POPE AND WARBURTON

BY B. S. KESAVAN, M.A. (LOND.)

(Department of English)


I

After his estrangement with Theobald, Warburton’s literary activities were partially suspended for a period of a few years, due to his preoccupation with his work first on the “Alliance” and then on the “Divine Legation”. What correspondence he had with Hanmer during these years was but communications of notes previously returned by Theobald, or comments on what Hanmer occasionally sent to him. Hanmer was not nearly so troublesome a correspondent as Theobald, and consequently Warburton’s literary labours were considerably lightened. The “Alliance between Church and State” was published in 1736 and the first part of the “Divine Legation” came out in 1738. The result was that Warburton stepped out of obscurity into the limelight and came to be regarded as something of a force in theological circles, though the orthodox looked upon him with a dubious eye. By lashing out against his opponents with all the arrogance of new-found authority, he earned notoriety as a cantankerous divine whose wrath it would be unwise to provoke.

It was while he was in such mettlesome spirit that he chanced upon the censorious Crousaz belabouring poor Pope for propagating infidel ideas. This should not have worried Warburton overmuch, if we are to judge by his attitude to Pope during his association with the Theobald group. Writing to Concannon about the amusement he derived from reading the English poets, he remarks that “Dryden... borrows for want of leisure, and Pope for want of genius; Milton out of pride and Addison out of modesty.”

1
In corresponding with him he not only allowed without protest the sneering remarks of Theobald about Pope, but also encouraged him in his proposed "Essay upon Mr. Pope's Judgment extracted from his own works". "It is no small satisfaction to me," says Theobald, "that you approve my design with regard to my antagonist's judgment." He also obliged Theobald by "three printed criticisms" to which he did not append his name. "It is a very reasonable caution," says Theobald, "that what is gleaned from them should come out anonymous; for I should be loth to have a valued friend subjected, on my account, to the outrage of Pope, virulent though impotent." Fortunately, it is possible to identify conclusively three anonymous contributions to the Daily Journal, 1729, as being the three printed criticisms referred to. These letters merit, in some detail, our investigation, as demonstrating the extreme malevolence of Warburton towards Pope in these early days of his life. On the strength of the general style of these letters, and the correspondences between the emendations contained in the letters and those in the later Shakespeare edition of Warburton, Prof. Lounsbury established the authorship. But his efforts have been felt to be a little incomplete and tentative. "These facts when combined," says Mr. Evans, "while not amounting to a demonstration, seem to place Warburton's authorship beyond reasonable doubt." It is now proposed to show by a somewhat minute investigation that these letters are, indubitably, the work of Warburton.

The first letter, written on March 22, has for its motto

"And Crucify Pope's Shakespeare once a week".

The opening paragraph, with its heavy banter, instantly puts us in mind of Warburtonian prose. Here it is:—

"The motto carries more powerful recommendation than the fastidious per placet of an Archbishop's chaplain. But as custom too has made it fashionable to fetch this Motto from the classics, and there being nothing in nature more discordant than antient and modern sentiments, it has too oft happened of late, that what was intended to recommend and illustrate, has served only to discredit and perplex, so that I have thought that this Word of Sapience, which cannot be omitted but to the inexpressible damage

---

3 Ibid., p. 551.
4 Ibid., p. 565.
5 Ibid., p. 621.
6 Burney Collection, 276 b, Nos. 2560, 2574, 2586.
8 Evans, A. W., Warburton and the Warburtonians, p. 74.
9 Burney Collection, 276 b, No. 2560.
of us Essayists, should have the first paragraph in each Discourse assigned as a commentary. I have therefore adventured to begin the Example, and to make all sure, have borrowed mine from a famous modern. But as the book quoted is printed in a most scandalous character, full of Hallucinations and needing and deserving the severest correction I have adventured to deviate a little from the Common reading. Besides, the Line alludes evidently to those emendations of Mr. Pope's Shakespeare, which Mr. Theobald had published in the Journals. But I have a better argument than all this for my Reading, and that is Mr. Pope's own great Authority; who, to the Vast improvement of Criticism, has introduced into that Wrangling Art this most Pacific Rule, That when all men are agreed about a Reading, the text may be established accordingly. These are his last words in his 2nd edition of Shakespeare: Or to speak more properly, this is his last Essay on Criticism, and well worthy his Beginnings. By this wonderful rule I establish my Reading, for I meet with none but tell me, that if he did not write so (as Dr. B. says of Horace) at least he should have wrote so. Tho' not to disguise anything in a Business of this Moment, I must own, a Friend of mine, a pretty critick, and one of Mr. Pope's hundred thousand Admirers, has objected against it, that a man could not be supposed to defame himself; but this was esteemed a cavil altogether unworthy of him; for experience informs us, that nothing is more common than for men under Torture to defame themselves; and that Mr. P. was on the Rack when the printer took his confession is plain, from his so basely traducing Friend and Foe without distinction."

The miserable pun at the end of the paragraph, the involved sentences, the heavy sarcasm, and the disposition of the capitals and italics, all are in accordance with what we know of Warburton's writing. The comparison in the opening sentence to the "per placet of an Archbishop's Chaplain" is likely to occur most readily to one in Holy Orders. But at best this is mere suspicion. To turn this to a certainty corroborative evidence is found in the various Shakespeare emendations which the writer advances as preferences to Pope's blundering readings.

Firstly, there is the manner of the emendations. Expressions like "For, so, doubtless, it should be read ", "you may be assured then that Shakespeare wrote ", and "Nothing so ridiculous as this could have come from the pen of Shakespeare" have Warburton's hall-mark. And when the tendency to "crow" over corrections (preceded by liberal abuse) is found, the suspicion gains in strength.

---

10 This last point observed by Mr. Evans in his Warburton and Warburtonians, p. 73.
11 Burney Collection, 276 b, Nos. 2560 and 2586.
Then there is the matter of these emendations. When it is found that most of them reappear in Warburton’s edition, and that some of them are accompanied by notes which are almost literal transcriptions of those found in the letters, then the writer of these letters emerges from the penumbra of suspicion into light and stands definitely revealed as William Warburton. After this there can be no mention of “reasonable doubt” in connection with the identity of the writer. And we find that such is the case. For instance, in his first letter the writer, in emending the line from R. III, Act 3, Sc. 1:

“Thus like the formal VICE, INIQUITY,”

into

“Thus like the formal WISE ANTIQUITY”

has the following note:—

“. . . alluding to the Mythologic Learning of the Antients, which explained the fables of their Gods by Moral Verities; a sentiment wonderfully well adapted to the character of Richard, who must be supposed here to speak ironically, and to this effect, ‘you men of Morals, who so much extol your formal Wise Antiquity, in what am I inferior to it, which was but an equivocator as I am and could moralize two meanings in one word’.”

In Warburton’s edition this emendation is found with the following almost identical note:—

“Alluding to the Mythologic learning of the antients, of whom they are all here speaking. So that Richard’s ironical apology is to this effect. You men of morals who so much extol your all wise antiquity, in what am I inferior to it? Which was but an equivocator as I am?”

Again, in altering

“. . . present Fears
Are less than horrible imaginings”

from Macbeth, Act I, Sc. 3, into

“. . . present Feats
Are less than horrible imaginings”,

the following paraphrase of meaning is given by the writer of the letter:—

“When I come to execute this Murther, I shall find it much less dreadful than my frightened imagination now presents it to me.”

We find an identical note—only Murther is spelt Murder—in Warburton’s edition.

---

12 Burney Collection, 276 b, No. 2560.
14 Ibid., Vol. 6, p. 343:
In altering the "base INDIAN" (Othello, last scene) into the "base JUDEAN", both the writer of the letter and Warburton in his edition refer to the story of Herod and Marianne in similar terms.  

The emendation of Aeneas into Sichaeus from Antony and Cleopatra (Act V, Sc. 2) in "Dido and her Aeneas shall want troops", has notes in both the letter and the edition identical even to the Latin quotation.  

In explaining "the Nook-shorten Isle" from Henry V (Act 3, Sc. 6) the same analogy of the Shotten-herring is used in the letter and in the edition. Defining the expression itself the letter has the following:—"So Nook-shotten is a place that shoots out into capes, promontories and necks of land, the very figure of Great Britain."  

Now that there is certitude about the authorship of the "three printed Criticisms", we can turn to the reflections on Pope contained in these letters. Sneering references to "Mr. Pope’s own great authority", "a famous modern", and to his book printed in a most "scandalous character full of Hallucinations" in the opening paragraph of the first letter, are but a mild prelude to the oncoming fusillade. Railing at Pope’s ignorance of Mythology, he says: "Homer the sacred text of the mythologists has been translated, you’ll say to very good purpose by our Editor". Exclaiming against an emendation of Pope’s, he remarks as follows:—

"If the editor can give any pertinent meaning... he shall be esteemed a second Lycurgus, as a poor mad Frenchwoman imagines him; which strange lunatick compliment, with unparallelled Modesty, he has transcribed into the postscript of his Odyssey."  

He who was later on to vindicate the "Essay on Man", speaks thus of Pope’s knowledge of philosophy:—

"But what do we speak of our editor’s Ignorance in Philosophy, when he appears unskilled in the signification of the most used terms in it."

Not only Pope’s ability but also his character comes under Warburton’s attack. In the opening paragraphs of the second letter, Pope is made out to be a cheat who, having taken people’s money, scamped his work to their utter loss. The story is told of a painter who was commissioned to paint the king’s arms on the Town House. Subscriptions were collected, but the painter, after eight days’ work, finding he could not make anything of...  

15 Burney Collection, 276 b, No. 2574 and Warburton’s Shakespeare, Vol. 8, p. 403.  
16 Burney Collection, 276 b, No. 2574, and Warburton’s Shakespeare, Vol. 7, p. 198.  
17 Burney Collection, 276 b, No. 2586, and Warburton’s Shakespeare, Vol. 4, p. 367.  
18 Burney Collection, 276 b, No. 2560.
his labour, threw away his pencil in disdain, returned the money, and told
his neighbours that he had a genius above such piddling matters.

"In like manner," he continues, "the late editor of Shakespeare, with
equal skill tho' not with equal Honesty (for I don't hear that ever he returned
one penny of the Publick on this pretence) having after all his pains left,
left Shakespeare as he found him, in great rage consigns over the province
to piddling T-s., and returns to his primitive Occupation of Libelling and
bawdy-Ballad-making and, after all this, has the insolence to talk of his
Hundred thousand admirers.... Who can forbear thinking that the Divine
Shakespeare prophesies in his editor, and that Peter Quince the Prologue-
speaker in Midsummer Night's Dream was but the Type, or shadow of A.P.
the Play-corrector."\(^{19}\)

Playing upon the words in a passage from Coriolanus (Act I, Sc. 12)
he upbraids the maliciousness of Pope:—

"Yet who will say on the other hand that the editor has not oft entered
very cordially into the true sentiments of the speaker; yea, far surpassed
them, who remembers nor SLEEP nor SANCTUARY, could cover the
immortal Mr. Addison from an outrageous Satire; who remember not being
NAKED or SICK, could secure some unfortunate men from having their
very Miseries most barbarously ridiculed without provocation, in the
Dunciad; who remembers lastly, nor FANE nor CAPITOL could screen that
incomparable patriot and prelate the Bishop of S——y from the blackest
Venom of his pen."\(^{20}\)

Pope the poet earns the following tribute from the early Warburton:—

"Cahumny and Prophaneness are two of the most considerable branches
of Modern poetry, and Mr. Pope's very enemies must allow him to shine
distinguishedly in each."

