual of the church of England, but the composition of her divines in general." To a certain extent, the religion of the Church of England had become a sort of social morality which encouraged charity and benevolence within the existing strata of society. The cult of sensibility evolved almost directly from this doctrine, which is central to an understanding of Brooke's novels. Its expression here places Mrs. Brooke with "the people of rational piety and moderation," with Addison, Mrs. Reeve, Mrs. Barbauld, and countless others.

"Rational Piety" was not a radical doctrine, but it was a powerful synthesis of social Christianity, optimism, and middle-class utilitarianism, a synthesis which was to influence the English-speaking world for a long time. It avoided theological hair-splitting, thus reducing the violence of inter-sect bickering. It contained a powerful plea for tolerance and for benevolent action, a philosophy of meliorism which sought practical virtue rather than dogmatic theological positions.

Brooke's enlightened response to the Lisbon earthquake is an example of such practicality. She denounces "the vindictive spirit and religious pride . . . of our new enthusiastic preachers who pronounce this dreadful calamity a special judgement from the Supreme Being" (No. 5). She urges the government to send relief in the form of food and supplies. Unfortunately, she casts doubt on the purity of her motives when she argues

the utilitarian aspect of this charity; it will "convince them [the Catholics] of the superior quality of our faith." She concludes the paper with a final attack on those who would make "that benignant power" a God of punishment and terror.

A natural catastrophe like an earthquake represented a real threat to the model of the macrocosm which was generally accepted in the eighteenth century. For most educated people the universe had become an orderly school, the earth a classroom, and God a benevolent school principal, whose efficiency and order could be experienced everywhere by any mind free of superstition and corrupt habits. People had to defend this model when they were confronted with an apparent inconsistency in God's perfection. Mrs. Brooke does so by quoting Pope on the necessity of accepting universal laws. She tells her readers to submit to the unfathomable ways of Providence. At the same time, she urges action for the relief of Lisbon. Although the two positions are logically incompatible, they apparently were not for Frances Brooke. Her essay testifies to the correctness of Basil Willey's assertion, that the Whig "optimism of progress" was replacing the Tory "optimism of acceptance."[9]

It would be a mistake to think that Brooke's distrust of "homebred enthusiasts" meant that she was opposed to the sentimental motions of the heart. On the contrary, she

[9] Willey, The Eighteenth Century Background (London: Chatto and Windus, 1946), p. 95.

identifies herself with a polite version of enthusiasm in several of her essays. One can find a similar distinction between polite and violent enthusiasm in Shaftesbury and in Addison.

In Number 10 Brooke observes: "I love to see a little heat and enthusiasm in the sentiments of people . . . especially when those sentiments have their foundations in reason and moral truth." Then she introduces a moral reflection in which she contrasts Timoleon of Corinth with Junius Brutus, the founder of the Roman republic. Timoleon had ordered his brother Timophanes killed because he had become a dangerous tyrant. Timoleon could not bear to watch the execution and covered his head with his coat. All the while he wept profusely. Brutus had condemned his two sons for attempting to restore the Tarquins, but he watched their execution without expression. According to Brooke, Brutus shows "a temper naturally savage, and unsusceptible of the soft sensations of humanity." In contrast to Brutus, Timoleon was not moved by passions, but by "a virtuous and ardent zeal for liberty: he was of a most sweet and tender disposition, and loved his brother with the fondest affection."

Brooke does not question that virtuous men should sacrifice someone they love in the interest of country. She emphasizes the differences in emotional response. Her interpretation of the story is a representative statement of the cult of sensibility

and deserves to be quoted in full:

> These violent and uncommon efforts of virtue [the execution of loved ones for patriotic reasons], as they are contrary to the natural bent of human affections, must in a man of tender sensations, be attended with sorrow and remorse, when the impulse which caused them is over and the end aimed at attained; therefore Timoleon's excess of sorrow was agreeable to nature . . . and if Brutus's dooming his sons to the ax was an act of heroic patriotism, his unflexible concern after their death . . . is the mark of a cruel and unrelenting temper, which greatly depreciates the merit of it.

The citation shows that affective response had become the main indication of goodness; moral weeping was proof of a superior delicacy and therefore a sign of a greater potential virtue.

The story of Brutus and Timoleon also draws attention to the anti-stoical content of rational piety. In the sermons of the "latitude men," in Shaftesbury, in Addison, and here in Brooke, one finds the polite but serious attack on Stoicism. The rationally pious opposed the Stoic acceptance of evil because it suggested the impossibility of change. They found it necessary to make a clear distinction between themselves and the Stoics because the two doctrines had so many similarities.

It was not enough, then, to do the right thing. One had to show that one enjoyed virtue, that one "felt" it. One had to learn the pleasure of goodness. In Old Maid Number 13, Miss Singleton and her niece Julia visit a government-run hospital for foundlings. The editor wants to educate Julia in the benevolent motions of the heart:

> I often indulge her and myself with a sight which must give pleasure to every mind which has any tincture of humanity, that of a number of unfortunate innocents saved from an untimely death, or what is worse, from being trained up in abandoned principles.

It was fun to be good and to contemplate works of goodness. This doctrine was central to that social religion which I have been calling "Rational Piety."

The same number goes on to urge government support for orphanages. Brooke's charitable disinterestedness is thrown into question when she concludes that the orphanage would be an excellent source of soldiers at a time when "it seems necessary to chastise the insolence and perfidiousness of our aspiring neighbours the French." The strength of "Rational Piety" was its combination of virtuous action for utilitarian ends. Not only did virtuous behaviour create emotional pleasure, but it was practical as well. Benevolence and charity could further the interest of self and of society.

To become better, men had to become more open to the "tender sensations." One way to reform men was through the influence and example of a good woman, that is, a woman of sensibility. For reasons such as this, a defense of women dominates The Old Maid papers. Feminism is their single most important theme.

In Number 3, Brooke argues that the two bright eras "of wit and learning in England were female reigns." This golden age (she uses the expression) had been lost through "the carelessness and insensibility of men," and could be restored only if women "take poetry under their protection." Women, Mrs. Brooke argues, should imitate their French sisters, who

with their "taste for the Belles Lettres" had become a significant force for improving the moral level of the arts. In The Old Maid Number 4, Brooke elaborates the idea that women have a responsibility in making the arts more respectable. Referring to the theatre as a real force for improving society, she goes on to say: "I have some thought of establishing a little court of female criticism, consisting of myself, and six virgins of my own age, to take into consideration all stage offences against sense and decency." She makes the suggestion wittily, but intends it seriously.

She relates several examples which exemplify women's power to induce "good." Paper Number 19 reviews a book called A Saracen History and recounts the story of the Saracen wives. When they were captured by the Greeks, they defended their chastity with sticks and stones. Their example encouraged the Saracen army to slaughter the too passionate Greeks. Number 8 comments on a scene from Pitt's translation of the Aeneid. The presence of the Cumaean Sybil, "a chaste exemplary virgin," prevented Dido from wreaking vengeance upon Aeneas. In Brooke's world, either the passions do not exist, or they are subdued by exemplary chastity.

The following citation best sums up the importance of women in Brooke's explanation of society. She first attacks the nobility's custom of pampering their sons and ignoring their daughters. She goes on to deliver a panegyric upon

women:

> They communicate joy and happiness, from the time they come into the world, to the time they leave it. Their innocence and beauty give us happiness in their youth: their decency and prudence delight us in their more advanced years. The dissolute and the gay cannot endure an old woman; they cannot endure a modest woman (No. 11).

She defines the ideal women of sense as being those who pass "their early time in improving themselves, and their latter days in improving others."

It is in the light of these beliefs that the heroines of Brooke's novels must be understood. These paragons act as ideal models. They are personifications of an affective ideal; and they represent Brooke's main artistic device, that of making the doctrine of domesticated sensibility emotionally appealing by giving it a human form. The heroines of countless novels of sensibility cannot be distinguished from Miss Singleton's Julia as she is described in The Old Maid Number 2:

> Her mind is the seat of every grace and every virtue: she is so innocent herself, that it is impossible to make her believe ill of others; so gentle that I can make her tremble by a look of anger; and so beneficent, that it is all she can do to make her money hold out from one quarter day to another, though she is, as to her own expenses, a remarkable good oeconomist. She sings and plays to great perfection . . . her taste for polite literature is admirable . . . she has fifteen thousand pounds in her own power.

I pause here only to note the element of middle-class prudence in the portrait. Julia is rich, but she is lavish only in charity.

The doctrine of superior feminine sensibility appears again in Brooke's discussion of marriage. On the whole, the

brutality and grossness of men causes unhappy marriages. Number 23 asserts: "The wife is only what the husband makes her." If a woman nags, it is because the husband lacks sensitivity. The number concludes with a poem celebrating the superior sweetness and delicacy of women:

> Of damask cheeks and radiant eyes
> Let other poets tell;
> Within the bosom of the fair
> Superior beauties dwell.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> It's power [celestial Sweetness] can charm the savage heart,
> The tyrant's pity move;
> To smiles convert the wildest rage,
> And melt the soul to love.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Beneath its bright, auspicious beams,
> No boistrous passions rise;
> Moroseness quits the smiling scene,
> And baleful discord flies.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Almighty Love exerts his pow'r,
> And spreads with secret art
> A soft sensation thro' the frame,
> A transport thro' the heart

The poem is an example of Brooke's poetry, but I quote at length because it expresses two stereotyped beliefs commonly held by the converts to the cult of sensibility; that of female emotional superiority, and that of the power of female sweetness to subdue male grossness.

Brooke is convinced that marriage should be based on a coming together of minds, and that girls should be allowed

to choose their mates, within certain limitations imposed by prudence and social necessity. One of Brooke's puppets, Sir Harry Hyacinth, writes in Number 29: "The person of the lady I am to marry, although ever so beautiful, will not satisfy me: I must see her mind: I must see it . . . in various attitudes . . . in danger . . . in sorrow. . . . I will not discover my passion till I have discovered all hers." However, this ideal is compromised by social pragmatism. In Number 7, Miss Singleton expresses the hope that Julia will "fix her choice on one who has not only such merit as may secure her affections to him, but such an estate too, as may continue her circumstances in a family connexion, at least as easy as they are at the present." The doctrine opposes the practice of auctioning marriageable girls to the highest bidder. On the other hand, a prudent respect for the existing order of society compromises this enlightened view. The boundaries of class and money curtail the dictates of the heart throughout Brooke's work.

Brooke's world-view contains an interesting combination. One element is a forward-looking morality, an urge to benevolent action in order to counteract existing evils. The other element is a pastoral ideal looking backward to a past more golden age. The heart of the ideal is an opulent patriarchal society set in a rural garden estate. The patriarch is a benevolent nobleman who has retired from fashionable life, and who mellows his city sophistication with rural simplicity. He creates a blooming Arcadia far from the artificial intrigues of the

city. This rural idyll, central to an understanding of Brooke's novels, is already clearly present in The Old Maid.

The rural Rosara has an appearance superior to that of her city-bred cousin Julia. The cheerful country life and the purity of the air have given Rosara a complexion "which rouge can never come up to" (No. 17). Rosara may be prettier than Julia, but she is not as careful. Her rural innocence must be tempered by a city-learned prudence. The following citation from Number 7 best shows to what extent Brooke limits the extremes of sensibility by a social wisdom:

> I am an enemy to what is called a town education, yet I think young women, whose circumstances will admit of now and then a visit to London, may be too much confined to the country: living there, in simplicity, and a degree of ignorance, unacquainted with life, and the dangers to which our sex is exposed, they fancy the world like the shades of Arcadia; and too often fall a sacrifice to the first military swain who happens to be quartered in the nearest market town: if they have fortunes, they are run away with in an honest way, and if not, the lord have mercy upon them.

This prudent combination of town and country, of sensibility and self-interest, distinguishes Brooke from the more extreme practitioners of sensibility such as Harry in Henry Brooke's The Fool of Quality or Harley in Henry Mackenzie's The Man of Feeling. These heroes of the affective life never consider self-interest. Brooke's characters usually do.

In Number 28, Brooke describes the ideal garden estate: "A large convenient old house, judiciously modernized, not spoiled; a delightful park well stocked with deer, and a

beautiful rivulet amply stored with fish, are circumstances, added to a rent-roll of two thousand pounds a year, that render Hartingley-Hall one of the most eligible spots in England." This rural setting, with its park, river, rent-roll and patriarch, was a convention of eighteenth-century literature. However, I will discuss it in greater detail with reference to Julia Mandeville, where the garden estate forms the entire background.

Chapter III

SENSIBILITY IN ENGLAND: THE HISTORY OF JULIA MANDEVILLE

Mrs. Brooke's first original novel, Julia Mandeville (1763), reveals important aspects of her manipulation of the convention of sensibility. Especially significant is the way in which she relates the convention to the English rural setting. It is useful to examine sensibility in its home territory, before studying it in its foreign environment in Canada.

1. The Plot.

I will first give a brief summary of the story, considering that not everyone interested in Emily Montague will want to read Julia Mandeville, although the book is readily available.[1]

The two lovers, Julia and Henry Mandeville, belong to distantly related branches of the old and landed Mandeville family. Julia is the daughter of the Earl of Belmont, benevolent patriarch and wealthy landholder. Henry's father, Colonel John Mandeville, has a tiny estate as well as his army appointment.

Upon the Earl's invitation, Henry comes to Belmont where the delicate sensibilities of Julia and Henry soon cause the two to fall in love. The only real threat to their happiness is Henry's lack of prospects, either of a title or of an income sufficiently large to allow him to "address" Julia. His love for Julia conflicts with his apparent duty toward the benevolent

[1] Volume XXVII of Mrs. Barbauld's British Novelists.

and trusting Lord Belmont. Henry is too virtuous to fool Belmont by running off with Julia. Indeed, this solution is not even discussed. He has too much sensibility to ask Julia's father to allow the marriage. After Julia and Henry have mutually confessed their great and spiritual love, Julia asks Henry to leave, it being her duty as an obedient daughter to do so. Henry goes to seek his fortune, but only gets as far as the corrupt Lord T____, whom he asks for help. Lord T____ calls him "romantic," and Henry, after denouncing T____'s wordliness, returns to Belmont where he hides in a cottage within sight of Julia's home.

At this point the reader discovers that Lord Belmont and John Mandeville have long ago made plans for the marriage of Henry and Julia in order to keep Belmont's land in the Mandeville family. Henry is the heir to the earldom, there being somewhere a legal clause limiting succession to a male Mandeville. The parents had kept their plan a secret from both children so that Henry would not be spoiled by his great expectations. They had hoped that after an education in all "the Graces" the two would fall in love of their own free will.

Meanwhile, in his cottage retreat Henry has grown desperate enough to confess his love for Julia and, in a letter to Lord Belmont, throws himself upon the Earl's benevolence. Lord Belmont, seeing his wish of many years fulfilled, immediately makes plans for the marriage. He sends Henry a letter, ordering

him to Belmont immediately.

At this point a sub-plot influences the main action. Two other sets of lovers are to be married along with Julia and Henry in the Temple of Love built by Lord Belmont on his rural estate. Lady Anne Wilmot, coquette, twenty-year-old widow, a friend to all lovers with true sensibility, has resigned her wealth and estate to her niece, Bell Hastings. This allows Anne to marry her lover Bellville. Bell Hastings is now wealthy enough to marry her soul-mate, Lord Melvin.

The letter to Henry is delayed; Henry sees Lord Melvin going to Belmont dressed for a wedding; his sensibility cannot tolerate the thought of losing Julia. He intercepts Melvin and distractedly challenges him to a duel. Melvin draws his sword but refuses to attack, so Henry desperately runs onto Melvin's sword. Melvin brings the wounded Henry to Belmont, where he dies in Julia's arms after discovering his error. Julia's sensibility is too great to bear the shock; she dies a few days after Henry. Everyone comes to Belmont in order to canonize with their sorrow these two saints of sensibility. The story ends with everyone indulging in the "pleasure of grief," although it is announced that in six months the other two couples will be married.

2. The Apotheosis of Sensibility.

Like Emily Montague and Juliette Catesby, The History of Julia Mandeville is written in the epistolary form. Two groups of letters make up the bulk of the novel. Henry Mandeville

writes almost half of all the letters, his main confidant being his friend George Mordaunt. Mrs. Brooke does not report Mordaunt's replies, a device which helps to maintain the pace of the novel. The other prolific letter-writer is Anne Wilmot. Most of her letters go to her lover Colonel Bellville, whom she cannot marry because of a jealous will left by her brutish husband. Bellville writes only one letter, his proposal of marriage to Lady Anne; otherwise he plays no part in the story. Anne Wilmot's letters provide a humorous but sympathetic point of view upon the progressing love affair between Henry and Julia. The tone and energy of her letters supply a welcome relief from Henry's more narcissistic sentiments.

Yet there is no doubt that the concept of sensibility has more power and plays a greater role than do any of the characters. They write letters, they dance, picnic, play cards, and love; but their motions are subject throughout to the doctrine of sensibility. The characters exist as votaries of the cult, as converts to it, or as sacrificial victims. They have no independent life; they exist to demonstrate a thesis, to raise to religious significance that complex of ideas I have been calling domesticated sensibility.

The characters can easily be divided into two groups: those who have emotional respectability, and those who do not. A hierarchy exists among those whose affective life is adequate. At the top of this pecking order are Henry and Julia, who are

the ideal of the benevolent society which gathers at Belmont. The other characters serve as hand-maidens to the two paragons or as foils.

Here is Henry Mandeville describing his education and his character:

> Other parents hoard up riches for their children; mine with a more noble, more enlightened solicitude, expended his in storing my mind with generous sentiments and useful knowledge, to which his unbounded goodness added every outward accomplishment that could give grace to virtue, and set her charms in the fairest light.[2]

Henry is careful to distinguish his friendship for Julia from passion:

> What I feel for this most charming of women is the tenderness of a relation, mixed with that soft and lively esteem which it is impossible to refuse to the finest understanding and noblest mind in the world, lodged in a form most celestial. Love, for I have tasted its poisoned cup, is all tumult disorder, madness; but my friendship for Lady Julia, warm and animated as it is, is calm, tranquil, gentle; productive of a thousand innocent pleasures, but a stranger to every kind of inquietude: it does not even disturb my rest, a certain consequence of love, even in its earliest approaches (I, 7).

Today the unsympathetic reader would conclude that either Henry is a hypocrite or that he is sexless. However, I have established sufficient background to explain why Mrs. Brooke presented love in these colours. She was not necessarily a prude nor unaware of the physical aspects of a love relationship. Henry is an ideal, an example. He is a teaching device, a creature that Brooke used to glorify sensibility. It must be kept in mind

[2] Frances Brooke, The History of Julia Mandeville (London: R. and J. Dodsley, 1763), Volume I, pp. 2-3. (Subsequent references will be to this text).

that she believed a perfect character could have no immoral influence, whereas an evil or passionate character, even when poetically punished, might very easily corrupt the reader.

Wherever Henry goes he dispenses benevolence and cash. Brooke emphasizes that his tenderness manifests itself not only to Julia but to every deserving human being. In Belmont's absence Henry secretly gives money to one of the tenants who is in temporary distress. At Lord T___'s, he meets the sensitive but poor Mr. Herbert. Lord T___ snubs Herbert, but Henry goes home with him, hears his story, and later sends him a hundred pounds, again secretly. Herbert needs the money to enable him to collect a rich inheritance.

Henry deals ineffectively with the world away from Belmont. He makes one fumbling attempt to advance his own fortune by asking for Lord T___'s patronage. When T___ rejects him, Henry returns immediately to Belmont and hides himself in a cottage within eyeshot of Julia's home. He spends his day listening to gossip about Julia and carving her initials into trees. It is clear, however, that Mrs. Brooke intends Henry's ineptness as a positive quality; it demonstrates his superior sensibility as well as the unbearable corruption of the outside world.

Nor does the catastrophic ending indicate a weakness in Henry's character, even though his rash misunderstanding causes the tragedy. The reader is expected to see Henry's rashness as

evidence of the greatness of his love. When Anne Wilmot writes to Henry shortly before the catastrophe and tells him that Julia has danced once with Lord Melvin, Henry replies: "Can you indeed know what it is to love, yet play with the anxieties of a tender heart? . . . You have set me on the rack" (II, 239-240). His "torment" leads to a moment of distraction in which he attacks Lord Melvin. The text emphasizes that the real cause of the tragedy is the undelivered letter. Herbert was to forward Henry's mail from Lord T____'s, but he had gone off to collect his inheritance. Henry's anonymous gift had given Herbert the opportunity to go. Consequently, Henry's sensibility receives its apotheosis when Anne Wilmot writes: "He dies for having alleviated the distresses of his friend, for having sympathized in the affliction of others" (II, 152). Henry is a martyr to his own great benevolence and sensibility.

The catastrophe is not primarily, as Mrs. Barbauld claims, "a forcible appeal to the feelings against the savage practice of duelling."[3] Mrs. Brooke's aesthetics had doctrinaire purposes, but they were slightly more sophisticated than what Mrs. Barbauld suggests. Here Mrs. Brooke is borrowing from the stage conventions of domestic tragedy. Ernest Bernbaum has described the essential characteristics of this genre:

[3] Mrs. Anna Barbauld, "Mrs. Brooke," an introduction to Lady Julia Mandeville, British Novelists (London: T. Davison, 1810), Volume XXVII, p. i.

> The drama of sensibility, which includes sentimental comedy and domestic tragedy . . . implied that human nature . . . was perfectible by an appeal to the emotions. It refused to assume that virtuous persons must be sought in a romantic realm apart from the everyday world. It wished to show that beings who were good at heart were found in the ordinary walks of life. It so represented their conduct as to arouse admiration for their virtues and pity for their sufferings. . . . In domestic tragedy, it showed them overwhelmed by catastrophes for which they were morally not responsible.[4]

Although the characters in Julia Mandeville were not exactly from the "ordinary walks of life," the last part of the quotation does apply to this novel. Henry is morally not responsible for his tragic end. Mrs. Brooke executes him in order to heighten the reader's respect for sensibility.

Julia Mandeville contributes only two letters to the entire novel, although she is ostensibly the main character. Mrs. Brooke characterizes her mainly through the reactions of Henry Mandeville and Anne Wilmot. This device tends to sanctify Julia and the ideal she represents. She is everyone's cynosure; a presence, as it were, of the divine spirit of sensibility. She is a passive and obedient paragon, an allegorical figure given domestic form.

Julia is the object that inspires Henry to the heights of human virtue and of affective experience; in his own words, "the love of such a woman, is the love of virtue itself: it refines, it ennobles every sentiment of the heart" (I, 192).

[4] Ernest Bernbaum, The Drama of Sensibility (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1925), p. 10.

Julia's sensibility, like Henry's, shrinks away from crude reality. In one of her few letters, she describes the refinement of her taste and the greatness of her love for Henry:

> Born with a too tender heart, which never before found an object worthy its attachment, the excess of my affection is unspeakable. Delicate in my choice even of friends, it was not easy to find a lover equal to that idea of perfection my imagination had formed (I, 201).

After Henry dies, no one doubts that Julia will die as well. Anne Wilmot sums up Julia's condition:

> Her youth, her sweetness of temper, her unaffected piety, her filial tenderness, sometimes flatter me with the hope of her recovery; but when I think on that melting sensibility, on that exquisitely tender heart, which bleeds for the sorrow of every human being, I give way to all the horrors of despair (II, 158-159).

Before her death, Julia describes herself as being "patient as the trembling victim beneath the sacrificer's knife" (II, 160). Language such as this emphasizes her role as sacrificial victim. Her death glorifies the god of sensibility. Lest her desire for death be misconstrued as loss of sensibility, Julia rouses herself from her death-bed to make a statement of faith: "Yet think not I have resigned all sensibility . . . I have seen him in my dreams; his spotless soul yet waits for mine: yes, the same grave shall receive us; we shall be joined to part no more" (II, 160). Mrs. Brooke has presented the lovers in such exalted colours that it was artistically necessary to kill them in order to have the ideal survive.

Their sensibilities were so refined that they would have died from shock in the marriage bed.[5]

The novel, then, is written to a thesis. The lovers must die in order to create in the reader the proper feelings of sympathy and respect for sensibility. All other characters in the book are subject to the laws of sensibility as well. If they have affective rectitude, they are rewarded with cash and a happy marriage, or, as in the case of Henry and Julia, with canonization. On the other hand, if they do not have the requisite emotional respectability, they are gently punished.

The Westbrook family had sinned against sensibility. They were struggling to achieve membership in the inner circle of sentimental aristocracy, but they are coldly rejected by the Mandevilles. Westbrook has made his money in the city and has "the merciless rapacity of an exchange-broker" (I, 63). When he tries to buy Henry for his daughter, the Mandevilles laugh at the idea. Mrs. Brooke punishes these "upstarts" by marrying Miss Westbrook to the "macaroni" Lord Fondville. He is the stock figure of aristocratic pride and ostentation, an effeminate fop. His artificial adornment contrasts unfavourably with Henry's natural simplicity. Fondville attempts in vain to marry Lady Julia and finally settles for Miss Westbrook's

[5] It will be remembered that Harley in Mackenzie's The Man of Feeling (1771) dies from joy when Miss Walton confesses her love.

millions. Fondville and the Westbrook's are banished to the outer wilderness of marriage without love.

Brooke's firm artistic purpose, that of apotheosizing sensibility, controls every event and every character in the novel. Seen in this way, the catastrophe is not tragic; it results in the affirmation of virtue and sentiment. For neither Henry nor Julia are individualized by their death. The catastrophe emphasizes that they are representative figures, endowed with the perfected characteristics of a group norm. Their death unifies the community of the emotional elite, the members of Lord Belmont's rural garden society. The mourning ritual of this group demonstrates to the neighbours and to the readers the superiority of its common capacity to feel. John Mandeville arrives to spend three days beside his son's body. Mr. Herbert comes to worship at this Gethsemane of sensibility. Lord and Lady Belmont, together with everyone else who has the required emotional credentials, gather at Belmont to "indulge in all the voluptuousness of sorrow" (II, 202).

The catastrophic ending has one other artistic effect and a philosophical content which is important. Brooke gives the ending some of the characteristics of a medieval morality play in which the audience is awed by the rise and fall of great men upon the wheel of fortune. She uses emotional propaganda to indoctrinate her readers with the sanctity of emotional virtue. At the same time she shows how the philo-

sophical optimism which was involved with the belief in innate benevolence came to terms with catastrophe.