In the final letter the writer announces his intention of giving Pope a
"coup-de-grace" and proceeds to do so in these terms:—

"The fidel obscurities which his critical talent has superinduced to
corruptions that he found (saving your reverence) proved just such a task
as his who goes to a House of Office in the dark, and, as Lord Bacon says,
feels about for what he would be loth to find."\(^{21}\)

This vulgar tone reaches its disgusting climax in the concluding paragraphs
of the letter, in which he has concentrated all his venom against the poet.

"What now, Reader, is to be thought of this man," says Warburton,
"who has no other Terms for the whole body of his contemporary Writers,

\(^{19}\) Burney Collection, 276 b, No. 2574.
\(^{20}\) Ibid., No. 2574.
\(^{21}\) Ibid., No. 2586.
than Dunce, Blockhead, Fool, which he rings Changes upon without End, in a most outrageous Libel, the Disgrace of the Good Sense, Politeness, and Humanity of Great Britain? And as he never yet introduced anything but by Imitation, this is to claim kindred to the fine poem of Mac-Fleeno, upon Pretence, I suppose (for there can be no other) that he has matched the Wit and Humour of that, with the abounding Beastliness and Obscurity of his own. Which cannot but put one in Mind of that pleasant Tale in the polite Roman Fabulist.

"An Ass, says he, one Morning, in the Gaiety of his Heart, very familiarly accosted a Boar by the name of Brother. That Freedom was very much resented, and being roughly asked whence sprang their Relation; the beastly creature in Answer, only lift up his Leg, and discovered a monstrous large Thing, not worth a name; which, in the ludicrous posture it was shown, presented a remote resemblance to the fulminating snout of that brave and generous savage."  

It has been already suggested that in view of this early attitude to Pope, Warburton need not have been unduly upset when he found Crousaz attacking the "Essay on Man". On the contrary, he had reason to hail him as an ally, for we have ample evidence that Warburton himself shared the learned professor's view in his weekly refutation of the "Essay" at the Newark Club. Prior, in his "Life of Malone", had this anecdote told him by Dr. Warton, who had it from someone else, "that when Warburton resided at Newark, he and several others held a club where Warburton used to produce and read weekly essays in refutation of Pope's 'Essay on Man'". Dr. Stukely, Warburton's "oldest acquaintance", whose honesty he acknowledged, and for whom Warburton professed a tenderness in his heart, says of him that he "wrote a treatise against Mr. Pope's Essay on Man, to prove it to be Atheism, Spinosism, deism, hobbism, fatalism, materialism, and what not. In that my sentiments fully coincided". Apart from pointing out these infidel tendencies of the poem he made very offensive remarks on the material of the poem. "What is a little singular," says Tyers, "Warburton, amongst his earlier friends who were Pope's enemies, had roughly and roundly asserted that the essay was Collected from the worst passages of the worst authors." Instead of writing a supplement to Crousaz, as would have been expected, and riveting the attention of the English public on the remarks of the learned professor, he fell foul of his ally and called him

22 Burney Collection No. 2586.
23 Prior's Life of Malone, p. 430.
24 Letters from a Late Eminent Prelate, p. 264.
26 Historical Rhapsody on Pope (1782), p. 49.
names! And those who knew about his early lucubrations on Pope were amazed when he referred to the poet as "the last of the poetic line amongst us, on whom the large patrimony of his whole race is devolved". 27 The Libeller and the Bawdy-Ballad-maker was extolled as "a great Genius, whose writings have afforded the World much Pleasure and Instruction". 28 The man whose ignorance in philosophy was so colossal that he was "unskilled in the signification of the most used term in it", had produced a poem which "hath a precision, Force, and Closeness of connection, rarely to be met with, even in the most formal treatises of Philosophy". 29 Crousaz was accused of "attempting to deprive a Virtuous Man of his honest Reputation", 30 who formerly was depicted as a cheat who collected subscriptions and scamped his work.

What was the reason of this Volte face? Let us hear Warburton himself on the point. Writing to Hurd, he says:—

"Those Villains, if any such there be, who upbraided me with my acquaintance and Correspondence with the gentlemen of the Dunciad, know I at the same time proclaimed it to the World in Tibbald's edition of Shakespeare, in Mr. P's lifetime—Till his letters were published I had as indifferent an opinion of his morals as they pretended to have. Mr. P knew this, and had the Justice to own to me that I fairly followed appearances, when I thought well of them and ill of him. He owned indeed that on reading that edition, he was sorry to find a man of genius got amongst them, for he told me he was greatly struck with my notes. This Conversation happened to pass in Company, on one of them saying, they wondered I would give anything to such a fellow as Tibbald: Mr. P said immediately, there was no wonder at all: I took him for an honest man as he had done, and on that footing had visited him—and then followed what I relate above. This was the only time the subject ever came on the tapis. For he was too delicate to mention anything of it to me alone."

Firstly, did Warburton also proclaim to Pope in his life-time the "three printed criticisms" with which he obliged Theobald? Then, does an "indifferent opinion of morals" mean such an opinion as found violent expression in those criticisms? When a man is accused of "Rank Atheism" 31 on the strength of a published poem, does it mean that Warburton "fairly

27 A Critical and Philosophical Commentary on Mr. Pope's Essay on Man, etc. (B. Museum No. 011850, cc. 12), p. 182.
28 Ibid., p. 1.
29 Ibid., p. 181.
30 Ibid., p. 186.
31 Letters from a Late Eminent Prelate, p. 164.
followed appearances”? Are we to conclude that the intellect of Warburton beclouded by association with the Theobald crowd suddenly cleared and woke up to the transcendent merits of Pope? His intimate friend and biographer Hurd actually thinks so.

“It has been objected to Mr. Warburton,” says Hurd, “that, in his earlier days, he had himself entertained a prejudice against Mr. Pope, and had even expressed it in very strong terms. The offence taken had probably been occasioned by a severe reflexion, in one of his satires, on Mr. Warburton’s friend and patron, Sir Robert Sutton. And, in that case, it is likely that he might express himself of the poet, with too much warmth. For I will not conceal or disguise the infirmity of my friend. When his moral feelings were touched, he was apt to be transported into some intemperance of expression, and was not always guarded, or even just, in his censures or commendations. But a mind, naturally great, does not long retain this fervour, and when cooled by reflection, is in haste to make amends for its former excesses. It is impossible indeed, that under any provocation, he should be blind to so much merit, as our great Poet possessed; and what he saw of this sort in any man, he was not backward to declare to others. In his Vindication of himself, last year, he had shown how much he admired Mr. Pope, by quoting a fine passage from him, and applying it to himself in a way, that showed an esteem of his morals, as well as poetry.”

Hurd certainly had done his best for him by this well-worded defence. By giving a perfectly plausible reason for Warburton’s early rage against Pope, and by a graceful admission of Warburton’s bad temper when roused, he has cleared the field for his defence very effectively. But is this all the truth? Is this not too naive a tale to carry our credence? If the satire on Sir Robert Sutton caused Warburton’s rage, why should it abate when the offence was not as yet atoned for by Pope? Also, if Theobald had fallen in with Warburton’s suggestion regarding his “Shakespeare cdn.” would this “naturally great” mind have ceased being blind to so much merit in Pope? Might not chagrin at Theobald’s resistance to his ideas have driven him to the present position as defender of Pope? Also, was not Pope the friend of the mighty and was not Warburton eager of advancement in life? And in fact was not Pope mainly responsible for the later prosperity of Warburton? The very swing of the pendulum, from Billingsgate epithets to dithyrambic praise, makes one doubt the sincerity of Warburton’s attitude. And we have positive proof of his insincerity. After defending the first three epistles in the Essay, he said that Pope’s “strong and delicate reasoning ran equally thro’ all” the poem but that “the turn of the fourth Epistle

---

28 Hurd, A Discourse, etc., p. 28.
being more popular seemed to need no comment”.

"I have been looking over, _inter nos_, the fourth epistle of the Essay on Man; .... I find this part of my defence of Mr. Pope as difficult as a confutation of Mr. Crousaz's nonsense, and a detection of the translator's blunders are easy. I do not know whether I can do it to my mind, or whether I shall do it at all, so beg you would keep it secret."

Still another reason has been suggested to account for his defence of the Essay, that "it was in keeping with Warburton's character that he should seize so excellent an opportunity for making out a paradoxical case and displaying his ingenuity and dialectical skill". It is quite possible that fresh from his labours on the "Divine Legation", he might have employed the same trick in establishing consistency in the Essay as he used in proving the Divine dispensation of the Mosaic Law. The _Method_ of his defence may owe something to his love of paradox, but to make the latter the very spring of action, somewhat strains our credulity. And when Hurd says that his recent harrowing experiences with his antagonists made Warburton sympathetic to the much-maligned Pope, we have what sounds very much like an afterthought. It is as if Hurd sat down to explain somehow his dear friend's amazing somersault and this clever explanation was the result. If Hurd had known of the "three printed criticisms" and seen Warburton himself in the light of an "angry zealot" misrepresenting Pope, he might have held back this explanation. From snarling hatred to touching sympathy is an act of Christian contrition beyond the temperament of a Warburton. It is said that by making friends with Pope he had something to lose in that he made many enemies. But this argument is very double-edged. And as we know from his life the friends he acquired more than made up for the hostility he incurred.

To sum up, then, pique at Theobald's ingratitude (as he understood it) seasoned liberally by self-interest, seems to have been at the back of his change in attitude.

The circumstances and manner of the Pope-Warburton _rapprochement_ are interesting enough to merit our attention. By assuming anonymity when publishing the "Essay on Man" Pope showed himself diffident as to the reception of his first attempts at philosophy. The versification of plagiarised

---

35 Oct. 25, 1739.
36 Evans, A. W., _Warburton and the Warburtonians_, p. 75.
37 Hurd, _A Discourse_, etc., p. 29.
38 _Ibid._, p. 29.
ideas, imperfectly understood, was quite a success, and the brightness of the
couplets dazzled inquiring minds into an uncritical acceptance of the poem.