Anne Wilmot, the character with the most authority to speak, does a good deal of sermonizing toward the end of the book. She points to the beautiful corpse of Julia, saying:

> How persuasive is such a preacher. . . . Look here, ye proud, and be humble! Which of you all can vie with her? Youth, health, beauty, birth, riches, all that men call good were hers: all are now of no avail; virtue alone bids defiance to the grave (II, 170).

The responses of the characters with sensibility show the reader how to react. The two sets of lovers still alive are humbled and solemnly respectful before the example of virtuous love set by Henry and Julia. Lord and Lady Belmont contribute to this teaching atmosphere as well. They plan to escalate their benevolent actions, to indulge "the pleasure of relieving the miseries of others" while waiting with "tender melancholy" to "follow their matchless children to the grave" (II, 202).

The philosophical content of Brooke's treatment of the catastrophe is similar to Pope's doctrine of submission before God's inscrutable plan. The concluding words of the novel are: "Certain of the paternal care of our Creator, our part is submission to his will" (II, 203). Needless to say, there is no hint of irony, here nor in the rest of the novel.

3. Raillery: The Function of the Coquette.

I have shown that in a thesis-novel like Julia Mandeville the characters function as allegorical images, images which incorporate or personify certain philosophical and doctrinaire concepts. Julia and Henry have Amatory (but virtuous) Sensibility written large on their aristocratic foreheads. Lord and Lady Belmont represent Benevolent Aristocracy and Ideal Parents. Lady Anne Wilmot, too, has a place within this doctrinaire scheme. She embodies an important principle of social interaction which can loosely be called "raillery." This principle, which is also a rhetorical device, plays a major role in Mrs. Brooke's art, and all her works contain examples of what she considered its proper form. The concept is central to an understanding of the coquettes, the most interesting characters in both Julia Mandeville and Emily Montague.

Raillery is satire dressed up for the drawing-room in Latitudinarian tolerance and punctilio, satire with its teeth drawn so to speak. It was Lord Shaftesbury who first popularized polite raillery in An Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humour (1711). There he defended the use of well-bred wit to test the truth; in his own words, "Truth . . . may bear all lights; and one of those principal lights, or natural mediums, by which things are to viewed, in order to a thorough recognition,

is ridicule itself."[6] He went on to define the proper form of ridicule, first rejecting "scurrilous buffoonery . . . that gross sort of raillery which is so offensive in good company."[7] In a discussion which contained an implicit attack on the great Tory satirists, Shaftesbury called for "a freedom of raillery, a liberty in decent language to question everything, and an allowance of unravelling or refuting any argument, without offence to the arguer."[8] Although Shaftesbury's gentle tolerance was admirable, it is important to notice that benevolence and manners had subdued the satirical method.

Richard Steele discussed raillery in The Spectator No. 422 (4 July 1712), making a direct attack on the satirical method and going on to describe the etiquette of wit:

> A man who has no good quality but courage, is in a very ill way towards making an agreeable figure in the world, because that which he has superior to other people cannot be exerted without raising himself an enemy. Your gentleman of a satirical vein is in the like condition. To say a thing which perplexes the heart of him you speak to, or brings blushes into his face, is a degree of murder . . . an unpardonable offence. . . . To rally well, it is absolutely necessary that kindness must run through all you say, and you must ever preserve the character of a friend to support your pretensions to be free with a man.

This citation shows that raillery was well on its way to becoming a social doctrine, a rhetorical device of polite interaction.

[6] Shaftesbury, "An Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humour," Characteristics (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1964), p. 44.

[7] Ibid., p. 45.

[8] Ibid., p. 49.

The idea that truth should be tested by wit and that kindness should be an essential concomitant of raillery was central to Mrs. Brooke's artistic credo, although her practice gives raillery a further bourgeois and utilitarian twist. She was secure in her belief that the truth involved innate human benevolence and that an appeal to the feelings could make man more virtuous. As a result, she felt confident enough to subject her heroines and heros of sensibility to the test of benevolent raillery. This was the function of the coquette.

I have shown that Mrs. Brooke's practice in The Old Maid was to create characters of whom she disapproved and to allow them to expose the grossness of their behaviour or the falseness of their beliefs. Or she graciously repelled unmannerly verbal attacks, thus demonstrating with a certain amount of wit that her values of tolerance, rational piety, and domesticated sensibility were superior. Her manipulation of the coquettes in both Julia Mandeville and in Emily Montague has a similar purpose. The coquettes provide a bit of the "picturesque," a pleasing disorder needed to make the human scene imaginatively graceful. They are used as polite devil's advocates, showing by their raillery and by their ultimate conversion that the position of virtuous sensibility was not only impregnable but also enjoyable. As a result of Mrs. Brooke's careful manipulation of Anne Wilmot, the reader trusts her version of the events more than he trusts that of Henry Mandeville.

As a young widow made financially independent by her husband's death, Anne Wilmot has considerably more social freedom than has Julia Mandeville. Conventional morality allowed freedoms to widows which it denied to virgins. Mrs. Brooke took advantage of this loophole in decorum to create a character whom the reader could admire for her wit and bravery. Anne Wilmot's benevolent skepticism lulls the reader into a proper appreciation of Julia's perfection.

For instance, Anne laughs at Julia for being offended because Henry had kissed Julia's hand. Wilmot's report of the incident to Bellville is a good example of polite raillery:

> Lord, these prudes—no, don't let me injure her—these people of high sentiment, are so tremblingly alive all o'er—there is poor Harry in terrible disgrace with Lady Julia for only kissing her hand . . . she takes the affair quite seriously, and makes it an offence of the blackest die—Well, I thank my stars, I am not one of these sensitive plants; he might have kissed my hand twenty times without my being more alarmed than if a fly had settled there (I, 51-52).

The raillery leaves all the social values intact, and the reader is expected to be impressed both by Julia's sensitivity and by Anne's benignity—after all, she does bring the lovers together again.

In anticipation of a tête-à-tête with Julia, Anne describes her to Bellville as a "little innocent fool who has not even a secret" (I, 93). However, she quickly exposes her true feelings: "I really tremble for my fair friend; young, artless, full of sensibility . . ." Comments like this establish Anne's credentials with the reader. She is worldly-wise, but virtuous

and benevolent—a fit adviser for Julia and, above all, someone whom the reader is to admire and to believe.

The pattern of Wilmot's raillery shows a slow but certain conversion to the ideal values of the Belmont community. She tells Bellville that she is now going to church, that he may not believe it, but that Lady Belmont's example has influenced her: "[She] has the most unaccountable way in the world of making it one's choice to do whatever she has an inclination one should, without seeming to desire it. One sees so clearly that all she does is right" (I, 40). Anne Wilmot is able to say, "Yes, the rural taste prevails; my plan of life is fixed; to sit under a hill and keep sheep with Harry Mandeville" (I, 69). The irony is superficial. She soon speaks respectfully of "these sylvan scenes . . . so very bewitching . . . youth, beauty, love, and the seducing pleasures of the golden age" (I, 91-92).

Halfway through the book, Wilmot reveals that she herself is a martyr to sensibility. Her coquetry has only been a brave cover-up for a suffering and tender heart. She hints at her true character when she confesses to Bellville:

> I begin extremely to dislike myself. I have good qualities and a benevolent heart, but have exerted the former so irregularly, and taken so little pains to rule and direct the virtuous impulses of the latter, that they have hitherto answered very little purpose either to myself or others. I feel I am a comet, shining but useless, or perhaps destructive, whilst Lady Belmont is a shining star. (I, 131-132).

All the while, she has been in love with Bellville but has been

unable to marry him because of her husband's will. (She is willing to resign her wealth, but feels she has not the right to ruin Bellville's chances.) When Henry reprimands her lightheartedness, she tells him, "With all my coquetry, I am as much in love as yourself" (II, 12). From this point on, Anne Wilmot remains serious and chastened. She admits her love to Bellville, she resigns her estate to her niece Bell Hastings, she helps Henry and Julia as much as she can. Her interpretations of the catastrophe are the authoritative ones; she gives the concluding sermon and points to the moral.

By bringing Anne Wilmot into the story, first to deride sensibility and then to be converted to it, Mrs. Brooke accomplished two artistic purposes. She obviously knew that the greatest weakness of Richardson's Pamela had been its lack of humour and its lack of an alternative point of view. As Fielding had demonstrated with his Shamela and Joseph Andrews, Pamela's virtue could easily be satirized; Richardson's solemnity was open to derision. By creating the worldly-wise but benevolent coquette, Mrs. Brooke built into the structure of her novel a certain amount of gentle criticism as well as a more convincing point of view. She tested her paragons and the ideal they represented through Anne Wilmot's benign raillery, thereby achieving a bourgeois ideal of prose fiction—to write a virtuous novel that had some humour in it without resorting to "low" characters or to other "indelicacies." By showing

the coquette's conversion to the "truth," Mrs. Brooke made her appeal to virtue more persuasive. When Anne Wilmot is convinced of the authenticity of the emotions displayed, the reader is convinced as well.

Throughout this rather admirable manipulation of raillery, Mrs. Brooke never lost sight of her utilitarian purpose. Nor did she ever subject her doctrine to any serious criticism. She made only a gesture toward testing the truth; she remained throughout an artist subject to social and moral orthodoxy. Nevertheless, she deserves some credit for her use of the convention of raillery. It served to apotheosize sensibility, and it made the sentimental virtue of her characters slightly more palatable.

4. The Idyllic Country Life: Symbol for a Moral and Social Order.

In Lady Julia Mandeville Mrs. Brooke offers a picture of a social order in which her ideals of benevolence and sentimental love become possible. Lord Belmont is the character who has created this affective community, a rural utopia far from the corruptions of court and town, a society in which virtuous characters could exhibit their true feelings and could act with charity toward their fellows without fear of derision or of exploitation.

The rural ideal with its built-in country-versus-city theme was a convention of the eighteenth-century novel. Jeffrey

Duncan describes as typical "the attitude that city pleasures are perverse and bucolic joys natural."[6] However, Mrs. Brooke differs from Fielding, Smollett, and even Goldsmith in that she presented "the bucolic vision"[7] as a serious alternative to (and not as an ironic reflection upon) the corruption of English society. She did not have comic or satirical purposes. The ideals of sensibility could only survive in a particular social environment, a setting which Mrs. Brooke found by harking back to a past more golden age in which the benevolent and aristocratic patriarch played god to his tenant farmers and rustic villagers. This also explains why, in the last volume of Emily Montague, the lovers all recoil from Canada and return to the English garden to enjoy their marriages of sensibility.

All the characters in Julia Mandeville agree that if every nobleman in England would follow Lord Belmont's example, the problems of eighteenth-century English society would disappear. "I have always regarded the independent country gentleman as the strength and glory of this kingdom," says Lord Belmont and proceeds to loan his neighbour enough money to keep his estate from falling into the hands of Westbrook, the avaricious city mercantilist (I, 64). Belmont lives eight months of the year at his country seat, "enjoying the genuine charms of simplicity and nature" (I, 18). Henry Mandeville describes Belmont's

[6] Jeffrey Duncan, "The Rural Ideal in Eighteenth-Century Fiction," Studies in English Literature 1500-1900, 8 (1968), 517.

[7] Duncan's phrase, Ibid., p. 533.

activities:

> Lord Belmont enjoys the most unmixed and lively of all human pleasures, that of making others happy. His estate conveys the strongest idea of the patriarchal government; he seems a beneficent father surrounded by his children, over whom reverence, gratitude, and love, give him an absolute authority, which he never exerts but for their good: Every eye shines with transport at his sight; parents point him out to their children; the first accents of prattling infancy are taught to lisp his honoured name; and age, supported by his bounteous hand, pours out the fervent prayer to heaven for its benefactor (I, 16-17).

Although Belmont has rejected the "avarice and ambition" of town life, he does not slough off his civic responsibilities. Rather unwillingly, he spends four months of the year in London fulfilling his duties to the king by attendance at the House of Lords. Belmont is in harmony with the "Latitudinarian . . . insistence that retirement must not negate the Christian demand for charity through active participation in the rest of society."[8]

However, Mrs. Brooke emphasizes that noblemen can do the most good by remaining in the country and taking care of their tenants. Lord Belmont gives his formulation of "true policy":

> When I first came to Belmont, having been some years abroad, I found my tenants poor and dejected, scarce able to gain a hard penurious living. The neighbouring gentlemen spending two thirds of the year in London, and the town, which was the market for my estate, filled only with people in trade, who could scarce live by each other: I struck at the root of this evil, and, by living almost altogether in the country myself, brought the whole neighbourhood to do the same: I promoted every kind of diversion, which soon filled my town with gentlemen's families, which raised the markets, and of consequence the value of my estate: my tenants grew rich at the same rents that before they were unable to pay; population

[8] Duncan, "The Rural Ideal in Eighteenth-Century Fiction," Studies in English Literature 1500-1900, 8(1968), 519.

> increased, my villages were full of inhabitants, and all around me was gay and flourishing. So simple . . . are the maxims of true policy: but it must be so; that machine which has the fewest wheels is certainly most easy to keep in order (I, 83-84).

Lord T____'s management is in unfavourable contrast to that of Lord Belmont. T____'s enclosures have produced a "deserted village":

> With infinite pain I see Lord T____ pursuing a plan, which has drawn on him the curse of thousands, and made his estate a scene of desolation: his farms are in the hands of a few men, to whom the sons of the old tenants are either forced to be servants, or to leave the country to get their bread elsewhere. The village, large, and once populous, is reduced to about eight families; a dreary silence reigns over their deserted fields; the farm houses, once the seats of chearful [sic] smiling industry, now useless, are falling in ruins around him (I, 222-223).

Mrs. Brooke punishes Lord T____ for his lack of moral (and economic) sensibility; he is an unhappy and childless bachelor. On the other hand, Lord Belmont is truly contented, surrounded by his family and admiring tenants.

Three aspects of this social ideal are important. First, Mrs. Brooke offers the practice of Lord Belmont as a realistic example of how the ills of English society might be cured. The example passed for the kind of solid information that the didactic novelist often included along with the virtuous love story. I note in passing that Mrs. Brooke's solution depended on the nobility becoming benevolent and taking seriously their social and economic responsibilities as landlords. Unlike Oliver Goldsmith, who could say in The Vicar of Wakefield (1766)

that "It is far better that two men should live than that one man should ride,"[9] Mrs. Brooke was not a "leveller." Her economics depended on benevolence within the social status quo.

Secondly, Mrs. Brooke's country setting has an important literary significance. She manipulates the social structure of rural life to show that the conventional rural values of innocence, virtue, simplicity, and unostentatious wealth depended entirely upon the presence of a noble patriarch with a properly tuned sensibility. She exploits the literary convention of the rural ideal in order to show, once again, the value of sensibility. Mrs. Brooke chose the kind of environment which could best support the values she wished to propagate.

Thirdly, implicit in the social ideal presented in Julia Mandeville is the notion that individual self-interest was ultimately compatible with the interests of society. Pope's doctrine, that "God and Nature link'd the genr'l frame/ And bade Self-Love and Social be the same,"[10] is all-pervasive in this novel. While watching birds, Colonel Mandeville reads the textbook of nature and points out the moral to Henry:

> When I see the dumb creatures, my dear Harry, pursuing steadily the purpose of their being, their own private happiness, and the good of their peculiar species, I am astonished at the folly and degeneracy of man, who acts in general so directly contrary to both; for both are

[9] Goldsmith, The Vicar of Wakefield (London: Dent, 1908), 173.

[10] Alexander Pope, An Essay on Man, ed. Maynard Mack (London: Methuen, 1950), Epistle III, ll. 317-318.

> invariably united. The wise and benevolent Creator has placed the supreme felicity of every individual in those kind domestic social affections, which tend to the well-being of the whole. Whoever presumes to deviate from this plan, the plan of God and nature, shall find satiety, regret or disappointment (I, 151-152).

Throughout the book, Mrs. Brooke emphasizes that Lord Belmont has created a happy human society simply by following his genuine self-interest. The catastrophe has the same implicit message. Had Henry not attacked his fellow human being, he would have found personal felicity. Henry's real self-interest lay in social love. It is essential to note, then, that sensibility was a social doctrine. However, it needed a special kind of human society before it could flourish. The idyllic rural community which formed around Lord and Lady Belmont was this kind of social microcosm.

5. Nature in Julia Mandeville.

Above all, the ideals of sensibility demanded a setting which was domestic and social. However, a certain interpretation of the natural world accompanied the social doctrine of the natural union of hearts.

The belief was that nature reflected the same values that led to harmony in the human world. It is not surprising, then, that the image of nature repeated over and over again in Julia Mandeville is that of the garden. Cultivated nature in the form of the garden constitutes the decorative background for

the human social interactions essential to moral sensibility.

For instance, Lord Belmont asks why noblemen should imprison themselves in the "smoaking furnace" of London when "the whole land is a blooming garden, a wilderness of sweets" (I, 85). The natural surroundings of Belmont show the same pleasant harmony:

> The house, which is the work of Inigo Jones, is magnificent to the utmost degree; it stands on the summit of a slowly rising hill, facing the South; and, beyond a spacious court, has in front an avenue of the tallest trees, which lets in the prospect of a fruitful valley, bounded at a distance by a mountain, down the sides of which rushes a foaming cascade which spreads into a thousand meandering streams in the vale below" (I, 15-16).

The description is conventionally "picturesque"; the mountain and the waterfall are a safe distance from the landscaped grounds, illustrating the proper combination of order and "elegant" disorder so pleasing to the people of true sensibility.

The garden at Belmont recalls "the fabulous pleasures of the golden age . . . infinitely pleasing to every mind uncorrupted by the false glare of tinsel pomp, and awake to the genuine charms of simplicity and nature" (I, 18). There Lord Belmont entertains his villagers and his family among "arbors of branches of trees . . . seats of moss, and twined wreaths of flowers" (I, 18-19). When the emotional elect go picnicking in the woods, they eat in a "rustic building, embosomed in the grove, the architecture of which was in the most elegant stile of simplicity" (I, 47). The description of nature which follows has phrases like "a gale of perfume," "the gentlest breath of

Zephyr," and emphasizes that "no rude sound disturbed the sweet harmony of nature" (I, 47). I cite one paragraph in full as representative of the many other nature descriptions in the novel:

> After an elegant cold dinner and a dessert of cream and the best fruits in season, we walked into the wood with which the house was surrounded, the romantic variety of which it is impossible to describe; all was nature, but nature in her most pleasing form. We wandered over the sweetly varied scene, resting at intervals in arbours of intermingled roses and jessamines, till we reached a beautiful mossy grotto, wildly lovely, whose entrance was almost hid by the vines which flaunted over its top. Here we found tea and coffee prepared as by invisible hands (I, 48-49).

Servants and Lord Belmont's planning are never far away in the carefully planned "wilderness" which surrounds the garden of sensibility. The scene is again generalized and conventionally picturesque. However, these descriptions must be kept in mind when reading the landscape "paintings" in Emily Montague. When artistic sensibility went to Canada, its landscape conventions were slightly upset.

The important point to note is that primitive nature was not being worshipped. The paradox in phrases like "elegant stile of simplicity" or "genuine taste for elegant nature" adequately proves that the kind of nature in which sensibility felt comfortable was nature that had been worked on enough to eliminate all the dangers and crudities. All the snakes had obviously been driven out of the Belmont garden. When Brooke uses expressions like "unadorned nature" and "simplicity,"

she really means nature that has been shaped by the moral sense, or at least by a social sense. This meaning applies to both human and non-human nature. A great deal of rigorous cultivation was needed before either the "natural" man or the "natural" garden could come into being.

The gardening metaphor is explicit in John Mandeville's description of how he has educated his son:

> Convinced that the seeds of virtue are innate, I have only watched to cherish the rising shoots, and prune, but with a trembling hand, the too luxuriant branches (I, 147).

The citation points to the logical inconsistency in the doctrine of innate human goodness and, its twin belief, the faith in a natural harmony of the macrocosm. The "people of rational piety and moderation" escaped from pessimism by combining Pope's axiom, that "Whatever is, is Right,"[11] with an energetic belief in man's duty to order and to control nature for the common good. They knew that the world and man were basically benign, so they went to work to prove it.

[11] Pope, An Essay on Man, l. 294.

Chapter IV

SENSIBILITY IN CANADA: THE HISTORY OF EMILY MONTAGUE

The central assumption of this study has been that Mrs. Brooke's purposes in fiction as well as her political and religious beliefs controlled her use of the Canadian setting in Emily Montague. She came to Canada rather unwillingly and out of a sense of marital duty. There was no other reason why a member of Johnson's circle, a successful novelist with strong ambitions to be a dramatist, should leave London and go to Quebec, that "seat of barbarism and ignorance." It is not surprising, then, that she viewed Canada through the spectacles of an English artist.

However, Mrs. Brooke's Canadian experience influenced in a significant way her control over her literary conventions. The new wild country could not easily be assimilated by the muse of sensibility. Because of her new experience and strange environment, Mrs. Brooke achieved a greater verisimilitude in Emily Montague than she had in Julia Mandeville, even though she remained within the limits set by the epistolary convention and by her major artistic purpose, that of apotheosizing sensibility.

1. The Advance in Formal Realism.

The characters in Emily Montague are not as exalted as Henry and Julia Mandeville were. Mrs. Brooke has shifted them down one notch in the social scale, making them members of the

gentleman-officer class. Ed Rivers is a colonel, William Fermor and Fitzgerald are captains; they all have "connections," that is, a high enough social standing to influence the nobility in their interests. Thus, William Fermor knows that the Earl of ____ will help Fitzgerald to a purchase of a majority (rank of major).

Ed Rivers, Emily Montague, Fitzgerald, and Arabella Fermor all have proper emotional credentials; however, these characters are slightly more individualized than were Henry and Julia, and they also manage their lives more successfully. Their highly refined sensibilities enable them to recognize both their soul-mates and their social duties, but they have some practical characteristics as well. Where Julia wrote only one letter and remained an exalted and non-individualized spirit throughout, Emily writes thirty-seven letters and demonstrates some human qualities, especially in her spirited rejection of George Clayton and of Mrs. Melmoth's social blackmail (Letter 69).[1] As well, a psychologically credible weakness is her inability to love Madame Des Roches, even though Emily admits it is her social duty to do so. Where Henry Mandeville had made only one distracted effort to improve his limited fortune by appealing to T____'s patronage, Ed Rivers shows enough individual initiative to come to the new world and actively seek land. Arabella Fermor, too, has a more tough-minded approach to reality than had her counterpart in Julia Mandeville, Anne Wilmot.

[1] I will refer by Letter number to the McClelland and Stewart paperback edition (1961; reprinted 1969). All previous editions have mis-numbered letters. Emotive italics inside citations are always those of Mrs. Brooke.

In Emily Montague, Mrs. Brooke carefully manipulates the epistolary convention to give a sense of probability. The exiles in Canada write the majority of the letters, and these give the impression that ships crossed the Atlantic every week. However, closer examination shows that Mrs. Brooke adhered to the possible in her trans-Atlantic mail. In all, ten letters arrive in Quebec from England. Of these, six are from John Temple, three from Lucy Rivers, and one from Emily Montague announcing to Bell her safe arrival at Dover. Most of these letters arrive in Quebec with the first ship after the spring break-up. The exiles read the letters from England one to two months after they were written. For instance, Ed learns on March 21 of Temple's marriage to Lucy, though the marriage took place on January 3 and the letter was posted the same day. It is hinted that winter mail arrived in Quebec via New York, a port which was ice-free. Similarly, Temple's letter describing Mrs. Rivers' illness is dated April 3; Ed reads it on May 28, receiving it when the first ship arrives in Quebec after the winter. These few examples show that Mrs. Brooke went to considerable effort to remain within the bounds of the realistically possible.

The most important advance in the formal realism of Emily Montague is the illusion of actuality produced by the setting. In Julia Mandeville, Mrs. Brooke had named neither town nor county, being content with the conventional and idyllic English locale. Belmont could have been anywhere in rural England. However, in Emily Montague, Mrs. Brooke

names the colony and describes real cities in which the characters live. The action is more firmly attached to an identifiable place, a colony well known to British readers from travel accounts and from reports in The Gentleman's Magazine.

In Emily Montague, Mrs. Brooke bridged the gap between romantic action and everyday life more successfully than any other writers of popular sentimental fiction of her time. She reduced her characters in rank, she arranged carefully the time-scheme of her letters, and she gave a local habitation to the action of her novel. The influence of Mrs. Brooke's Canadian experience is first apparent, then, in this slight shift to a greater formal realism, especially in the use of the setting. In The Excursion (1777) and Rosina (1783), which were written after her return to England, Mrs. Brooke went back to using the conventional and general English locale.

2. The Hero of Sensibility: Ed Rivers

A close reading of Emily Montague indicates that Mrs. Brooke conceived of Ed Rivers as the main character. Within the conventions of popular fiction, he represents the Sir Charles Grandison type, a truly virtuous man who under all conditions shows an ideal sensibility which manifests itself in tender love, filial duty, and in general benevolence. Ed Rivers is

Mrs. Brooke's serious attempt to create a bourgeois hero, a hero with none of Henry Mandeville's melodramatic rashness. It is more than speculation to observe that Mrs. Brooke was aware that Henry's distraction, although suitable to her purpose in Julia Mandeville and consistent within the conventions of domestic tragedy, could easily be miscontrued by the reader. Henry's attack on Lord Melvin was dangerously close to making anti-social behaviour appealing. It was the kind of thing that a consumer-oriented and doctrinaire artist worried about. Mrs. Brooke's conception of Ed Rivers avoids any hint of such social imprudence. Ed is the ideal male as conceived by the clergyman's wife; he is a character suitable to the genre which the Germans describe as the "Landpfarrhausroman," literally translated, the country-rectory novel.

Seen in this way, Ed's actions throughout Emily Montague are totally consistent. His every motion exemplifies true sensibility: a refined awareness of duty, tenderness, and polite taste.

His recognition of filial duty has caused his emigration. Although light-hearted, he makes sure that the reader knows he has made a genuine sacrifice. He has left England in order to allow his mother and sister the benefits of "the little estate" (Letter 1), and his purpose is to create a Belmont garden and patriarchal community in Canada:

> My subjects indeed at present will be only bears and elks, but in time I hope to see the human face divine multiplying around me; and, in thus cultivating what is in the rudest state of nature, I shall taste one of the greatest of all pleasures, that of creation, and see order and beauty gradually arise from chaos (Letter 1).