His orthodoxy was unassailed and Pope thought fit to claim the pater-
nity of the poem. Those whom he thought dangerous, he propitiated by
ingenious correspondence as his letters to Caryll will show.39 He was so
nervous about getting into trouble with the powers that be, that Bolingbroke
remarks about it to him in his letters. "I know how desirous you are to
keep fair with the Orders," writes Bolingbroke, "whatever liberties you take
with particular men."40 In due course the French translations of the poem
spread on the Continent and one of them fell into the hands of a Swiss
professor, Jean Pierre De Crouzaz, who discovered a veritable horns' nest
of infidel ideas in the poem. After a partial study of the poem he published
his sketchy "Examen de l'Essai de Mr. Pope" in 1737, and a year later,
followed it up with a more elaborate "Commentaire sur la Traduction en
Vers de M. l'Abbe Du Resnel de l'Essai de Mr. Pope sur l'Homme". Un-
luckily for Crouzaz, as we shall see, the translator, Abbé Du Resnel, on
whose work he based his remarks, had done his task most deplorably. The
sum and substance of M. Crouzaz's remarks were that Pope was a free-
 thinker who derived most of his ideas from Leibnitz. The consequence
was that a "Fatality destructive of all Religion and all Morality", was the
keynote of the poem. In concluding his First Epistle Pope had said the one
clear truth was that "Whatever is, is Right". M. Crouzaz discerned in it
the Leibnitzian doctrine of "pre-established Harmony". Coming from
one of established reputation, the accusation must have terrorised the nervous
Pope, who was so anxious to keep fair with the Orders. Those were days of
"Hunt the Atheist", and "Hunt the Infidel" cries, and even the great
Bolingbroke professed his heresies only in private. Crouzaz had started the
"View-halloo!" and it would not be long before the whole pack was in full
cry. Efficient versification of glib ideas was Pope's forte, but when it came to
justifying the philosophy underlying his poem, of which he never had a clear
idea, he felt helpless. His "Guide, Philosopher, and Friend" was hardly
the person he could turn to for assistance, knowing, as he did, the noble
lord's predilections. It was when Pope was in this terrible situation that
Warburton played the knight-errant to earn the poet's everlasting gratitude.
With his letters to the "History of the Work of the Learned",41 which

40 Ibid., p. 286.
41 Five letters: 1738, Dec., and 1739, Jan., Feb., March, May. Later these letters were
collected into a comprehensive "Vindication" in 1740. A seventh letter was written the same
year. An expanded edition was also published with a dedication to Ralph Allen.
appeared anonymously, he parried a formidable thrust, and those who would have joined in the cry saw in the author of the "Divine Legation" an antagonist best unprovoked.

In writing against Pope’s inorganic poem with all his solemnity, Crousaz was in the plight of the knight of La Mancha who mistook windmills for giants. And in writing against Crousaz, Warburton’s position was still more unreal. It is true that, as Dr. Johnson pointed out in his "Life of Pope", there are several passages in Pope’s poem which certainly bear the fatalistic construction put upon it by Crousaz. But there are other passages which, carried to their logical extent, lead to either pantheism or deism. Pope was speaking the absolute truth when he said in his letter of gratitude to Warburton that he never heard of such a thing as "pre-established-harmony" in his life before.\(^{42}\) Bolingbroke had taken care in his conversations with Pope so to calumniate Leibnitz that his disciple never suspected his friend of actually having stolen from that philosopher many of the ideas retailed to him.\(^{42a}\) By assuming a unity of thought and feeling in the medley of ideas that the poem really was, Crousaz was in an untenable position, and laid himself easily open to attack. He was correct when he discerned fatalism and Leibnitzianism in many parts of the poem. But he was mistaken in alleging that they were the dominant doctrines of the poem, or that they were worked out with any consistency throughout the Essay. His position was rendered worse by relying on the deplorable translation of the poem by Abbe Du Resnel, whose rendering of Pope’s verse is effectively disposed of by Warburton.

Exclamation, raillery, unblushing panegyric of Pope and dialectical gymnastics constitute Warburton’s vindication of the Essay. He proved himself a veritable Procrustes in stretching or compressing the meaning of the couplets. Pope’s Jerry-building was completely obscured by the new outworks, and a tottering Jerry-building had an additional strain to bear.

"How unaccountable is this perverseness",\(^{43}\) "what.... wild talk",\(^{44}\) "Wonderful! our logician has at length found his subject",\(^{45}\) "what stupidity", and similar expressed are liberally scattered throughout the letters. Whole paragraphs make fun of Crousaz the Logician,\(^{46}\) and

---

\(^{42}\) Egerton, 1946, Feb. 2, 1738.


\(^{44}\) Ibid., 1738, p. 431.

\(^{45}\) Ibid., 1739, Vol. 1, p. 62.

\(^{46}\) Ibid., 1739, pp. 72-73.
almost a whole letter of epithets and exclamations is devoted to the M. l’Abbe who, one feels, deserves much of it.\(^{47}\)

As to praise of Pope, there is not a page without a compliment. The eulogy begins in a low key with just “admirable poet” and “great Countryman” in the opening paragraph of the first letter,\(^{48}\) proceeds to the “most sublime, witty and harmonious (poem), that ever was wrote”\(^ {49}\) and “a great genius, who has afforded the World much pleasure and instruction”\(^ {50}\) and culminates in “Mr. Pope, the last of the poetic Line amongst us, on whom the large patrimony of his whole race is devolved”,\(^ {51}\) and a poet “whose works want nothing but to be fairly examined by the severest Rules of Logick and good Philosophy, to become as illustrious for their sense as they have long been for their wit and poetry”.\(^ {52}\) Later on, when he expanded these letters into a “Vindication”, part of the expansion consisted in additional fulsome adulation of the poem and the poet.

As examples of his defence of the Essay, his refutation of Pope’s alleged Leibnitzianism and his demonstration of the Christian Religion, from the interpretation of passages in the Essay, will suffice.

In refuting the alleged heresy of Fatalism, he begins by angrily asserting that Pope never “espoused that impious whimsy”.\(^ {53}\) On the contrary, Pope was but following Plato, who, in defending providence against atheistical objections about the origin of Evil says that

“amongst an infinite number of possible worlds in God’s Idea, this which he hath created and brought into being, with a Mixture of Evil was the best. But if the best, then consequently Evil is partial, comparatively small and tends to the greater perfection of the whole.”\(^ {54}\)

Thus Pope, when he said that “Whatever is, is right”\(^ {55}\) and that “Eternal Art educes Good from Ill”,\(^ {56}\) instead of being a fatalist, was theorising in very good company, Plato, of course, not being liable to be in the least suspected of Fatalism. This defence would have been perfectly tenable but for the following lines from another part of the poem:

\(^{47}\) History of the Works of the Learned, 1739, pp. 159–72.
\(^{49}\) Ibid., 1738, p. 427.
\(^{50}\) Ibid., 1739, Vol. 1, p. 56.
\(^{51}\) Ibid., 1739, p. 104.
\(^{52}\) Ibid., 1739, p. 358.
\(^{54}\) Ibid., p. 426.
\(^{55}\) Epistle i, l. 294.
\(^{56}\) Ibid., ii, l. 175.
"If plagues or earthquakes break not Heav’n’s design
Why then a Borgia, or a Catiline?
Who knows but he, whose hand the light’ning forms
Who heaves old Ocean, and who wings the Storms,
Pours fierce ambition in a Cæsar’s mind,
Or turns young Ammon loose to scourge Mankind."\(^{57}\)

On which Elwin comments as follows:

"Since the sin of men is imposed upon them by God they must be machines after all, and of a debased and often devilish species. An inexorable fatalism becomes the law of Humanity and Borgias and Catilines and Caesars are destructive wheels which simply obey the motion impressed upon them by the omnipresent architect. God can do no wrong; man is the puppet of God; and whatever is, is consequently right, the villainies of miscreants included."\(^{58}\)

This was very much the reasoning of Crousaz\(^*\) on which Warburton with the futile remark that it was "very tragical", begs the question by simply asserting that it has a meaning in the platonic sense.\(^{59}\) But it is characteristic of Pope’s poem that Warburton’s remarks would have held good for other parts of the Essay. As, for instance, here:

"What makes all Physical and Moral Ill
There deviates nature, and here wanders Will
God sends not ill."\(^{60}\)

The hand that forms the lightning no longer pours fierce ambition into Cæsar, nor is it responsible for turning Ammon loose to scourge mankind. "God sends not ill." This inconsistency, instead of embarrassing Warburton, suited him perfectly in that while Crousaz was censuring one part of the Essay, he could be confuted by quoting other parts of it. And Warburton’s convenient memory, which forgot passages inimical to his own view, was an asset for such defence.

His distortion of several passages into a demonstration of the Christian religion is not so much ingenious as pathetic. In the statement that Reason was no guide and so Nature’s road must be preferred,\(^{61}\) Warburton saw a

---

\(^{57}\) Epistle i, II. 155–60.


\(^*\) "These lines have no sense but on the system of Leibnitz, which confounds Morals with Physics and in which, all that we call Pleasures, Grief, Contentment, Inquietitude, Wisdom, Virtue, Truth, Error, Vices, Crimes, Abominations, are the inevitable consequences of a fatal Chain of Things as ancient as the World."—Crousaz.


\(^{60}\) Epistle iv, II. 111–12.

\(^{61}\) Ibid., ii, II. 161–2.
conclusive demonstration of Christianity. The poet leaves Reason unrelied and so he asks triumphantly "What is this then, but an intimation that we ought to seek for a cure in that Religion, which only dares profess to give it?" Here Warburton is repeating an old trick of argument on a lesser scale. In the "Divine Legation of Moses Demonstrated" he proved the Divine Original of the Law of Moses in much the same manner. The doctrine of a future state, which was so very necessary to the welfare of society, was not found in the Mosaic Law. Since this dispensation did not contain the most essential principle, it must have been supported by an "extraordinary providence". His ability in such sleight of mind has won him the dubious reputation as one skilled in paradox. In developing his argument that "The perfection of happiness consists in a conformity to the order of Providence here, and a resignation to it here and hereafter", Pope says:

"For him alone Hope leads from goal to goal
And opens still and opens on his soul
Till lengthen'd on to Faith, and unconfin'd
It pours the Bliss that fills up all the mind."

Warburton is here certain that Pope is referring to Christianity because "Natural Religion never lengthened Hope on to Faith. Nor did any Religion, but the Christian, ever conceive that Faith could fill the mind with Happiness". But Pope never worried about any particular Religion. "For modes of Faith," he had said, "let graceless zealots fight." Nor did he ever consider Faith the monopoly of the Christian religion. He speaks about "The faith and moral nature gave before", thereby letting us know that Faith was an element of the religion of nature. Warburton's convenient memory had ignored these lines. In stating the desirability of the "Restoration of true religion and government on their first principle", Pope speaks of "the studious head or gen'r'ous mind" and the "Follow'r of God or friend of human kind" who

"Relumed her (Nature's) ancient light, nor kindled new;
If not God's image, yet his shadow drew."

Warburton's note on this very nearly takes the prize for deliberately misrepresentative interpretation. He remarks that "The poet speaking of the great

---

64 Epistle iv, II. 341-44.
66 Epistle iii, verse 305.
67 Ibid., iii, II. 285-86.
69 Epistle iii, II. 283-88.
Restorers of the Religion of Nature, intimates that they could draw God’s shadow, not his Image. As reverencing that Truth, which tells us that this Discovery was reserved for the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the Image of God”. By taking “yet his shadow drew” to mean “only his shadow drew”, he arrives at his stupendous conclusion. This, notwithstanding what Pope had written about the state of Nature being the reign of God, from which it follows that to resume the ancient light was considered as most desirable by the poet.

If his defence of the Essay as a consistent philosophical poem converging towards the truths of Christianity was pitiable, his appreciation of it as a poem is more so. When he expanded his letters into a Vindication, he threw in a few aesthetic appraisals of the lines which he had not time to do in the heat of controversy. He discovers a “new species of the sublime” in Pope which is of a nature “distinct from every other poetical excellence”, the character of which he describes as follows:—

“The two great perfections of works of genius are Wit and Sublimity. Many writers have been Witty, several have been Sublime, and some few have possessed both these qualities separately. But none that I know of, besides our poet hath had the art to incorporate them.”

Our interest keyed to a pitch by this praise, we await the illustration of such excellence and we are given it in the following lines:

“Superior Beings, when of late they saw
A mortal man unfold all Nature’s Law
Admired such Wisdom in an earthly Shape,
And shew’d a Newton, as we shew an Ape.”

Leaving aside all the very fine lines that the poem admittedly has, that Warburton should have selected these for illustration of his new species of sublimity and wit is deplorable. And when it is seen that even this passage is adapted from Palingenius—a Latin poet of the sixteenth century—where it was a false conceit “without a spark of sublimity or wit”, then the whole episode becomes ridiculous.

Yet this travesty of a defence gave the initial impetus to his subsequent career of position and influence. On the 2nd February, 1738, he received the following letter:  

---

71 Epistle iii, l. 148.
72 Vindication of the Essay on Man, p. 75.
73 Epistle ii, II. 31-4.
75 Egerton, 1946, f. 3 : Mr. Evans is not quite accurate when he says (p. 78 in Warburton and the Warburtonians) that this letter was printed by him for the first time. The letter in its entirety was printed, as he says, for the first time in his book. But the relevant portions of it have been printed by Elwin and Courthope, Vol. 9, p. 243.
Sir,

I cannot forbear to return you my thanks for your animadversion on Mr. Crousaü: Tho' I doubt not, it was less a regard to me, than to candour and truth, which made you take the pains to answer so mistaken a man. I fear indeed he did not attack me on quite so good a principle: and whenever I see such a vein of uncharitableness and vanity in any work, whether it concerns me or another, I am always ready to thank God to find it accompany'd with as much weakness. But this is what I shd never have exposed myself, because it concerned myself: And therefore I am the more obliged to you for doing it.

I will not give you the unnecessary trouble of adding here to the Defence you have made of me. (Tho much might be said on your article on the passions in the second book.) Only it cannot be unpleasant for you to know, that I never in my life read a line of Leibnitz, nor understood that there was such a term as pre-established harmony, till I found it on Mons. Crousaü's book.

I am Sir, with a due esteem for your abilities and for your Candour (both which I am no stranger, from your other writings as well as this).

Your most obliged and most humble servant,
A. Pope.”

The modest Pope, who forbore defending his poem only because it concerned himself, is an amusing figure. Be that as it may, nothing could have been sweeter to Warburton than to have the premier poet of the day and the friend of nobility, suing for friendship in this profuse manner. He had by then written two letters to the “Works of the Learned”, and now he redoubled his efforts and dispatched a third one to be published in their March issue which immediately drew from Pope more extravagant compliments. Writing to Warburton on the 11th of April, Pope says:78

“......I cannot help thanking you in particular for your third letter, which is so extremely clear, short and full, that I think Mr. Crousaü ought never to have another answerer, and deserved not so good a one. I can only say you do him too much honour, and me too much right, so odd as the expression seems, for you have made my system as clear as I ought to have done and could not. It is indeed the same system as mine, but illustrated with a ray of your own...... I am sure, I like it better than I did before, and so will every man else. I know I meant just what you explain, but I did not explain my meaning so well as you: you understand me as well as I do myself, but you express me better than I could express myself.”

78 Egerton MS. 1946, f. 5.
Instead of just obliging Pope by stray rays from his intellect according as the poet’s works came his way, Warburton was given the opportunity to shine steadily on his friend. Pope expressed a desire to meet the man to whom he had “more obligation than to almost any man” and placed his town house with its library at Warburton’s disposal. “I must repeat my urgent desire,” he says in another of his letters, “to be previously acquainted with the precise time of your visit to London; that I may have the pleasure to meet a man in the manner I would, whom I must esteem one of the greatest of my benefactors.” And when Warburton let him know of the likely time of his visit to London, the poet who, in a previous letter thought it “below the dignity of the occasion” to write in the general style of compliment, wrote as follows:

"[Spring Gardens] April 16th, 1740.

Dear Sir,

You could not give me more pleasure than by your short letter, which acquaints me that I may hope to see you so soon. Let us meet like men who have been many years acquainted with each other, and whose friendship is not to begin but continue. All forms should be past, when people know each other’s minds so well: I flatter myself, you are a man after my own heart, who seeks content only from within and says to greatness Tuas habeto tibi res, egomet habebo meas. But as it is but just, your other friends should have some part of you, I insist on making you the first visit in London, and thence after a few days, to carry you to Twickenham, for as many as you can afford me. If the press be to take up any part of your time, the sheets may be brought you hourly thither by my Waterman, and you will have more leisure to attend to anything of that sort than in town. I believe also I have most of the books you can want, or can easily borrow them. I earnestly desire a line may be left at Mr. R, where and when I shall call upon you, which I will daily inquire for, whether I chance to be here or in the country. Believe me, sir, with the truest regard, and the sincerest wish to deserve

Yours, your faithful and
affectionate servant,
A. POPE."

After reading this and other letters of Pope to Warburton, it is amusing to see the latter writing to his friend that “civility and compliment generally are the goods that letter-writers exchange, which with honest men, seems a

---

77 Pope, ed. Elwin and Courthope, Vol. 9, p. 204.
78 Ibid., p. 407.
79 Ibid., pp. 207–8.
80 Ibid., pp. 205–6.
81 Ibid., p. 209.
kind of illicit trade by having been for the most part carried on, and carried furthest, by designing men”. For some reason or the other, the first visit in London did not take place, but we hear from Warton, on the personal testimony of Dodsley, who was present at the meeting, that Lord Radnor’s garden in Twickenham was the scene of their first interview. Pope seems to have been so profuse in his manner that Dodsley told Warton about his astonishment “at the high compliments paid him (Warburton) by Pope as he approached him”. Elwin tellingly comments on this in terms which cannot be bettered. He says:

“There was no occasion for astonishment. Pope’s desipser had turned idolater, ‘the gentlemen of the Dunciad’ had lost their ablest ally, the thrust of Crouse had been parried, and the Champion was the dreaded man who was expected to be a fatal foe. The sensitive novice in philosophy, who was incompetent to fight, and could not endure defeat, was relieved from future as well as present fears. He would not henceforward be answerable to theological and metaphysical assailants. Warburton had assumed the responsibility of the poem, and his irascible pugnacious Vanity was a pledge that he would defend his certificate of orthodoxy with his usual violence, disdain and ability. The relief to the mind of the anxious poet was universal, and fully explains the headlong gratitude.”

Pope seems to have taken exceeding care that his guest should enjoy his visit thoroughly. And he succeeded in his efforts to charm his new ally who wrote to Middleton in the most satisfied terms. “I passed about a week at Twickenham in the most agreeable manner. Mr. Pope is as good a companion, as a poet; and what is more, appears to be as good a Man.” He wrote in similar terms to Charles Yorke, who in a letter to his brother reports Warburton as telling him that Pope “is not a better poet than a man, and that his vivacity and wit is not more conspicuous than his humanity and affability”. In his conversations with Warburton Pope seems to have been very modest about himself, declaring “with great sincerity” (1) that “he really thought he had been exceeded in every part of writing, and on the side of invention more particularly”. Warburton was equal to the occasion and seeing that Pope’s modesty might be offended by any “particular designation of merit”, gave him what he felt was a subdued compliment by saying that

---

83 Ibid., p. 342.
84 Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 289.
85 Hurd, A Discourse, etc., p. 33.
86 Harris, Life of Lord Chancellor Hardwicke, p. 475.
87 Ibid.
"Mr. Pope was unrivalled and alone, and . . . the only poet who hath found out the art of uniting Wit to Sublimity; [whose] wit . . . gives a splendour and delicacy to [his] sublimity, and [his] sublimity gives a grace and dignity to [his] wit . . . ."

The stay was made so very pleasant that Warburton told Charles Yorke\(^8\) that

"he never spent a fortnight so agreeably anywhere as at Twickenham. He was presented to all Mr. Pope's friends, who entertained him with singular civility, and received him with an engaging freedom."

And this meeting meant that the tutelage of Bolingbroke was at an end. From the influence of a suave politician's glib philosophy Pope disentangled himself only to be snared by the shallow sophistries of a pugnacious divine. Not all Pope's good intention could cement a friendship between these two, the displeasure between whom had its acrimonious end over Pope's very grave.

After this first meeting Pope wrote Warburton letters in such fulsome vein that only his friend could read them without blushing.

"Do not therefore," he writes,\(^9\) "commend my talents, but instruct me by your own. I am not really learned enough to be a judge in works of the nature and depth of yours. But I travel through your book as through an amazing scene of ancient Egypt or Greece; struck with veneration and wonder; but at every step wanting an instructor to tell me all I wish to know. Such you prove to me in the walks of antiquity; and such you will prove to all mankind: but with this additional character more than any other searcher into antiquities, that of a genius equal to your pains, and of a taste equal to your learning."

So abject did Pope represent his surrender to be that when a Latin translation of his Essay was proposed, he told his friend\(^10\) that he was the best judge, having understood his work better than he (Pope) did himself. And the insincerity of this attitude is immediately revealed when, only a few lines later, he goes on to direct the translator in the selection of his Latin phrases. When we read:

"I am not content with those glimpses of you, which a short spring visit affords; and from which you carry nothing away with you but my sighs and wishes, without any real benefit,"\(^11\)

\(^{8}\) Harris, *Life of Lord Chancellor Hardwicke*.

\(^{9}\) *Ibid.*


we might be pardoned for thinking it an extract from the intimate correspondence of lovers. And it is to the credit of Pope that he backed these professions of regard and friendship with positive action and never lost a chance to secure advancement for his friend at the hands of the influential nobility with whom he was familiar. His earliest effort met with disappointment. Writing to Warburton about it, he says:

"It is not my friendship but the discernment of that nobleman I mentioned, which you are to thank for his intention to serve you. . . . I am sorry I can only wish you well, and not do myself honour in doing you any good."93

Earlier Pope had given a signal proof of his friendship for Warburton. In the summer of that year Pope and Warburton were on a ramble during which they came to Oxford. During their stay there, which was of short duration, the Vice-Chancellor sent a message to Warburton "with an unusual compliment to know if a Doctor's degree in divinity would be acceptable to him." To which Warburton returned such an answer "as so civil a message deserved". At the same time Pope was offered the Doctor's degree in Law. Unfortunately for Warburton the proposal as far as it concerned him was voted down, while Pope's degree was secured. On coming to know of this, Pope refused his degree until such time as the University conferred one on his friend, writing to whom he says:

"As for mine I will die before I receive one, in an art I am ignorant of, at a place where there remains any scruple of bestowing one on you, in a science of which you are so great a master. In short, I will be doctorless with you or not at all."

Warburton remonstrated and asked him not to slight the honour since it was only the machinations of a few who were "the slaves of their own passions and prejudices" that were responsible for this refusal. But Pope would not change his resolve. "We shall take our degree together in fame," he wrote to Warburton, "whatever we do at the university: and I tell you once more, I will not have it there without you."94 And Warburton never excused Oxford for this slight as is shown by his sarcastic references to it in a letter to Charles Yorke.95 Oxford is called "that Athens of Loyalty and learning", wherein takes place the metamorphosis of "so many simple rustics into civil doctors..... But the best of it is, that an Oxford Doctor, like a train-band drum forbodes no mischief or bloodshed ".