The sub-plot involving John Temple and Lucy Rivers demonstrates the benign influence of Rivers' example. John Temple is a good-hearted rake, a male coquette; in a series of letters Ed converts him to the stability and happiness of a marriage of sensibility. In Letter 210, Temple writes:

> I am now perfectly safe; my vanity has taken another turn: I pique myself on keeping the heart of the loveliest woman that ever existed, as a nobler conquest than attracting the notice of a hundred coquets. . . . Everything conspires to keep me in the road of domestic happiness: the manner of life I am engaged in, your friendship, your example, and society; and the very fear I am of losing your esteem.

Virtue and interest are shown again to be compatible, and the citation emphasizes the importance of Ed Rivers' example in bringing about the conversion. Allegorically, the character of Ed Rivers embodies the spirit of domesticated sensibility given male form, and all characters in the novel pay him homage.

Of course, the most important example of perfected bourgeois sensibility offered to the reader is the main plot, the love story involving Ed and Emily. The love affair exists solely to exhibit different aspects of Ed's sensibility in order

to bring out its true splendour.

Ed's qualities quickly defeat his rival, George Clayton. Clayton is intended to be the villain of the novel, and he has all the qualities detested by the people of sensibility. In Ed Rivers' words:

> It is impossible she can love him; his dull soul is ill-suited to hers; heavy, unmeaning, formal; a slave to rules, to ceremony, to etiquette, he has not an idea above those of a gentleman usher. . . . His virtue is the meer absence of vice; his good qualities are all of the negative kind (Letter 18)

Emily agrees, and her letter to Mrs. Melmoth leaves no doubt that it is Ed's example which has rescued her from the monster of insensitivity:

> I think him [Rivers] the best, the most amiable of mankind; and my extreme affection for him, though I believe that affection only a very lively friendship, first awakened me to a sense of the indelicacy and impropriety of marrying Sir George (Letter 69).

Rivers has totally eclipsed his rival, and Clayton plays no further part in the story.

The love affair also exhibits Ed's nice sense of filial duty. When John Temple writes that Mrs. Rivers is dying because of Ed's absence (sensibility, as it were, has departed from England), both Ed and Emily separately decide to return immediately. Here is Emily's decision as she writes it to Lucy:

> You do me but justice to believe me incapable of suffering your brother to sacrifice the peace, much less the life, of an amiable mother, to my happiness: I have no doubt of his returning to England the moment he receives your letters; but knowing his tenderness, I will not expose

> him to a struggle on this occasion: I will myself, unknown to him . . . embark in a ship . . . and will leave Quebec in ten days (Letter 144).

Ed has similar sentiments. He thinks Emily is still at Quebec when he writes from Montreal:

> I must return immediately to England. Did not my own heart dictate this step, I know too well the goodness of yours, to expect the continuance of your esteem, were I capable of purchasing happiness, even the happiness of calling you mine, at the expence of my mother's life, or even of her quiet (Letter 148).

Mrs. Brooke emphasizes the fact that both lovers believe they will not be able to marry in England. Both think they are sacrificing love to the demands of filial duty. The sacrifice is meant to illustrate the morality of their feelings as well as the superiority of their relationship. Emily goes so far as to say that their union is already fairly perfect, even without marriage:

> If we are never united, if we always live as at present, his tenderness will still make the delight of my life; to see him, to hear that voice, to be his friend, the confidante of all his purposes, of all his designs, to hear the sentiments of that generous, that exalted soul— I would not give up this delight, to be empress of the world (Letter 166).

Ed's sensibility receives similar praise on almost every page of the book.

It is significant that one of the threats to the happiness of the lovers is, paradoxically, their own sensibility. Ed does not want to marry Emily until he is able to give her the same material standard as George Clayton offered. Emily

fears Rivers will be ruined if he marries her. At the same time each repeats ad nauseam that he does not care about money himself. The reader is expected to be impressed by the greatness of their love and affective life when they finally do marry in spite of material considerations.

Even though Mrs. Rivers has just received four hundred a year from a distant relative (allowing Ed to keep his half-pay as well as the estate), he still preaches that love should ignore money. For instance, in Letter 183 he tells Fitzgerald that a rich relative is about to return from the East Indies. The relative wants Rivers to marry his daughter and a dowry of twenty thousand pounds. Ed nobly rejects the idea and hurries his marriage to Emily, lest she hear of the offer and refuse to spoil his main chance.

Although Mrs. Brooke shows true sensibility to be above material interest, a bourgeois compromise is always present. After Ed and Emily are married, they receive their prize. Ed's relative, Colonel Willmot turns out to be Emily's father; Emily it appears, has always been intended for Ed, and the lovers end up rich after all. In Mrs. Brooke's novels, virtue and interest (as well as love and filial duty) are always ultimately compatible, although in a concrete and simplistic way never conceived of by Shaftesbury. All characters with true sensibility receive a large cash prize, but the award comes only

after they have followed their virtuous feelings. Bell Fermor calls the appearance of Colonel Willmot and the large dowry a "triumph of tenderness" and adds quite seriously, "You see love, like virtue, is not only its own reward, but sometimes entitles us to other rewards too (Letter 227).

I have referred to enough sentimental and moral passages to show that the main purpose of Emily Montague is to make appealing the doctrine of virtuous sensibility as it is personified by Ed Rivers and by the various secondary characters. Mrs. Brooke was enough of a conscious artist to subordinate everything in the book to this main purpose. Any aspect of the novel should first be considered according to the way in which it reinforces this doctrine and its related qualities of benevolence, rational piety, and social prudence.

3. The Coquette as Historian: Arabella Fermor.

Ed Rivers is the main character, but Bell Fermor is the chief historian. In Letter 11, Rivers formally appoints Bell to the position: "I shall quit my post of historian to your friend Miss Fermor; the ladies love writing much better than we do; and I should perhaps only be just, if I said they write better." Bell writes seventy-eight letters in all, two more than Ed Rivers, and there is no doubt that her commentary is authoritative, and that she embodies the rhetorical device of raillery.

Like Anne Wilmot in Julia Mandeville, Bell Fermor provides an alternative and convincing point of view upon the action and the main characters. Her letters are the most significant distancing device in the novel, and they allow Mrs. Brooke to praise the hero and heroine without having them do it themselves. As I have shown in the previous chapter, it is in this way that Mrs. Brooke solved one of the chief technical problems of the epistolary convention. Bell Fermor's raillery provides welcome relief from the sermons of the more solemn and dedicated hero and heroine; yet the technique seduces the reader into accepting the values they represent. Bell is even less of a devil's advocate than Anne Wilmot was, and in every way her commentary reinforces and sanctions the doctrine of sensibility.

An example of how Bell functions as an objective observer occurs in Letter 50:

> I have loved him [Ed Rivers] ever since a little scene that passed here. . . . A very affecting story, of a distressed family in our neighbourhood, was told him . . . your brother changed colour, his eyes glistened; he took the first opportunity to leave the room, he sought these poor people, he found, he relieved them; which we discovered by accident a month after.

The etiquette of sensibility demanded that Ed remain silent about his charity. Bell is able to report it to the reader, and true sensibility is glorified once again. Similarly, Bell describes Ed's use of his political influence in England to prevent an English settler from receiving in grant some

land which belonged to his friend Madame Des Roches (Letter 155). Again Bell's approval of Ed's "delicate attention" is unqualified.

One example is sufficient to show how Bell's raillery reinforces and makes convincing Emily's exalted love for Rivers. Emily writes:

> I love him—no words can speak how much I love him. My passion for him is the first and shall be the last of my life. . . . I have no pleasure but in Rivers' conversation nor do I count the hours of his absence in my existence (Letter 106).

Bell's reply provides the necessary comic intensification:

> Yes, my dear, I love, at least I think so; but thanks to my stars, not in the manner you do. I prefer Fitzgerald to all the rest of his sex; but I count the hours of his absence in my existence; and contrive sometimes to pass them pleasantly enough. . . . I find love is quite a different plant in different soils; it is an exotic, and grows faintly, with us coquets [sic]; but [is] in its native climate with you people of sensibility and sentiment (Letter 107).

In spite of the raillery, or perhaps because of it, the passage heightens the respect of the reader for Emily's superior ability to love.

Bell's coquetry is a pretense. She is as tender-hearted as Emily, and she announces her conversion in Letter 58: "I believe I begin to love this fellow, because I begin to be delicate on the subject of flirtations, and feel my spirit of coquetry decline every day." By the end of the novel, she sounds almost as solemn as Rivers:

> Do you know, Rivers, I have a fancy you and Fitzgerald will always be happy husbands? This is something owing to yourselves, and something to us; you have both that

> manly tenderness, and true generosity, which inclines you to love creatures who have paid you the compliment of making their happiness or misery depend entirely on you, and partly to the little circumstance of your being married to two of the most agreeable women breathing (Letter 202).

The concluding tinge of irony is superficial. Bell remains well within the limits of moral sensibility; she represents the belief that a woman could be virtuous without being a prude; that she could exhibit energy, imaginative grace, and some of the unrestrained "romantic" qualities without becoming immoral like Rousseau's Héloïse.

Bell's character illustrates what part Mrs. Brooke gave to the passions in her system of morality. The passions were neither good nor bad in themselves; it was their direction that mattered. "Vice," writes William Fermor, "may justly be called the fever of the soul, inaction its lethargy; passion, under the guidance of virtue, its health" (Letter 133). Immediately after he adds, "I have the pleasure to see my daughter's coquetry giving place to a tender affection for a very worthy man." In another place he states, "I am extremely happy at this event [the marriage], as Bell's volatile temper made me sometimes afraid of her choosing inconsiderately" (Letter 159). The point is clear. Bell represents an active principle, passion moving somewhat erratically in the direction of virtue. The believers in the cult of sensibility considered active virtue (propelled by the feelings) to be far superior to that virtue which, in George Clayton's case was the "mere absence of vice."

For reasons such as this, Mrs. Brooke associated her rather passive heroines with the active but virtuous coquettes. In eighteenth-century landscape descriptions, the presence of a waterfall was almost inevitable. It added the disorder needed to make the scene picturesque. In the same way, the good-hearted coquette provided the "pleasing irregularity" and mild lack of restraint needed to make imaginatively pleasing the picture of overall moral harmony in the human world. When faced with the loss of Rivers, Emily is likely "to sit like patience on a monument and pine herself into a consumption," writes Bell in Letter 114. The raillery is not meant to destroy respect for Emily's delicacy. It is there to strike a balance between the active and passive virtues.

Supposedly unrestrained, Bell's commentary creates an impression of intellectual freedom, an impression which has led several scholars[2] to see Bell Fermor as a built-in critic of the social ideal presented in the last part of Emily Montague. But throughout the novel it is Bell who is the leader in establishing the kind of social group needed to support the refined moral taste and amatory sensibility of all "true lovers." She forms the coterie of lovers on the farm at Silleri, and the virtuous social pleasures of this happy quartet of sensitive souls make the Quebec winter pass quickly. She complains when

[2] For instance, William H. New, "Frances Brooke's Chequered Gardens," Canadian Literature, 52 (1972), 24-38.

Mrs. Rivers recalls Ed and Emily to England:

> I wish Mrs. Rivers had borne his absence better; her impatience to see him has broken in on all our schemes; Emily and I had in fancy formed a little Eden on Lake Champlain: Fitzgerald had promised me to apply for lands near them; we should have been so happy in our new little world of friendship (Letter 146).

Superficially considered, the citation seems to be an early expression of the American dream. However, salvation is not associated with place but with the coming together of an emotionally and morally qualified social group. The vision is one of a tea-party in a pleasingly romantic setting. When Ed and Emily leave for England, Bell prevents Fitzgerald from taking up land in Canada. She writes:

> I cannot think with patience of continuing in America, when my two amiable friends have left it; I had no motive for wishing to settle here, but to form a little society of friends, of which they made the principal part (Letter 151).

When she sees Ed's garden estate in England, her praise carries no overtones of irony. She expresses a vague nostalgia for Silleri, but then goes on to deliver a sermon on male greed:

> What could induce you, with this little retreat, to cross that vile ocean to Canada? I am astonished at the madness of mankind, who can expose themselves to pain, misery, and danger; and range the world from motives of avarice and ambition, when the rural cot, the fanning gale, the clear stream, and the flowery bank, offer such delicious enjoyments at home (Letter 202).

The quotation shows a return to conventional landscape vocabulary, but, more importantly, it emphasizes that Ed's desire to colonize the wilderness had been dangerously close to unrestrained ambition. Presumably, Ed's ambition will take a socially approved form in the more cultivated English setting. In England,

then, Bell is most emphatically speaking the language of domesticated sensibility; she is confident that the English garden is the only place that will support the values sacred to the group.

She reaffirms most of these values in her last letter. She sums up the main theme of the book when she writes:

> The very idea that love will come after marriage, is shocking to minds which have the least spark of delicacy: to such minds, a marriage which begins with indifference will certainly end in disgust and aversion (Letter 227).

She has news from Canada; Madame Des Roches has refused the colony's most eligible man because of her love for Ed and has resolved to die celibate. The information serves to apotheosize Ed Rivers once again.

She warns Ed and Emily that after marriage there is "a great danger of sinking into vegetation," but she is not thereby questioning the possibility of being happy in the English garden estate. She is once again showing her sensibility; she is pointing out to the reader that people of true moral taste know all the dangers and will be able to guard against them. The reader is expected to agree with Ed when he replies:

> Have no fear of falling into vegetation; not one amongst us has the least vegetative quality. . . . None of our party are of the sleepy order of beings, who want perpetual events to make them feel their existence: that is the defect of the cold and inanimate, who have not spirit and vivacity enough to taste the natural pleasures of life. . . . I dare say, our whole lives will be Pindaric (Letter 228).

The adjective "Pindaric," now obsolete, refers to the irregularity

and lack of restraint supposedly characteristic of Pindar's odes. Here it denotes the trait of passionate virtue (morality based on the feelings) which the cult of sensibility regularly opposed to Puritan and Augustan virtue.[3] The latter kind was considered to be "cold and inanimate."

Rivers gives a concluding panegyric upon "love," "tenderness," "delicacy," "the domestic attachments," and upon "the affections as the true sources of enjoyment." He interrupts himself and cites Voltaire's "Mais il faut cultiver notre jardin," which he assumes will be Bell's response to his moralizing. Professor New interprets this interruption as "a sudden intrusion of reality which works reflexively to illuminate the rest of the book." He goes on to observe: "The direct quotation from Candide throws perspective from the resolvable upsets of the mannered romance to the continuing tensions of irony."[4] New's argument is that Bell brings "a strong sense of change and empirical truth"[5] into the novel. This interpretation is appealing to the modern reader, but I believe I have documented enough of Mrs. Brooke's artistic practice, especially with

[3] Mrs. Brooke develops the theme of the "Pindaric" virtues in greater detail in her later novel The Excursion (1777). She uses "Pindaric" there to describe the heroine Maria Villiers, who goes to London filled with passionate but virtuous ambition to become a writer. There she is almost seduced by the villain, a "Chesterfield Man." Having learned a proper and prudent direction for her feelings, Maria returns to her father's rural estate and marries the "boy next door."

[4] William New, "Frances Brooke's Chequered Gardens," Canadian Literature, 52 (Spring, 1972), p. 34.

[5] Ibid., p. 38.

regard to the convention of raillery, to show how untenable such a reading is when the novel is seen in its literary context.

The moral novelists intended their corrective propaganda to inculcate practical virtue, not metaphysical truth. All of Mrs. Brooke's work was a refutation of the ironies of Candide; to her, human nature was innately benevolent, the world did manifest the work of its "Divine Almighty Architect," and human society could be morally harmonious. It was necessary only to cultivate the garden of moral taste, to develop the true sensibility which lay, as it were, ungerminated in every human soul. These were Mrs. Brooke's fundamental beliefs, and her novels do nothing but reinforce them over and over again. The final exchange between Ed and Bell portrays again the pleasant cooperation of the coquette's active virtue with the hero's greater idealism. Ed gets the last word of the novel: "On Thursday I hope to see our dear groupe [sic] of friends re-united, and to have nothing to wish, but a continuance of our present happiness." The coterie will be re-united and they will continue to live their idealized lives as models and as exemplars of the best life in the best of all possible worlds.

Throughout the novel Bell Fermor acts as a hand-maiden to the cult of sensibility. Structurally, she functions to bring together the lovers and to strengthen the appeal of sensibility by being converted to it herself. Her passionate

virtue provides the necessary balance to Emily's greater stability and passivity. Significantly, too, Bell is the only one of the lovers who is temporarily "at home" in Canada; she lives with her benign parent William Fermor, and the other lovers depend on her for energetic guidance through the dangerous "picturesque" of Canada.

4. Sensibility and the Indians.

It is obvious in The History of Emily Montague that Canadian scenery and Canadian society made a deep impression on Mrs. Brooke, and in describing them, she indulges not only her own interest, but at the same time caters to the popular taste of the time for travel literature about remote lands and peoples. She selects those things in her new environment that would most likely be admired, deplored, or wondered at by her readers at home. Her descriptions of climate and landscape are particularly notable. The break-up of the ice (Letter 131), the Montmorenci Falls in winter (Letters 80, 81), ice-fishing (Letter 114), the frozen ink and wine (Letters 48, 49) are all included in part for their "sensational" effect, although to her credit, they also serve a specific artistic function in terms of her characters and theme. A particularly clear example of how she took advantage of regional material is her account of the Indians. She used them to provide exotic interest, but at the same time, she found it necessary to "control" them with her doctrine of sensibility.

Mrs. Brooke devotes Letters 4, 11, 16, 20, and 152 mainly to accounts of aboriginal habits, religion, social organization, and morals. I suppose the eighteenth-century reader would have considered as most sensational the following three items: Ed's account of the Indian woman who cut off an English prisoner's arm and gave her children the blood to drink in order to encourage ferocity (Letter 4); his mention of the Indian women's sexual freedom before marriage (Letter 11); and Bell Fermor's modest drinking spree with a group of squaws on the banks of the St. Lawrence (Letter 16). Of course, the incident tells more about Bell's character than about the Indians. She first says she will marry a savage because of the freedom the men give to their wives. However, she quickly retracts her statement:

> I will not be a squaw; I admire their talking of the liberty of savages; in the most essential point they are slaves: the mothers marry their children without ever consulting their inclinations, and they are obliged to submit to this foolish tyranny. Dear England! where liberty appears, not as here among these odious savages, wild and ferocious like themselves, but lovely, smiling, led by the hand of the Graces. There is no true freedom anywhere else (Letter 20).

The movement from enthusiastic acceptance to categorical rejection of a "dangerous" idea again defines the social limits of Bell's apparent imaginative freedom. It is also an example of the consistently ambivalent attitude shown towards the savages by all the characters, and in a way, it also defines Mrs. Brooke response to almost all aspects of the colony.

Mrs. Brooke believed, along with Shaftesbury,[6] that the "natural" state of man was social. She was a primitivist only in so far as she believed in reverting, not to the state of "untutored nature," but to the idyllic social garden with its benevolent patriarch. Constant cultivation was needed to bring out "nature." Nowhere in the novel does she suggest that the Indians were an ideal for the English gentleman. On the contrary, she insists that the savages were in a constant state of war, Hobbes' pre-social state; that their liberty was ferocious and not civilized as in Britain; and that they were incapable of the kind of love demonstrated by Ed and Emily. At the same time, Mrs. Brooke had to defend the doctrine of innate benevolence. Hence, the Indians are regularly shown to have affections, but in embryonic form. One citation suffices to make the point. Ed Rivers writes:

> Deprived by their extreme ignorance, and that indolence which nothing but their ardour for war can surmount, of all the conveniences, as well as elegant refinements of polished life; strangers to the softer passions, love being with them on the same footing as amongst their fellow-tenants of the woods; their lives appear to me

[6] "That imperfect rude condition of mankind . . . was that which we suppose of man ere yet he entered into society, and became in truth a human creature. 'Twas the rough draught of man, the essay or first effort of Nature, a species in the birth, a kind as yet unformed; not in its natural state, but under violence, and still restless, till it attained its natural perfection." From "The Moralists," Characteristics, II, 79.

> rather tranquil than happy: they have fewer cares, but they have also much fewer enjoyments, than fall to our share. I am told, however, that, though insensible to love, they are not without affections, are extremely awake to friendship, and passionately fond of their children (Letter 11).

The need to believe that the Indians were in the pre-social state of war, but that they also had human affections (although embryonic) accounts for Mrs. Brooke's consistently ambivalent attitude toward the Indians. They were not totally corrupt, but neither were they in a state of grace. In short, they lacked sensibility.

Mrs. Brooke's withdrawal from the task of civilizing the savages is apparent not only in Bell's rejection of savage liberty but also in Letter 57, where Ed writes:

> You are right, Jack, as to the savages; the only way to civilize them is to <u>feminize</u> their women; but the task is rather difficult: at present their manners differ in nothing from those of the men; they even add to the ferocity of the latter.

The movement from tentative exploration of the wilderness to explicit rejection of it as a possible home for sensibility becomes the all-pervasive but underground theme of this novel. It is subconsciously present as well in Mrs. Brooke's utilization of the landscape descriptions as characterizing devices and of the colony itself as a literary image.

5. The Literary Vision: Canada as a Landscape Painting.

In the second half of the eighteenth century, landscape descriptions had become a literary fashion. Joyce Tompkins describes the development of the convention:

> Landscape . . . had about it something of a new revelation. That conscious attention to natural scenery and its effects on the mind, which marks the second half of the eighteenth century, together with that discovery of the beauty of barren landscape, of the mountainous, the abrupt and the picturesque, which was its special excitement, expresses itself in poetry and in landscape-painting, and was soon to overflow into the novel.[7]

Landscape backgrounds had been encouraged by Rousseau's La Nouvelle Héloïse (1761), but there were plenty of English influences at work, among them Thomson's The Seasons. The fad was in part related to the growing tendency "to divinize the idea of Nature," as Basil Willey has noted.[8] The Deists were, of course, especially interested; but for Mrs. Brooke, it was the more orthodox belief that God's benevolence could be seen in creation which led her to charge some of her descriptions with emotional energy. The landscape in Julia Mandeville had formed an harmonious background, posing no threats or dangers to the social activities of the lovers. Its effect on their minds had been moral, creating a moderate degree of graceful enthusiasm. However, in Emily Montague, the interaction of landscape with character (and of setting with sensibility) is not so reassuring.

[7] Tompkins, The Popular Novel in England, 1770-1800, p. 354.

[8] Willey, The Eighteenth Century Background, p. 57.

Three landscape "stills" in Emily Montague are especially impressive, and they can be seen as representative of the other and briefer Canadian landscape descriptions scattered here and there throughout the book. The first is Ed's description of his arrival in Canada:

> The country is a very fine one: you see here not only the beautiful which it has in common with Europe, but the great sublime to an amazing degree; every object here is magnificent. . . . On approaching the coast of America, I felt a kind of religious veneration, on seeing rocks which almost touch'd the clouds, cover'd with tall groves of pines that seemed coeval with the world itself (Letter 2).

The second major description is of the area around Quebec City. Bell's first letter gives her response to the new environment:

> I am enchanted with the beauty of this country in summer; bold, picturesque, romantic, nature reigns here in all her wanton luxuriance, adorned by a thousand wild graces which mock the cultivated beauties of Europe (Letter 10).

In life and energy, the description also "mocks" those in Julia Mandeville. Bell goes on to give some specific information about the heat and the thunderstorms and then describes the waterfalls:

> There are two very noble falls of water near Quebec, la Chaudiere and Montmorenci: the former is a prodigious sheet of water, rushing over the wildest rocks, and forming a scene grotesque, irregular, astonishing: the latter, less wild, less irregular, but more pleasing and more majestic, falls from an immense height, down the side of a romantic mountain, into the river St. Lawrence, opposite the most smiling part of the island of Orleans, to the cultivated charms of which it forms the most striking and agreeable contrast.

Bell's enthusiasm encourages her to make the most dangerous statement in the book when she goes so far as to recognize

the possibility of a pagan religion. She speaks of "the abode of the Nereids" and of "the throne of the river goddess," but then very quickly closes "this little world of enchantment" and returns to her farm at Silleri, which "stands at the foot of a steep mountain covered with a variety of trees, forming a verdant sloping wall, which rises in a kind of regular confusion." This withdrawal and retreat from the dangerous enthusiasm created by the sublime back to the "regular confusion" and emotional security of the farm at Silleri becomes the central image of the novel, although it was probably not Mrs. Brooke's conscious intention to make it so. Later when the characters return to England, they are similarly withdrawing from certain emotional threats created by the Canadian landscape and the corresponding apparent disorder of the Canadian society.

The third outstanding intrusion of landscape into the story is William Fermor's description of the ice going out at Levi:

> I found the great river, as the savages with much propriety call it, maintain its dignity in this instance as in all others, and assert its superiority over those petty streams which we honour with the names of rivers in England. Sublimity is the characteristic of this western world. . . . A landscape-painter might here expand his imagination, and find ideas which he will seek in vain in our comparatively little world. The object of which I am speaking has all the American magnificence. The ice before the town, or to speak in the Canadian style, the bridge, being of a thickness not less than five feet, a league in length, and more than a mile broad, resists for a long time the rapid tide

> that attempts to force it from the banks. . . . Everyone is looking eagerly for its breaking away, to remove the bar to the continually wished and expected event, of the arrival of ships from that world from whence we have seemed so long in a manner excluded. . . . We stood waiting with the eagerness of expectation; the tide came rushing with an amazing impetuosity; the bridge seemed to shake, yet resisted the force of the waters; the tide recoiled, it made a pause, it stood still, it returned with redoubled fury, the immense mass of ice gave way.

He concludes his description with one more reference to "the pleasing . . . ideas of that direct intercourse with Europe" and then gives his interpretation of the scene's emotional effect:

> If my painting has the least resemblance to the original, your lordship will agree with me, that the very vicissitudes of season here partake of the sublimity which so strongly characterizes the country. The changes of season in England being slow and gradual, are but faintly felt; but being here sudden, instant, violent, afford to the mind, with the lively pleasure arising from meer [sic] change, the very additional one of its being accompanied with grandeur (Letter 131)

After one has pushed aside the moralizing and explicit authorial commentary in the novel, it is in these descriptions that one finds the confrontation between the cultivated British mind and the Canadian reality.