---

94 Ibid., p. 219.
95 Egerton MS. 1952, Aug. 24, 1754.
Warburton, on his side, studied to deserve Pope's adulation by becoming his literary adviser and compiling copious notes on his friend's verse. He scented Pope's idea of writing another epistle similar to the "Essay on Man". Earlier in 1736, Pope had written to Swift about such an idea and had declared his intention of addressing the epistle to him.\textsuperscript{96} Since then he had done nothing except a few fragmentary compositions. Warburton urged that these be worked up into an additional book of the \textit{Dunciad} giving that poem a general moral.\textsuperscript{97} Referring to this Pope writes to Warburton that if he can prevail upon himself to complete the \textit{Dunciad}, it would be published at the same time with a general edition of his verses.\textsuperscript{98}

"I hope," he says, "your friendship to me will be then as well known, as my being an author, and go down together to posterity;—I mean to as much of posterity as poor moderns can reach to, where the commentator, as usual, will lend a crutch to the Weak poet to help him to limp a little further than he could on his own feet."

The prospect of Warburton as a commentator of his works left Pope entirely unafraid. On the contrary, he speaks in glowing terms of Warburton's notes as

"those garlands which a commentator weaves to hang about his poet, and which are flowers both of his own gathering and painting too; not blossoms springing from the dry author."\textsuperscript{99}

Here one remembers the anecdote related by Malone,\textsuperscript{100} as to what Lord Marchmont remarked to Pope about his connection with Warburton. Marchmont told Pope that he was convinced as to Pope being one of the vainest men living. "How so?" says Pope. "Because, you little rogue," replied Lord Marchmont, "it is manifest from your close connection with your new Commentator you want to show posterity what an exquisite poet you are, and what a quantity of dullness you can carry down your back without sinking under the load." Unfortunately Pope's reply is not recorded.

Very soon Pope took steps to ensure his immortality with posterity by deciding to make Warburton the editor of the new edition of the \textit{Dunciad}.

"A project has arisen in my head to make you,"\textsuperscript{101} wrote Pope to his friend, "in some measure, the editor of this new edition of the Dunciad, if you have no scruple of owning some of the graver notes, which are added to

\textsuperscript{96} Pope, ed. Elwin and Courthope, Vol. 4, p. 16.
\textsuperscript{97} Ibid., Vol. 9, p. 218.
\textsuperscript{98} Ibid., p. 218.
\textsuperscript{99} Ibid., p. 232.
\textsuperscript{100} Prior, \textit{Life of Malone}, pp. 385-6.
\textsuperscript{101} Pope, ed. Elwin and Courthope, Vol. 9, p. 225.
those of [Mr. Cleland and] Mr. Arbuthnot. I mean it as a kind of prelude or advertisement to the public, of your Commentaries, on the Essay on Man, and on Criticism, which I propose to print next in another volume proportioned to this. . . . I have a particular reason to make you interest yourself in me and my writings. It will cause both them and me to make the better figure to posterity. A very mediocre poet, one Drayton, is yet taken some notice of, because Selden writ a [very] few notes on one of his poems.”

Joseph Warton’s poetic conscience was roused to protest against this slight done to Drayton and he remarked\(^{103}\) that Drayton deserved a much higher character than the one given to him by Pope. After characterizing Selden’s notes as “full of curious antiquarian researches,” he wrote that “Pope was as much superior to Drayton, as Selden was to Warburton”. Warburton was only too willing to accept the dignity and in addition to the notes asked for, he wrote a discourse on the poem under the pseudonym of Richard Aristarchus. These were characterized by Pope as the “last finishings and ornaments” of the poem.\(^{105}\)

Meanwhile Pope had laid the foundations of a prosperous career for Warburton by introducing him to Ralph Allen. It seems that when Pope was on one of his visits to Prior Park, a note from Warburton, declaring his intention of visiting the poet at Twickenham, was handed to him. Allen relieved Pope’s embarrassment by offering to entertain the “Lincolnshire clergyman to whom he [Pope] had very great obligation”.\(^{104}\) Accordingly, Pope wrote to Warburton inviting him to Prior Park.\(^{105}\)

“I am here in more leisure than I can possibly enjoy,” writes Pope, “even in my own house, Vacare litteris. It is at this place that your exhortations may be most effectual to make me resume the studies I had almost laid aside by perpetual avocation and dissipations. If it were practicable for you to pass a month or six weeks from home, it is here I could wish to be with you; and if you would attend to the continuation of your own noble work, or unbend to the idle amusement of commenting upon a poet, who has no other merit than that of aiming by his moral strokes to merit some regard from such men as advance Truth and Virtue in a more effectual way; in either case this place and this house would be an inviolable asylum to you from all you would desire to avoid in so public a scene as Bath. The worthy man who is the master of it invites you in the strongest terms, and is one who would treat you with love and veneration, rather than with what the world calls civility and regard. He is sincerer and plainer than almost


\(^{104}\) Ibid., p. 226.

\(^{105}\) Kilvert, Ralph Allen and Prior Park, p. 13.

any man now in this world, *antiquis moribus.* If the waters of the Bath may be serviceable to your complaints (as I believe from what you have told me of them), no Opportunity can ever be better. It is just the best season. We are told the Bishop of Salisbury is expected here daily, who, I know, is your friend; at least, though a Bishop, is too much a man of learning to be your enemy. You see I omit nothing to add to the weight in the balance, in which, however, I will not think *myself* light, since I have known your partiality. You will want no servant here. Your room will be next to mine, and one man will serve us. Here is a library and a gallery ninety feet long to walk in, and a coach whenever you would take the air with me.”

Warburton accepted the invitation and was exceedingly well cared for by Allen, who saw to it that his guest’s “bilious indigestion” was bettered by the waters of Bath, which were brought hot every morning for him to drink in bed.  

He stayed there till after the Christmas holidays and expressed satisfaction with his stay to his friend Doddridge, saying that he spent his time in “most agreeable retired society, with two excellent persons so very dear to me.”  

As has been aptly remarked, “This was the tide in the affairs of that remarkable man, which he took at its flood,” and which “led him on to fortune.”  

At the time of Warburton’s first visit to Allen, Gertrude Tucker, the latter’s favourite niece, was a child barely twelve years old. And three years later Warburton married her, or, as he put it in a letter to his friend Bowyer, he submitted to the “Vinc’la jugalia” and “offered up his freedom to one of the finest women in England.”  

The finest woman in England was then only fifteen years old. The whole affair has more the aspect of an alliance for advantage than anything else, especially so when we remember that Warburton had turned forty-seven at the time of his marriage. And Warburton did well in establishing himself as a relative of Allen in that he made the latter more solicitous about his advancement in life. A few years afterwards, Allen’s friend, Pitt, made him the Dean of Bristol, and two years later congratulated himself on having elevated Warburton to the Bishopric of Gloucester (1759).  

And finally, when Allen died, he left his niece and her husband a “legacy of £5,000 each and the reversion of the Prior Park and Claverton estates were bequeathed to Mrs. Warburton on Mrs. Allen’s death—which took place

107 *Ibid*.
110 Hurd, *Life of Warburton*, p. 70. See also *Letters from a Late Eminent Prelate*, pp. 113, 119, 188.
in 1766”. Allen also provided for various annuities and for the educational expenses at the University to benefit the short-lived son of Warburton who was named Ralph Allen Warburton as a mark of affection and gratitude. All these circumstances did not escape the notice of those who were hostile to Warburton, and many an anecdote must have circulated among them commenting on the opportunism underlying Warburton’s friendship with Allen. One such is preserved in Prior’s Life of Malone, where it is related how Quin the player retaliated on Warburton when the latter proved somewhat offensive to him. When dining at Prior Park Warburton seems to have made rather unpalatable comments on Quin’s love of eating and voluptuous life. Quin bided his time and when, after dinner, asked to recite something by Warburton, got up and, looking at Allen, repeated a few lines from Pierre beginning:

“... Honest men
Are the soft easy cushions on which knaves
Repose and fatten.”

It is noted that Warburton gave him no further trouble for the rest of the evening.

Warburton himself was deeply sensible of Allen’s goodness and never mentioned his name without praise. In the light of what we know of Allen’s own gentle temper and the many obligations that Warburton was under to him, it is not very surprising that Warburton should express himself so. Writing to his young friend, Charles Yorke, he says about Allen that:

“Of all friendly men I never knew one so easily paid. He has no idea, in his commerce with those he loves, that there can be anything disguised or feigned: and so reasonable with all men, that he wishes the reason of the thing may prevail, whether for or against himself... It is true he has raised a fortune by the public, but not out of it. He has this in Common with many others, that he has got considerably by being concerned for the public; but he is one of those few by whom the public has largely got in their concerns with him. His few thousands has brought to the public revenue many thousands, distinct from the prodigious advantage his scheme has been of to the national commerce. But what perhaps more particularly distinguishes him is, his having ever preferred, throughout this whole transaction, the public benefit to his own; and what is more, the giving much of his own, to advance that service.”

---

111 Peach, Life and Times of Ralph Allen, pp. 138-39.
112 Ibid., Appendix, pp. 226-41.
113 Prior, Life of Malone, p. 345.
114 Egerton MS. 1952, f. 47.
Again, writing to his friend Doddridge after a visit to Prior Park, he says\textsuperscript{115}:

\begin{quote}
“I got home a little before Christmas, after a charming philosophical retirement in a palace with Mr. Pope and Mr. Allen for two or three months. The gentleman I last mentioned is, I verily believe, the greatest private character in any age of the world. . . . I have studied his character even maliciously, to find where his weakness lies; but have studied in vain. . . . In a word, I firmly believe him to have been sent by Providence into the world, to teach men what blessings they might expect from Heaven, would they study to deserve them.”
\end{quote}

From these extracts from his letters, it is quite evident that Warburton’s regard for Allen was genuine and went beyond a concern solely due to self-interest. The nobility of character in Allen was such that none could escape paying a tribute to it and his demeanour so gracious that all were charmed by it. Warburton’s devotion to Allen drove him to pillory a perfectly well-meaning man who incurred his wrath by punning on Allen’s interest in the postal service, in a brochure entitled \textit{Iter Bathoniense}, which was a record of his impressions of Bath. This was Dr. John Burton, an Oxford man and a Fellow of Eton College, and the offending passage (translated into English from the original Latin) is as follows\textsuperscript{116}:

\begin{quote}
“. . . a man [Allen] whom I would not venture to call the most learned, yet certainly of all men in the world most conversant with letters, and one who, by his connexion with letters, has deservedly acquired an ample and unenvied fortune.”
\end{quote}

The play upon “letters” as applied both to learning and to Allen’s connexion with the post office, was resented by Warburton as a “saucy stupid joke” and he called Burton a “puppy” who had abused Allen’s hospitality by writing irreverently about him.\textsuperscript{117} And he resorted to his favourite method of punishing his enemies, by gibbeting Dr. Burton in a note in the \textit{Dunciad}, where he referred to the Doctor’s satire on Bath as one of gentle Dulness’s own jokes.\textsuperscript{118} Later this reference to Dr. Burton was removed at the intercession of one of his friends.\textsuperscript{119} Bath is also indebted to this devotion to Allen on the part of Warburton, for an architectural monstrosity which commemorates the owner of Prior Park. This is how it is described\textsuperscript{120}:

\textsuperscript{115} Nichols, \textit{Illustrations}, Vol. 2, p. 833.
\textsuperscript{116} Peach, \textit{Life and Times of Ralph Allen}, p. 141.
\textsuperscript{117} \textit{Letters from a Late Eminent Prelate}, Letter 19.
\textsuperscript{118} \textit{Dunciad}, Bk. iv, ll. 441-44, note.
\textsuperscript{119} Bishop Hayter (\textit{Letters from a Late Eminent Prelate}, Letter 19).
\textsuperscript{120} Peach, \textit{Life and Times of Ralph Allen}, p. 142.
"On the south side of Prior Park, in a large field... the proud prelate resolved to erect a monument to his friend—not in the city of Allen's labours and philanthropy, but away from the busy haunts of man in a spot unprotected from the mischief-loving wayfarer. Not only was the spot ill-chosen, but the monument itself—a circular tower enclosed in a triangle—is devoid of all merit and interest.... at the present day there are scarcely twenty people in Bath who have the slightest idea what the fantastic edifice means."