The descriptions are all charged with emotion. None of them are empirical or scientific in terms of the eighteenth-century definitions of these words. A glance at the travel accounts of the period or a browse through The Gentleman's Magazine with its military and commercial descriptions illustrates the difference between Mrs. Brooke's landscapes

and those of the documentaries. For instance, when Peter Kalm describes the Montmorenci Falls in 1749, he gives their height and a great deal of geological fact. The only emotions he reveals are his astonishment at the quantity of water and his disgust at being wetted by the spray while examining the stone base.[9] In his Concise Account of North America (1765), Major Rogers does not even mention the falls, although he must have seen them. He fills his book with statistics, verbal cartography, and commercial facts.

Mrs. Brooke's descriptions are all given in conventional "landscape" vocabulary; that is, in terms of the beautiful, the picturesque, and the sublime. The beautiful was associated with order, proportion, and harmony, the aspects of nature which encouraged the analogy between the human and the non-human worlds. It was the beautiful (the man-made and cultivated garden) which supported the social values so essential to the "people of rational piety and moderation." The picturesque involved some "pleasing variety"; it produced an imaginatively graceful response, a mental energy that in its controlled form can loosely be associated with the passion for virtue. The sublime was usually the work of God alone, referring to events and creations of such magnitude that they staggered the social mind. It inspired feelings of awe and

[9] Kalm, The America of 1750: Peter Kalm's Travels in North America, II, p. 497f.

ultimately of terror. The "naive aesthetics of Romanticism"[10] are at work in Mrs. Brooke's descriptions. The need was to moralize the landscape (the beautiful), to make it pleasing (the picturesque), and to inspire religious awe and even terror (the sublime), that overwhelming emotional response which indicated that one not only saw the works of God but actually felt His presence. Ed's description mentions "religious veneration," Bell's provides the passionate (and Pindaric) enthusiasm which verges on the dangerous and the irreligious, and Mr. Fermor's emphasizes the pleasures of the imagination, the mind-expanding effects of sublime events.

It is important to note that none of these characters are influenced or changed by their imaginative experience. All three soon withdraw from the excitement and the danger of the sublime. Ed grows tired of "meer scenery" and "sigh [s] for society" (Letter 5); Bell withdraws to the safe garden at Silleri and forms a coterie of lovers in order to defy the coming winter; and William Fermor sees the thaw mainly in terms of re-established communications with England. There is a certain compulsiveness with which the characters in Emily Montague turn away from the sublime and return quickly to the human world where lay

[10] Ernest Tuveson, The Imagination as a Means of Grace: Locke and the Aesthetics of Romanticism, p. 137.

the social pleasures of family, love, friendship, and benevolence. Mrs. Brooke's conception of the innate benevolence of man and nature did not include an unqualified primitivism; she did not believe that man could be moral in a state of nature. Everywhere she repeats the eighteenth-century cliché that man was "naturally" formed to live in society. Isolation and the hermit's life were considered to be reprehensible.[11] Society was the true setting for moral sensibility, and Anne Wilmot speaks for Mrs. Brooke when she writes in Julia Mandeville: "The finest landscape is a dreary wild, unless adorned by a few groups of figures" (J. M., I, 67).

Mrs. Brooke was influenced by the magnitude of the Canadian scenery, for it clearly upset her English-conditioned view of nature. In Julia Mandeville, the landscapes were generalized and absolutely conventional. An example of her mountain-cascade-tree-cottage formula is her description of the surroundings of Belmont (J. M., I, 15-16). The same formula appears occasionally in Emily Montague. However,

[11] Madame Des Roches introduces Ed to a hermit who as lived sixty years on the Isle of Barnaby in the St. Lawrence (Letter 32). After giving a sermon on the moral pleasures found in human society, Ed weeps over the hermit's sad story. The hermit has withdrawn from the world to show his devotion to "his Louisa," who drowned when the ship carrying her from England sank before his eyes off Barnaby. The inset tale teaches that only devotional sensibility justifies renunciation of society. Symbolically, the tale comes at a critical point in the story and acts as a warning to Ed, showing him what might happen to sensibility in the wilderness.

the waterfalls, the ice, the climate, and the St. Lawrence are real and specific. The emotions they induced in the characters came from experience and not from formula, and there is evidence that reality upset appearance enough to cause a withdrawal from the threats of the sublime. On Mrs. Brooke's part, the rejection of the wilderness may have been subconscious. In any case, one can conclude that the wilderness impressed the author enough for her to make the landscape descriptions reflect the reality she observed around her. She saw the scenery with the conventions that she had, but the realistic content of the descriptions dominates them.

The landscape descriptions play a minor but significant role in the love story. First, they are used as characterizing devices. When Mrs. Brooke's characters respond emotionally to landscape, they demonstrate their superior sensibilities. As Joyce Tompkins has said, "A mind delicately sensible to the beauties of nature becomes a sine qua non for heroines."[12] Thus, Bell flaunts her imaginative grace and active virtue by emphasizing the picturesque in her descriptions. By his controlled response to the sublime and the beautiful, Rivers exhibits his more stable social virtues. George Clayton, who has no sensibility at all, fails the landscape test. Ed notes

[12] Tompkins, The Popular Novel, p. 354.

in Letter 17: "[Clayton's] feelings are dull . . . he is as insensible to the various beauties of the charming country . . . as the very Canadian peasants themselves who inhabit it."

Secondly, the landscapes help to set the mood of the narrative. The grandeur of the Canadian setting, its picturesque irregularity, advises the lovers that they are in for the greatest experience a sensitive soul could have, that of meeting its soul-mate. The chief characters fall in love while under the influence of the picturesque. For instance, Emily is afraid to visit the Montmorency escorted solely by Ed. When they do go, they break the barrier of manners, and confess their mutual love. It is significant, too, that the "wilder" Bell marries when still at Silleri, while the more sedate Emily waits until she is in Ed's country garden in England. Bell has been the one most affected by the excitement of the sublime. In Letter 81 she confesses to being "Montmorenci-mad," and there is no doubt that Fitzgerald, in marrying her, has rescued her from the danger of eccentric behaviour. On the other hand, Emily does not say a single thing about the Canadian landscape. Once she is married and in England, she becomes prominent as a gardener (Letter 199), and begins to write praises of nature which seem conventional and dull (although they were intended not to be) in contrast to the earlier Canadian scenes. I quote one of Emily's descriptions in order to establish the contrast:

> The whole universe smiles, the earth is clothed in lively colours, the animals are playful, the birds sing: in being chearful [sic] with innocence, we seem to conform to the order of nature, and the will of that beneficent Power to whom we owe our being (Letter 198).

It is a description which was impossible for Emily or for Frances Brooke to make while in Canada.

6. The Literary Vision: Canada as Image.

I have said enough about Emily Montague to indicate that it is a novel primarily about sensibility. Yet as an eighteenth-century sentimental novel, it is almost unique in that a major part of its action occurs in an identifiable place. It is also unique in that the Canadian setting acts not only as a decorative background for the social activities of the four lovers, but also as a literary image structurally integrated with plot and theme.

Emily Montague is the kind of novel which Arnold Kettle has described as "a moral fable," that is, a novel incorporating a moral vision which dominates all elements of the plot.[13] Thus, the novel takes on some of the qualities of allegory, a genre in which the travels of the characters, the positions which they take, and the houses they live in all represent parts of a doctrinal argument. This aspect of allegory is primarily visual; that is, the events and characters should be seen as on a tapestry, as iconographical elements of a moral vision. This way of looking at Emily Montague helps to

[13] Kettle, An Introduction to the English Novel (London: Hutchinson, 1951), I, 14-17.

define clearly the role of the novel's Canadian setting.

It is important to note the various positions of the characters in relationship to geography. Here I consider only those "postures" closely related to the plot. In Canada, Ed Rivers moves around more freely than anyone else in the book. When he arrives in the colony, he admires the scenery, explores the St. Lawrence valley from Montreal to Quebec several times, and plans to form a patriarchal community. His movements appear somewhat uncertain until he meets Emily and defeats George Clayton. Ed then joins the coterie of lovers whose centre of gravity becomes the farm at Silleri. Ed's most dramatic movements occur when he disappears from this little social group and twice visits Madame Des Roches in the wilderness of the Kamaraskas. The other main characters move around very little. Bell Fermor rescues Emily from Mrs. Melmoth and George Clayton at Montreal, and Emily then joins Bell at Silleri. From this time on, Bell and Emily stay close to the farm until the ship carrying news of Mrs. Rivers illness arrives in the spring. After this event everyone returns to England where Colonel Willmott hands out the cash rewards, and the elite of sensibility are united around Ed Rivers and his garden estate in rural England.

The doctrinal argument reflected by the plot (in its relation to geographical location of the characters) is quite straightforward. Ed Rivers, representative of ideal male

sensibility, has been exiled from his true home in England. He has delicately resigned his estate to his mother, and his ambition of forming a patriarchal community which will support his refined taste drives him to Canada. He wishes to regain the rank for which his birth, education, and sensibilities qualify him. Once in Canada he exhibits eccentric and individualistic behaviour in his desire to buy land in the wilderness. However, the plot makes clear that he is really lacking not rank but a female soul-mate of an equally refined affective life. Emily rescues him from his temporary and forgiveable aberration, and the voices of female sensibility quickly convince Ed that Canada offers a much too limited scope for a man of his quality. Mother England needs men of virtue and Ed responds quickly to his "mother's" call. For instance, Emily pleads:

> For your own sake, I once more entreat you to return to England: I will follow you; I will swear never to marry another . . . Fortune may there be more favourable to our wishes than we now hope; may join us without destroying the peace of the best of parents (Letter 125).

Once the group returns to England, female sensibility is shown to have been right; fortune does smile, and the domestic comedy ends with the coming together of the affective community in a setting which supports the sacred values of sensibility.

It is emphasized over and over again that virtue like Ed's should not hide in the wilderness. For instance, at a time when Ed is still determined to settle in Canada and when

Lucy (Letter 67) and Emily (Letters 73, 118) are trying to convince him to return to England, William Fermor defines the morally correct action:

> Would all those whose virtues . . . are adorned by politeness and knowledge of the world, mix more in society, we should soon see vice hide her head: would all the good appear in view, they would, I am convinced, be found infinitely the majority. Virtue is too lovely to be hid in cells, the world is her scene of action (Letter 100).

The characters practice what Fermor preaches; they return to England. There, an inset tale describes Ed's rescue of Fanny Williams and of her young ward (Letters 206, 207, 208, 218, 221). The tale illustrates that England has need of benevolent gentlemen and that Ed's virtue has now found its proper setting.

The main visual movements of the plot together with its attached doctrinal argument clarifies the role of Canada in this complex but carefully worked out moral and patriotic vision. Canada is a place of exile. Ed is there because English society has no place for him;[14] Emily has been abandoned there by the death of her military uncle, and Bell is there out of filial duty to her military father. The main characters are in Canada either because of duty or because of some form of bourgeois necessity. Had they free choice, they would all be in England.

As place of exile, Canada allows the characters to demonstrate their superior virtues by making the best of the untamed

[14] Ed writes: "I cannot live in England on my present income, though it enables me to live <u>en prince</u> in Canada" (Letter 36).

and 'uncivilized' environment. Emily and Bell form a defensive alliance against the gossipy Quebec society and the insensitive Canadian women. The girls retreat to the tame farm at Silleri and socialize there under the protection of the benign parent, William Fermor. On the other hand, Ed makes uncertain movements in the direction of becoming a gentleman-farmer, an ambition second only to spiritual love in its suitability for an emotionally respectable male. The reader is expected to have a certain amount of sympathetic tolerance for Ed's vision of a pastoral patriarchy in the Kamaraskas. (See Letters 7, 45.) All the while, the wiser females are benignly (and sometimes a bit frantically) ridiculing Ed's attempts at colonizing. It will be remembered that in Mrs. Brooke's doctrine the female sensibility was much superior to that of the male. Over and over again in Emily Montague, Mrs. Brooke emphasizes the fact that it is the woman's duty to play "petticoat politics" in order to secure the most important element of the social bond, a tranquil and happy marriage.[15] The women make it clear that Ed is guilty of ambition, a fault to which he confesses in Letter 83:

[15] See Letter 50 for the superior intuitive virtue of women; Letter 82 for their ability to choose by affection (men choose by appearance); and any of the women's letters after they are married for the need to play 'sexual politics' in order to domesticate the dangerous passions of the male. Lucy Rivers is depicted as having won a great victory when she had subdued John Temple.

> I am determined to pursue Emily; but before I make a declaration, will go to see some ungranted lands at the back of Madame Des Roches's estate. . . . I cannot bear my Emily, after refusing a coach and six, should live without an equipage suitable at least to her birth . . . I know this is folly, that it is a despicable pride; but it is a folly, a pride, I cannot conquer.

Ed's one sin explains why he is often subjected to sermons on male avarice and greed.

As setting, Canada provides the main tension of the plot. The question of where Ed will settle becomes sentimentally dramatic in the middle of the book. Emily has refused to marry him in Canada, and her refusal reinforces several aspects of my argument:

> I would therefore marry him to-morrow were it possible without ruining him, without dooming him to a perpetual exile, and obstructing those views of honest ambition at home, which become his birth, his connexions, his talents, his time of life; and with which, as his friend, it is my duty to inspire him. . . . He must return to England, must pursue fortune in that world for which he was formed: shall his Emily retard him in the glorious race? shall she suffer him to hide that shining merit in the uncultivated wilds of Canada, the seat of barbarism and ignorance, which entitles him to hope a happy fate in the dear land of arts and arms? . . . If he loves me, he will . . . leave Canada to those whose duty confines them here, or whose interest it is to remain unseen (Letter 118).