II

Pope's attempts to bring together Warburton and Bolingbroke did not have the same idyllic sequel as in the case of Allen. The usurping arrogance of the new-found religious mentor of Pope was distasteful to the erstwhile "guide, philosopher and friend". The initial bias against Warburton, natural in a man who sees his disciple turn renegade under the influence of one belonging to an order which was particularly loathsome to Bolingbroke, was aggravated to hatred by the well-meaning tactlessness of Pope. In the Spring of 1742 Pope heard of Bolingbroke's probable arrival at Bath and was anxious to meet him there. At the same time he thought it a good idea to take Warburton with him, and by the friendship that he thought would ensue, to repair the displeasure that he must have realised was felt by Bolingbroke at his new allegiance. Accordingly he wrote to Warburton requesting his presence at Bath. "Though this is a mere chance," he wrote, "I should not be sorry you saw so great a genius, though he and you were never to meet again. You never saw a man before, if I know what a man is." For some reason or other the chance did not immediately occur and Pope did what he thought was the second best thing. He had with him, entrusted to his care, Bolingbroke's *Letters on the Study and Use of History*, which he placed in Warburton's hands for perusal and opinion. Correspondence between persons, Pope thought, was the best way of getting acquainted with each other in the absence of personal contact. And what is more natural than that such correspondence between intellectuals should contain mutual criticism of each other's works? And so when Warburton criticised the portion concerning the authenticity of the Old Testament, telling him that the arguments were mostly borrowed from other writers and had been confuted to the full satisfaction of the learned world, and so on, Pope immediately asked him to reduce those criticisms to writing, saying that he would communicate them to his very much respected friend, whose name he kept a secret. Warburton, hearing Pope speak so respectfully of the friend, immediately sat down and "scribbled over half a dozen sheets of paper" his

criticisms, all couched in civil terms as befitted a criticism of a friend of Mr. Pope's. But theological controversy always has a subversive, though subconscious, influence on polite letter-writing. And Warburton had breathed the very spirit of it for years. Notwithstanding his immense care not to offend a friend of Mr. Pope, "the word 'prevarication' or something like it, chanced to escape his pen".122 When the sheets were sent to Paris, instead of the letter of gratitude overflowing with thanks for the learned corrections that Pope expected, he was confronted with a forceful description of his friend (Warburton) as a "very foul-mouthed and a very trifling critic",123 who was nothing but an impostor, and against whom Pope would do well to guard himself. And as Warburton himself expresses it, "Mr. Pope found he had not paid his court by this officious piece of service". But he did not leave off hope and only bided his time for a further opportunity which offered itself shortly before his own death. In the winter of 1744, he concluded a letter to Allen as follows124:

"L. Bolingbroke stays a month yet, and I hope Mr. Warburton will come to town before he goes. They will both be pleased to meet each other: and nothing in all my life has been so great a pleasure to my nature, as to bring deserving and knowing men together. It is the greatest favour that can be done, either to great geniuses or useful men."

The idea of bringing these two together had a singular fascination for Pope who was convinced that only two persons in the whole of Europe had any pretensions to be called knowing, and that they were Bolingbroke and Warburton. He wrote to Allen on March 6th of the same year saying that he had promised to make known to Warburton "the only great man in Europe who knows as much as He".125 The circumstances and the result of this first meeting is best described by Warburton himself, who communicated the notes of it to Ruffhead126 to be incorporated in the Life of Pope:

"A few days before Mr. Pope's death, he would be carried to London, to drive with Mr. Murray in Lincoln's-Inn Fields, whom he loved with the fondness of a father; and he was solicitous that Lord Bolingbroke and Mr. Warburton, the present bishop of Gloucester, should be of the party.

Some time before Mr. Warburton being with Mr. Pope at Twittenham, Mr. Hooke came in and told them, he had supped the night before at Battersea with Lord Bolingbroke; when his Lordship in conversation,

122 View of Lord Bolingbroke's Philosophy, 1756, p. 331.
123 Ibid., p. 326.
125 Ibid., p. 198.
126 Ruffhead, Life of Pope, p. 219.
advanced the strangest notions concerning the moral attributes of the Deity, which amounted to an express denial of them. This account gave Mr. Pope much uneasiness, and he told Mr. Hook with some peevish heat, that he was sure he was mistaken. The other replied as warmly, that he thought he had sense enough not to mistake a man who sopke plainly, and in a language he understood. Here the matter dropped; but Mr. Pope was so shocked at this imputation, that he did not rest till he had asked Lord Bolingbroke whether Mr. Hook was not mistaken. Lord Bolingbroke assured him Mr. Hook misunderstood him. This assurance, Mr. Pope, with great pleasure, acquainted Mr. Warburton with, the next time he saw him.

Both Lord Bolingbroke and Mr. Pope were so full of this matter, that at dinner at Mr. Murray’s, the conversation among other things, naturally turned on this subject, when, from a very suspicious remark of his Lordship’s, Mr. Warburton took occasion to speak of the clearness of our notions concerning the moral attributes; which occasioned a debate, that ended in some warmth on his Lordship’s side."

Whatever our opinion as to Warburton’s assertion that the post-prandial debate ended in some warmth only on his Lordship’s side, this much we know, that Pope’s glorious idea was a dismal failure, and the only two knowing personalities in Europe chose not to benefit posterity by their intellectual co-operation. Instead, they engaged in a post-mortem dispute on Pope, which, if it tarnished the reputation of the one, somewhat enhanced that of the other. Well might we have taken as the text of this quarrel Caesar’s celebrated “Et tu Brute”, but for the fact that Bolingbroke had neither “just cause” for his action nor the dignity of proceeding that marked Brutus’ act. The circumstances are briefly these. After the death of Pope, Bolingbroke chanced upon a cachet of 1,500 printed copies of his “Letters on the spirit of Patriotism; The idea of a patriot king, and the State of parties, etc.”, the MS. of which he had entrusted to Pope strictly enjoining him not to print it or make it public except to the very few that he (Bolingbroke) had named for the purpose. The ostensible reason was that the letters being mostly of impromptu composition, did not merit publication without further revision. Pope remonstrated to no purpose except that he gained permission to print a very few copies—hardly numbering ten—for the chosen ones. Now this large find of the printed copies argued a flagrant breach of trust on the part of Pope, and the matter was worsened by the free-lance editing of those letters without the consent of the author. In view of the thirty years or so of the closest friendship mutually professed in no uncertain terms, and in the light of Bolingbroke’s touching behaviour\[27\]

\[27\] Spence, Anecdotes, ed. Singer.
at the death-bed of Pope when he burst into tears, bemoaning the irreparable loss, the natural sequel to this find would have been anything but what it turned out to be. A savage imputation of wilful double-dealing or publication of absolutely unfounded libels against Pope could not have been even dreamt of as emanating from Bolingbroke. Still, this is what happened. The suppression of the character of Atossa, by Bolingbroke, at the request of the Duchess of Marlborough, is a well-known story. Bolingbroke was mainly instrumental in getting Warburton to consent to this suppression. And this fact was known only to him, Warburton, and Lord Marchmont, who was the intermediary for the Duchess. But without any sense of decency, or as Courthope effectively puts it, with a "reptile spirit", he defamed Pope's memory by having these lines published in 1746 with a damning note which ran as follows:

"These Verses are part of a poem entitled 'Characters of Women'. It is generally said that D—— gave Mr. P £1000 to suppress them: he took the money, yet the world sees the Verses; but this is not the first instance where Mr. P's practical Virtue has fallen very short of those pompous professions of it he makes in his writings."

As to the mere malice of this note which does not contain a particle of truth, the reader must be referred to Courthope's exposure of it in his fifteenth chapter of his Life of Pope.

"Warburton," says Courthope, "who had been a Consenting party to the suppression of the edition of the 'Ethic Epistles', was of course precluded from making any direct defence of his friend, but from the note which he attached to the 'Character of Katharine, Duchess of Buckinghamshire', it may be inferred, that if he had felt himself able, he would have put forward the explanation of the character of Atossa, which, coming from Pope himself, would of course have been accepted as conclusive."

If Warburton felt uneasy at not being able to vindicate his friend on this occasion, he did not have long to wait for an opportunity to do so. In 1749 Bolingbroke revised and published the "Letters on the Idea of a Patriot king, etc." with an advertisement prefixed wherein Pope was represented as a double-dealing, base man who foully betrayed a trusting friend. The relevant portion of the advertisement runs as follows:

---

129 Ibid., p. 347.
130 Ibid., pp. 347-49.
131 Ibid., Appendix iv, pp. 443-44.
132 Ibid., Vol. 5, p. 351.
"The original draughts [of the letters] were intrusted to a man, on whom the Author thought he might entirely depend, after he had extracted from him, and taken his promise, that they should never go into any hands, except those of five or six persons who were then named to him. In this Confidence the author rested securely for some years: and tho' he was not without suspicion that they had been communicated to more persons than he intended they should be, yet he was kept, by repeated assurances, even from suspecting that any copies had gone into hands unknown to him. But this man was no sooner dead, than he received information that an entire edition of 1500 copies of these papers had been printed; that this very man had corrected the press, and that he had left them in the hands of the printer, to keep with great secrecy till further orders. The honest printer kept his word with him better than he kept with his friend: so that the whole edition came, at last, into the hands of the author, except some few copies, which this person had taken out of the heap and carried away. These are doubtless the copies which have been handed about, not very privately, since his death. The rest were all destroyed in one common fire.—By these copies it appeared, that the man who had been guilty of this breach of trust, had taken upon him further to divide the subject, and to alter and omit passages according to the suggestions of his own fancy. What aggravates this proceeding extremely is, that the author had told him, on several occasions, amongst other reasons, why he could not consent to the publication of these papers, that they had been written in too much heat and hurry for the public eye, though they might be trusted to a few particular friends. He added more than once that some things required to be softened, others perhaps to be strengthened, and the whole most certainly to be corrected. There is scarce a man in the world more detached from it at this hour than the author of these papers, or more indifferent to the censure of most people in it, having nothing to expect nor anything to fear from them. He might therefore in his way of life and in his disposition of mind...not have known that scraps and fragments of these papers had been employed to swell a monthly magazine, and that the same honourable employment of them was to be continued....The editor, therefore, who has in his hands the genuine copy—resolved to publish it."

The editor of these letters was the somewhat sinister David Mallet (or Malloch), formerly a hanger-on on Pope, and by him introduced to Bolingbroke whose hack he became later. Commenting on the correspondence between him and Pope, Courthope has this illuminating note,\(^{134}\) that

\(^{134}\) *Pope, ed. Elwin and Courthope, Vol. 10, p. 79.*
Why this step of publishing these letters with the damaging advertisement was so long delayed is not very evident. An explanation has been ventured\(^ {135} \) that this edition was precipitated by Warburton’s threatened rough-handling of Bolingbroke in a projected Life of Pope, necessitating the publication of the letters in this manner. Writing to Mallet in July 1745, Bolingbroke says:

"They say Warburton talks very indecently of your humble servant, and threatens him with terrible things he shall throw out in a life he is writing of our poor deceased friend Mr. Pope. I value neither the good nor the ill-will of this man; but if he has any regard for the man he flattered living and thinks himself obliged to flatter dead, he ought to let a certain proceeding die away in Silence, as I endeavour it should."

Mallet replied to this letter asking him not to take the slightest notice of "Warburton’s impudent and silly menaces". According to the suggested explanation Bolingbroke disregarded Mallet’s advice and forestalled Warburton by printing his letters, the editing of which Mallet undertook with an indecent readiness entirely oblivious of his previous association with Pope. But it is difficult to see why, just because Warburton threatened to manhandle Bolingbroke, the latter should think fit to avenge himself by defaming Pope. If Bolingbroke’s endeavour that the “certain proceeding should die away in silence”, was sincere, there would not have been the advertisement to his edition of the “Letters”. Whatever the manner of the threatened handling of Bolingbroke, it could not have any possible relation to the privately printed edition of the “Letters” about which the general public was entirely ignorant. This incident Warburton certainly would not have raked up, knowing as he did the danger to the poet’s reputation by such an exposure—danger to the poet’s reputation, not because there was anything essentially discreditable in the episode, but because of the base interpretation that Pope’s numerous enemies would be ready to foist upon it. Therefore, if this letter from Bolingbroke is all the “documentary evidence” there is to prove that Bolingbroke’s “intention was to forbear, and that it was Warburton who necessitated his own edition and the advertisement to it”\(^ {136} \), then it is very inconclusive evidence. What then was the reason of the delay for five years after Pope’s death for the “Letters”, with its “advertisement”, seeing the light of day? The possible explanation may lie in the fact that a dormant irascibility of temper evidenced earlier by the publication of the Atossa verses was aggravated by the acute physical ills to which Bolingbroke was subject at the time, and the edition was the result.

\(^ {135} \) Sichel, Bolingbroke and His Times, Vol. 2. The Sequel, p. 387.
\(^ {136} \) Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 387.
Immediately on publication of this edition, Warburton prepared a dignified reply entitled *A Letter to the Editor of the Letters on The Spirit of Patriotism. The idea of a Patriot King, and The State of Parties, etc.* Occasioned by the Editor’s Advertisement. It has for its motto “Is this my Guide, Philosopher and Friend? Pope to L.B.”

Considering the provocation that Warburton had from the previous actions of Bolingbroke, and also bearing in mind the customary virulence of expression when he engaged in controversy, it is surprising to come across the dignified reticence of this reply. He starts by differentiating the attitude of the editor from the author of the letters.

“My respect for L.B.’s character,” he says, “will not suffer me to think you the same. Your Advertisement is the crudest and most unmanaged attack on the Honour of his deceased Friend; and he appears to be under all the types of that sacred relation to defend and protect it.”

He then quotes the relevant portions of the accusation from the Advertisement. He points out that there is a “vindicative severity” in the charge inviting the people to think “worst of the offender’s intention”. He then proceeds to a consideration of the various possible motives that Pope could have had for his surreptitious act.

“For tho’ the Motive cannot so alter the Nature of Actions, as to make that right, which, in itself, is wrong; yet it may alleviate the Weight of the very worst; it may make others pardonable, which are confessedly bad; and, in some again, it may give, even to their Obliquities an Amiability which a truly generous mind would honour; and which the severest casuists would only degrade into the Limbus of their Splendida Peccata.”

Is it alleged, he asked, that Pope was actuated by plagiaristic tendencies? Then the answer is that Pope was so immensely rich himself that he had no need for paltry thieving. Moreover, the title-page announced loudly that the author was a “Person of Quality” and the fact that the printer knew who the author was by his going to L.B. with the information, shows that Pope had no intention of claiming it as his own. Is it suggested that Pope had lucrative views? Then the reply is that for one who at several periods of his life refused honourable pensions from ministers there was no need to resort to such trickery for money. Also the very circumstances of the fact are against such an assumption.

“He prints at a considerable expense, 1500 copies of an eighteen-penny pamphlet to lye in the printer’s Warehouse; and which according to your own account did actually lye there till his Death. And what Book? One, which of all the author’s writings, was least calculated to catch the public
attention (howsoever this extraordinary Advertisement may now raise their curiosity) as the subject of it has been so often hacknied over, in the papers of the Craftsman. Had profit been his point, who can doubt but he had rather chosen some of L.B.'s historical Tracts, which he had equally in his possession."

What other motive could there be except that Pope sought to injure the fame and fortune of Lord Bolingbroke? This is clearly impossible in that the contents of the published book represents Lord Bolingbroke in the light of "a dispassionate and disinterested lover of his country". Had Pope any such base motive he would have seen to it that the fact of his having printed the copies never reached Bolingbroke's ears. He could have burnt them "with a secrecy equal to the ostentation with which they were all destroyed in one common fire by this Depository of the Writings and Reputation of a Man, whose last Vows to Heaven were for the prosperity of his surviving Friend."

If none of these motives can be sustained, how can the surreptitious act be explained? Warburton suggests that "An excessive and superstitious zeal for L. B.'s Glory" was the cause of it.

"He paid as all the World knows, a kind of idolatrous homage to the divine Attributes of his friend.... He was not only the Warmest advocate for his L's private and public Virtues against his adversaries, but even against himself. It was his common subject of complaint, amongst his other Friends that L.B. was faultily negligent of his Glory, even where the good of his country, and the happiness of the World depended on its being unveiled.... And this.... was the reason why his Friend chose to prevent the loss of these letters."

As to the aggravation of the offence caused by Pope's editing the letters without the author's consent, if it is remembered that they had a mutual confidence about one being the other's literary executor, the whole matter is reduced to its proper proportion and the act is divested of all the enormity of an offence. Though Pope printed the copies he would not have published them without the author's leave. The fact of their having lain at the warehouse so long proves it. That he was waiting for Bolingbroke to die in order that he might publish them is an absurd idea when "the great Disparity in the chance of survivorship" is borne in mind.

"Besides, to what purpose was the expense of printing, and the hazard of secreting an edition projected now, when he would have it equally in his power, if that event happened, to do it then.... We have nothing left, even on your own state of the case, but to believe that he expected very speedily to obtain L.B.'s concurrence. What grounds had he for such Expectation, the prudent disposition of his Papers will not permit us to say."
When all this is considered with the additional fact that Bolingbroke’s glory “will never stand fairer with posterity than in the Lines of this immortal Poet”, the idea that Pope sought to besmirch Bolingbroke’s name will seem absurd.

As to the “scraps and fragments” which appeared in a magazine, the right thing to do was to trace their origin and not to blame Pope.

“Or if the severity of Justice required even this; was it not enough to say, that the mischief came first from Mr. P by his giving abroad too many copies; without telling their common enemies, that he had printed fifteen hundred? For it came not from these (which, you own, were all destroyed in one common fire) but from a straggling copy which escaped that Desolation. As this Brand on Mr. Pope’s memory was needless, it could not come from the hand of his Noble Friend.”

Notwithstanding this controversial gesture of assuming that Bolingbroke was not the author of the Advertisement, Warburton had no doubts as to the real authorship. Adopting a well-known ruse of controversy, whereby the antagonist is severely treated by the pretence that the accusations are common misconceptions about the victim which the writer hardly believes himself, Warburton proceeds to a telling exposure of Bolingbroke’s attitude. If indeed, the editor and author of these letters are one and the same, which, of course, the writer refuses to believe, will not the public say:

“Are the Laws of Friendship then so weak, .... are its Bonds so slight, that one imprudent action committed against the honour of a Friend, (in a mistaken fondness for his Glory which came near to Adoration) that one shall obliterate the whole merit of a Life of Service, flowing from the warmest heart that the Passion of Friendship ever took possession of.”

Bolingbroke must have suffered agonies when the matter was put to him in this manner. Warburton closes the Letter by saying that he wrote this reply in order to nip in the bud any misconceptions that might survive to posterity which is ever ready to “catch at a low slander, which the Times that brought it forth saw despised and forgotten almost at its birth”, else he would not have done so, resting firmly in the conviction that the noble Lord had no hand in the Advertisement.

Warburton’s defence, as we have seen, follows reasonable lines and is not in any way marred by his customary truculence. As far as we know his presentation of the case for defence has not been seriously shaken. An attempt\textsuperscript{137} to do so has been made by bringing as a witness for the

\textsuperscript{137} Sichel, Bolingbroke and His Times.
prosecution “Bolingbroke’s trusted sister”, a passage from whose letter to a friend is quoted as evidence. In a letter to Shenstone she says:

“I saw to-day in the London Evening Post a letter which reflects on my brother Bolingbroke in regard to Mr. Pope’s treachery. . . . I have often wondered he could so long stifle the abominable usage he met with from Pope in printing his work, which he had intrusted to him to review, intending that it should not be published till after his own death. The letters between Pope and the printer bargaining for the price, were found by Lord Marchmont [the italics are Mr. Sichel’s] whose business it was to look over his papers jointly with Lord Bolingbroke.”

If these letters were found by Lord Marchmont, where are they? They are not recorded anywhere and all attempts to find them have been unsuccessful. It is unlikely that they were destroyed, for they provided such a triumphant justification for the Advertisement. The conclusion forced upon us is that in that letter Bolingbroke’s sister wittingly or unwittingly has crystallized some rumour into a definite fact.

On the contrary, we find that Warburton’s arguments are borne out by Martha Blount’s statement to Spence that she had heard Pope speak

“of some work of Lord Bolingbroke’s which that Lord designed to suppress: he spoke of it as too valuable to be so used; and said he would not suffer it to be lost”

and “she could take her Oath that it was done out of excessive esteem for the writer and his abilities.”

“A Familiar Epistle to the Most Impudent Man living” was Bolingbroke’s abusive reply to Warburton. Not one of the latter’s arguments are successfully countered, and except for a little quibbling on terms, the whole letter is indecent in its abuse. “There is a peculiar indecency,” the writer tells Warburton, “that distinguishes your writings from those of every other man.” Why should not Bolingbroke complain when he is injured? After asking that question he rails at Warburton in these terms:

“You have signalized yourself by attempting to be the Bully of Mr. P’s Memory, into whose acquaintance, at the latter end of the poor Man’s life, you was introduced by your nauseous Flattery; and whose admirable writings you are about to publish with commentaries worthy of scriblerus himself; . . . .”

The writer then assures him that he is not writing a defence of L. B. or an answer to him. “He wants no defence. You deserve no answer.” After

188 Lord Luxborough’s Letters to Shenstone, June 1749.
189 Spence, Anecdotes, ed. Singer, p. 358.
this there is some more railing at Warburton's "sophisms, foul language, and Impudence".

"By continuing to write," he says, "you have writ yourself into the contempt of all those, who have either sense or taste."

This continues for a few more paragraphs, reaching its climax in:

"... I join in this manner with every reasonable Man, to hoot out of society an Animal, who is a nuisance to it."

And after fulminating in this manner the writer thinks it a useless occupation trying to reply to Warburton's arguments.

"Who can do anything more than laugh at one, who pretending to be a modern Aristarchus, is so much below any modern Zolius, that he does not understand, or knavishly perverts, the plainest words of the English Language?"