Ed's reply is dramatically placed at the end of volume two in both the 1769 and 1784 editions, and it creates as much suspense as can be found in this sentimental novel. He writes:

> What have you said, my dear Emily? <u>You will not marry me in Canada</u>. You have passed a hard sentence on me: you know my fortune will not allow me to marry you in England (Letter 124).

These two quotations show how closely the Canadian setting is linked with the love story. The people of feeling come to Canada in a tentative and exploratory way. They investigate the social and physical environment to see if it is an acceptable setting for sensibility. Ultimately, the elite group decides, with varying degrees of qualification, that Canada is unsuitable; and everyone returns to "the dear land of arts and arms."

The place of exile rapidly becomes a threat to the felicity of the lovers. One of the dangers is Madame Des Roches. Emily and Bell clearly perceive Ed's two visits to the Kamaraskas as a threat to all the values of domesticated sensibility. Mrs. Brooke may not have intended it consciously, but Madame Des Roches represents not only the attractions of the Canadian wilderness but those of the uncontrolled male passions as well. This interpretation is in accord with Mrs. Brooke's artistic vision, which involved the utilization of the paradigm she and other optimists imposed upon nature for the purpose of reflecting patterns of human emotions. A logical extension of the technique here is her depiction of Madame Des Roches in close association with the threatening aspects of the Canadian environment. At the same time, Des Roches is represented as a dangerously attractive principle to the bourgeois hero of sensibility.

For these reasons, Ed describes the Kamaraskas as "the wildest country on earth" (Letter 32), and himself as wandering

about "like the first man when driven out of paradise" (Letter 34). When Ed is with Madame Des Roches, Bell describes him as "rambling about in the woods when we want him here" (Letter 33), and as "out of range of human beings, down the river" (Letter 31). On his second trip to Madame Des Roches, the women fear and assume (for no reason other than the symbolical or doctrinal necessity) that Ed is proposing marriage to Madame Des Roches (and to the wilderness). Ed himself perceives the threat, and he quickly retreats to what is depicted as his true setting, proximity to Emily and, eventually, to the security of the ordered English garden and the sedate marriage.

Because Madame Des Roches (and the name is, of course, significant) has presented a real threat, the characters show an almost obsessive need to see her as having been subdued or in some way made safe by Rivers' sensibility. She comes to Quebec and takes up a position as the suffering, unassuming, and hopeless suppliant for Rivers' favour. Emily explains rather compulsively and at great length in Letter 122 that Madame Des Roches has been converted to sensibility, and expresses a complacent sympathy for the outcast. "Can there be a misfortune equal to that of loving Rivers without hope of a return?" she asks and goes on to write: "I idolize her character; but I cannot sincerely wish to cultivate her friendship." It is as close as Emily comes to confronting the wilderness (either of the emotions or of nature), and her assessment of Madame Des Roches spreads out symbolically to

cover all of the Canadian experience.

Madame Des Roches becomes a sacrificial victim, a kind of scapegoat that is exiled from the group. This promotes the group's happy social union, freeing it from its own subconscious fears of the internal and external wilderness. The coterie abandons Madame Des Roches in her Canadian exile.

The second most apparent way in which Canada threatens sensibility is in its effects upon the little garrison at Silleri. The group has come together through mutual recognition; it stays together as a defensive alliance against the threats of the environment, both social and physical.

When the last ship sails before winter sets in, Bell describes her feelings of melancholy and isolation (Letter 45); when it begins to snow, her landscape imagery changes ominously:

> The scene is a little changed for the worse: the lovely landscape is now one undistinguished waste of snow, only a little diversified by the great variety of evergreens in the woods: the romantic winding path down the side of the hill to our farm, on which we used to amuse ourselves with seeing the beaux serpentize, is now a confused, frightful, rugged precipice, which one trembles at the idea of ascending (Letter 48).

Silleri becomes an outpost of sensibility, isolated in the wilderness. As the winter progresses, Bell does describe many of the scenes positively. However, these descriptions are consistently coloured by pride; the coterie congratulates itself for being able to defy the winter (and the gossip at Quebec) with its social virtues.

The arrival of the first ship from England is the symbolic centre of the plot. William Fermor's description of the break-up of the ice introduces the event, and the letters brought by the ship resolve the tension caused by the Canadian setting. The ship's arrival liberates the coterie so that it can be re-united in England.

The characters have gracefully survived that "vile climate which is at war with beauty" (Letter 58), and their return to the mother country reaffirms all the conventional values associated with the English rural setting. Ed Rivers is symbolically baptized[16] in the little stream flowing through his English estate and he intends to contribute to the English imperial effort, not by isolating his virtues in Canada, but "by raising oaks, which may hereafter bear the British thunder to distant lands" (Letter 199).

The plot, then, reveals an image of Canada which is more realistic than the conventionalized English setting. Mrs. Brooke sends her hero on a bourgeois voyage of discovery into the uncivilized wilderness. He explores Canada as an investment and finds it to be a good one. At the same time,

[16] "I have been bathing in the clear stream, at the end of my garden; the same stream in which I laved my careless bosom at thirteen; an idea which gave me inconceivable delight . . . Of all local prejudices, that is the strongest as well as most pleasing, which attaches us to the place of our birth. Sweet home! only seat of true and genuine happiness" (Letter 215).

he investigates the possibility of establishing an Arcadia on the banks of Lake Champlain. Falling into his true orbit around female sensibility, he rejects this possibility, and his return to England apotheosizes, once again, Mrs. Brooke's moral vision.

At the same time, it is a voyage into the picturesque and the sublime, both of landscape and of affective experience. While in Canada, the characters fall in love, the most exciting and sacred experience possible within Mrs. Brooke's definition of the cult of sensibility. The return to England is a return to the beautiful, to the moral order of domestic happiness, and to the physical order of the English countryside.

CONCLUSION

Mrs. Brooke and other writers and thinkers of "rational piety and moderation" had faith in the innate goodness of man, but they combined this belief with an energetic meliorism. They recognized the necessity of cultivating the moral taste so that man could know his "natural" condition, a human society morally ordered by benevolent charity and domestic tranquility. An optimistic and moral view of nature supported this doctrine, and the whole complex of beliefs produced the aesthetic rationale which lay behind the didactic and sentimental novels. These works were intended as corrèctive propaganda, and they appealed to the emotions in order to reinforce the code of benevolence and of refined moral taste. Mrs. Brooke was particularly interested in demonstrating the superior sensibilities of women; to her, wives were the most important "bands of society . . without which man is the most ferocious of all beasts of prey" (Letter 100).

When Mrs. Brooke brought this moral and didactic vision to Canada, she made practical use of her new environment. She inserted bits of political and commercial opinion throughout The History of Emily Montague, suggesting that the colonies were a good investment and that the French subjects should be encouraged to speak English, to abjure "superstition," and to embrace the "rational and moderate" faith. This 'empirical' information was coloured by the prejudices one could expect—imperialism, Anglicanism, and practical mercantilism.

However, this novel is much more than a mere compendium of observations and opinions about Canada. Mrs. Brooke shows the touch of a professional writer interested in making a book that appealed to the publisher and to the public. She describes the cold, the Indians, and the "great sublime" of the scenery, but these descriptions are not scientific records. They are coloured by the convention of sensibility, which demanded an emotional and a moral view of the landscape and of the savages. This material shows the moral vision at work, filtering the new reality through the beliefs of domesticated sensibility.

The most interesting aspect of the Canadian content of Emily Montague is the interaction of setting and sensibility contained by the plot. I have shown in Chapter III that the muse of sensibility felt most comfortable in the English rural garden, where it was supported by the moral and physical order created by the nobleman-patriarch. However, in Emily Montague, Mrs. Brooke experimented with setting. She had her characters (who like herself were in Canada out of duty or necessity) fall in love while under the influence of the picturesque and the sublime. Thus, by analogy to nature, Mrs. Brooke reproduced in the human world the excitement and imaginative grace commonly associated with the picturesque. However, the disorder and passions which her characters found in the "great sublime" of the Canadian wilderness presented a real threat to the social and moral ideals of domesticated sensibility. Once the love

affairs were properly terminated by marriage, the characters returned to the moral order of the "beautiful," the English garden estate. Significantly, the more sedate couple gets married in England. Symbolically, the plot shows sensibility victorious over the passions, as, by analogy, it shows the refined moral and social tastes of the emotionaly elite conquering the wilderness of the physical environment. At the same time, the movements of the plot suggest a subliminal awareness on the part of the characters and of the author of an intractable reality which threatened the carefully cultivated appearance of the emotionally respectable society.

In the history of the transplantation of the English literary tradition to the new world, Frances Brooke and her novel deserve more than a foot-note. The true artist cannot abandon the precepts of his culture nor the conventions of his art when he crosses the ocean. Mrs. Brooke brought her moral integrity and her artistic vision with her to Canada and used them to give form to her new experiences in this new country, and her artistic honesty demanded that she reject the wilderness of Canada and of the passions, and expose the crudity of the settlers and the Indians. There was to be no compromise with truth as she saw it, and so she concluded quite rightly, by her artistic and moral standards, that Canada as yet "was a vile climate at war with beauty." For Mrs. Brooke, neither artistic beauty nor moral order was possible in the Canada of the 1760's.

APPENDIX I

Some Biographical Facts Inaccurately Reported in most Sources.

1. Frances Brooke (Moore) was baptized at Claypool, Newark on January 24, 1723, and not in 1724 as is always reported. Professor E. Phillips Poole has seen the certificated extract from the Parish Register. (See Poole's introduction to Julia Mandeville, 1930, p. 12.)

2. Lady Julia Mandeville contains only one brief reference to Canada and not "much description of Canadian scenery" as the D.N.B. (1909) reports.

3. Memoirs of the Marquis de St. Forlaix was written by Nicholas Framery and translated by Mrs. Brooke in 1770. The novel is often attributed to her. (See Poole's bibliography in Julia Mandeville, 1930, p. 39.)

4. I can clarify further the interesting question of the length of Mrs. Brooke's stay in Quebec. John Brooke went to Quebec in February of 1762. Frances, travelling with her son John (seven years old) left England on July 6, 1763, and arrived at Quebec on October 5, 1763. This information Professor Poole draws from the private collection of Edmund Royds of Stubton Hall, Newark. The collection contains letters and diaries of Frances Brooke, her husband, her sister Sarah Moore, and of a Mrs. Collier. According to F. P. Grove's appendix to the 1931 edition of Emily Montague (and Poole's information supports this) Frances returned to England on November 8, 1764, making her first stay in Quebec a year and four months. For want of evidence, Grove suggests that "she seems not to have returned." Poole, however, has found proof in a letter of Sarah Moore that Frances returned to Quebec "early in 1765." That she must have been in Quebec in 1766 is also demonstrated by one of the letters of Francis Maseres in which he describes the "sensible, agreeable" Mrs. Brooke. (See The Maseres Letters, 1766-1768, ed. W. Stewart Wallace, Toronto, 1919, p. 46.) Maseres did not arrive in the colony until July, 1766, and his letter is dated at Quebec, September 14, 1766.

   After this date one can only speculate. Mrs. Brooke may have stayed until 1768, when John Brooke had his auction sale before returning to England.

APPENDIX II

A Bibliography of Mrs. Brooke's Published Writings

(In Chronological Order)

1. The Old Maid. By Mary Singleton, Spinster. Saturday, November 15, 1755, and every Saturday for 37 numbers to July 24, 1756. Collected in book form by Millar, 1764.

2. Virginia, a Tragedy, with Odes, Pastorals, and Translations. Millar, for the author, 1756.

3. Letters from Lady Julia Catesby, To Her Friend Lady Henrietta Campley. Translated from the French of Marie-Jeanne Riccoboni. Dodsley, 1760. Six editions by 1780.

4. The History of Lady Julia Mandeville. Dodsley, 1763. Other editions: two more in 1763; 1765, 1769, 1773, 1775; Mrs. Barbauld's 1810, 1827; E. Phillips Poole's 1930.

5. The History of Emily Montague. Dodsley, 1769. Other editions: 1775, 1777, 1784; Burpee's 1931; Klinck's 1961, 1969.

6. Memoirs of the Marquis de St. Forlaix. Translated from the French of Nicholas Framery. Dodsley, 1770.

7. Elements of the History of England. Translated from the French of Claude François Millet. Dodsley, 1771.

8. The Excursion. Cadell, 1777. Second edition, 1785.

9. The Siege of Sinope—A Tragedy. Cadell, 1781. (Produced at Covent Garden, January 31, 1781.)

10. Rosina. A Comic Opera in Two Acts. Cadell, 1783. Fifteen editions by 1785. Reprinted in at least nine nineteenth-century collections of plays.

11. Airs, Songs, Duets, Trios and Chorusses [sic], in Marian, a Comic Opera. Cadell, 1788.

    Marian: A Comic Opera. Longmans and Rees, 1800.

12. The History of Charles Mandeville. A Sequel to Lady Julia. London: Lane, 1790. Dublin, 1790.

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