This last charge refers to Warburton's interpretation of the honest printer's statement to Bolingbroke about the copies as an evidence of Pope's desire that the cachet of books should be made known to Bolingbroke after his death. The writer of the Epistle laughs at the suggestion and says that the printer informed Bolingbroke because he dared not do otherwise. And he characterizes the Advertisement as one written with the "utmost regret, and with as much reserve as the Case would admit". (Even our extracts from the Advertisement reveal how much truth there is in this statement.) Then he refers to Pope's first showing of the "Letters on the... Use of History" to Warburton (as we know, done in very good faith) as another Breach of Trust which only the graciousness of a Bolingbroke forgave.

"... He had forgiven it so entirely, that it did not hinder him from living with P. as he had done before, nor from attending him with all the tenderness of Friendship in his latest Hours."

With the utmost childishness he rebukes Warburton for having said that Pope's "last vows to Heaven were for the prosperity of his surviving Friend". How could Warburton know when he was not near Pope at the time of his death?

"I believe the fact to be false; at least in your Mouth it must pass for a lye, which you thought invented with great skill to raise unjust compassion on one side, and unjust indignation on another."

The letter concludes with some words of advice to Warburton.

"I would advise you then, to keep within that low sphere to which Nature and Fortune have confined you. Coax your young wife, flatter her old Uncle, and be sure, when any Corporation dispute arises at Bath, to inform
the heedless public of it; to extol him ridiculously, and to rail at those whom he oppresses. If you write on any other subject, which I cannot advise you to do, Collect plentifully, affirm dogmatically, but never attempt to reason; for they who can reason agree very unanimously that it is not your Talent. In a word be less insolent to those that are far above you in every Form of Life, to Ladies of the first Quality, and to Men of the greatest eminency."

There is no doubt that on a comparison of these letters, the honours of the battle go to Warburton. These two letters were not the only two pamphlets of the controversy. On the Warburtonian side was published "A Letter to the Lord Viscount B. . . . . . ke" which covers the same ground as Warburton's own letter in almost a similar order of arguments. It is written in an easy manner and the simplicity of its style, so unlike Warburton's, coupled with Warburton's own denial of its authorship, make it certain that the Divine had nothing to do with it. On the side of Bolingbroke was published "To the Author of a Libel entitled, A Letter to the Editor, etc." which is not very much distinguished either for its style or for its matter. It exclaims against Warburton as being a "shuffling pedant!" "Audacious Libeller!" and a "Vile Slanderer!" and so on. It resembles the Epistle in foul temper, but falls far short of it in incisiveness of expression.

Two years after this controversy Bolingbroke died, and Mallet prepared his works for publication. It was generally thought, and we have Hurd's word for it, that there were quite a number of passages in the works that were directed against Warburton. There are a few interesting letters between Warburton and Andrew Millar, the printer of Bolingbroke's works, which reveal that the latter was advised by Warburton as to the propriety of his printing Bolingbroke's works, which were "injurious to Society". Printing Bolingbroke's works for gain, says Warburton, would be just as honest a proceeding as that of the man "who for a reward undertakes to scatter poison into all the wells and cisterns of his neighbourhood". Millar replied that publication of such works instead of injuring the cause of Christianity, would "place the evidences of Religion in a stronger and clearer light". Also he had "consulted two D.'s of Divinity of y' Church of England, a Bishop, some of y' most eminent of y' dissenting ministry and several lay people of candor and reputation distinguished in y' world", who were clear upon the point and advised him to get along with his work, so long as Mallet's name was there as publisher and editor.

---

140 Evans, Warburton and the Warburtonians, p. 170, note.
141 Egerton MS. 159, reverse of f. 16.
142 Ibid., f. 15.
and Millar’s name was only one of those in his trade. To which Warburton replied as follows:—

“Jan. 3, 1754.

Sir,

I never thought my opinion of much weight where better judges were of a different; on the other hand I could not see an honest man deceive himself, if I could set him right.

I believe with you that these execrable writings will be the occasion of putting Truth in a more irresistible light. I believe too, that providence produces a deal of good out of every Species of natural and moral evil. But this I think, will not justify any one in deliberately contributing to the propagation of that evil. And whatever benefit to Religion may arise from the learned Confutation of B’s impieties, it will be but a poor reparation for the vast mischief they will do amongst the weak heads and bad hearts of a people.

Few would receive more contentment in seeing, or more pleasure in answering these writings, than myself: yet God forbid I should ever prefer my private satisfaction to the peace and happiness of society.

At the same time I make no question but you satisfy your own judgment when you act on different sentiments: and then nobody has any reason to be dissatisfied with you: at least, not I, to whom you pay a compliment, which I had no pretensions to expect, when you are pleased to account to me for your conduct.

I am, etc.”*143

There the matter rested, and we find from the British Museum copy of the works of Bolingbroke,*144 that Millar timidly omits his name, as printer, from the title-page. But Warburton’s pious resolve to prefer his private satisfaction to the peace and happiness of society, lasted only a short while. For we find that in 1755 he published his “view of Bolingbroke” in “Four letters to a Friend”, the friend addressed being the placid Allen.

“As to my view of Bolingbroke,” he tells Hurd*145 in a letter on Sep. 7, 1754, “I tell it to you in confidence, I am apprehensive of displeasing some by it whom I most honour, and at a critical time. So that I solemnly assure you, nothing but the sense of indispensable duty, as a Christian and a Clergyman, could have induced me to run the hazard of doing myself so much injury.”

This letter has been quoted as an instance of Warburton’s selflessness when confronted by duty. But when one thinks of his security in Prior Park with

---

*143 Egerton MS. 1959, f. 16 (Warburton’s copy in his own hand).
*144 British Museum press mark 12272 m. 4.
*145 A Discourse, etc., p. 75.
Allen ever ready to interest himself with Pitt in favour of his relative, the injury to the material prospects of Warburton does not assume grave proportions. That he was offending men of influence is true, as we will see a little later. Only he need not have dramatised himself to his friend in such terms. Writing again to Hurd a short while afterwards, in the rôle of the champion of Christendom, he says:

"I go on punishing the grand enemy of God and Godliness. But what I predicted to you, I am sorry to tell you, I have experienced to be true; that I tread *per cineres dolosos*. However my duty tells me, this is a capital case, and I must on.""\(^{146}\)

It was an anonymous letter, expostulating in friendly terms on the manner of his treatment in the *View*, that confirmed Warburton's suspicions that he was tiptoeing on burning cinders. From Hurd one gathers that Warburton guessed at the identity of the writer as that of Mr. Murray, the Attorney-General.\(^{147}\) Beyond this statement we have no other evidence to establish authorship of the letter. The fact that the writer professes an admiration for Warburton, and the polite and even cajoling tone of the letter, bear out, to some extent, this presumption.\(^{148}\) Warburton received this anonymous Communication after he had published his first two letters. Immediately on receiving it he wrote an *Apology for the Two First letters*, which he prefixed to an edition of all the four letters published in 1755. Hurd has praised this defence in superlative terms.

"The occasion of the subject," he says, "fired the writer. His very Soul came out in every sentence, and is nowhere to be seen to more advantage than in this apology, which is written throughout with a peculiar glow of sentiment and expression, and is, at once, the most interesting and the most masterly of all his works."

There is, it is true, a verve and incisiveness of style not met with ordinarily in Warburtonian prose. But there is nothing in it which would enable it to be described as a masterpiece of English prose.

As to the *Letters* themselves, the loyal biographer, Hurd, would have it that ""in writing it (he) has surpassed himself; the reasoning and the wit being alike irresistible, the strongest and keenest that can be conceived ".\(^{149}\) From the same source we hear that Warburton himself was not a little pleased with the work. He tells his friend, Dr. Balguy, that he has given to it all

\(^{146}\) A *Discourse, etc.*, p. 76.
\(^{147}\) *Ibid*.
\(^{149}\) Hurd, *A Discourse, etc.*, p. 74.
the finishing in his power. "If any thing of mine should tumble down to posterity," he says, "it will have as good a chance as any."\textsuperscript{150} To enter into the details of the work and verify these statements is not in the scope of this thesis which has to confine itself solely to the literary productions of Warburton. It can only be pointed out that there are conflicting opinions on the matter. Leslie Stephen thought it a satisfactory refutation of Bolingbroke,\textsuperscript{151} whereas Mr. Sichel, Bolingbroke’s aggressive biographer, thinks that Leslie Stephen "seems very easily satisfied",\textsuperscript{152} and proceeds to demonstrate the unconvincing character of Warburton’s defence.

**Conclusion**

We have seen how Pope’s solicitude for his friend resulted in a happy consummation in the one case and in an implacable hatred in the other. The unchallenging placidity of manner in Allen could hardly provoke anyone to an enmity with him. And Warburton had sense not only to respect and love the dignified charm in Allen, but also to realize the immense advantage to himself in fostering his friendship with the intimate friend of Pitt. But Bolingbroke was all bristles where the clergy were concerned and his keen mind could penetrate the pomosity of the Warburtonian manner and arrive at the real self of Warburton, which offered only too many vantage points to the hostile mind. His imperious temper functioning against a background of an initial dislike of the clergy, was roused to a dislike of the pretensions of this particular individual, and finally exploded when Pope deserted his banner only to accept Warburton as spiritual mentor.

And these are not the only two instances of Pope’s consideration for his friend. We have already seen how he was persuading his noble friends to bestow preferments on Warburton. The disappointment he met with at the hands of Lord Chesterfield\textsuperscript{153} left him undaunted, and he tried at other quarters.

"I have again heard from Lord Bathurst," he writes to Warburton, "and another hand, that the lord (Granville) I write to you of, declares an intention to serve you. My answer... was, that he would be sure of your acquaintance for life if once he served or obliged you; but that I was certain you would never trouble him with your expectation, though he never got rid of your gratitude."\textsuperscript{154}

That even this did not materialize is not Pope’s fault, who was ceaseless in promoting his friend’s interests. When Warburton’s bookseller, Gyles, died

\textsuperscript{150} Hurd, A Discourse, etc. 
\textsuperscript{151} English Thought in the Eighteenth Century. 
\textsuperscript{152} Sichel, Bolingbroke and His Times, Vol. 2, p. 417. 
\textsuperscript{153} Pope, ed. Elwin and Courthope, Vol. 9, p. 216. 
\textsuperscript{154} Ibid., p. 229.
Pope recommended Knapton\textsuperscript{155} to him. When there was some difficulty of realizing a debt from Gyles' executors Pope shows great concern for his friend's finances. "I am more concerned for your finances than your fame,"\textsuperscript{156} he writes to Warburton. After his estrangement with Hanmer, Warburton was worrying about the use that Hanmer had made of his notes and Pope consulted Murray as to whether any legal steps could be taken in the matter.\textsuperscript{157} In addition to looking after these material affairs of Warburton, Pope was ever exhorting him to get on with the other volume of the Divine Legation. He would rather that Warburton completed his work than busy himself with commenting on his own poems. "But I insist on one condition," says Pope, "that you never think of this (i.e., editing the Epistles, etc.) when you can employ yourself in finishing that noble work of the Divine Legation (which is what, above all, iterum iterumque monebo)."\textsuperscript{158} Warburton himself in his edition of the letters comments on this as follows:—

"Either his friendship for the editor, or his love or religion, made him have this very much at heart; and almost the last words he said to the editor as he was dying, was the conjuring him to finish the last volume. . . ."\textsuperscript{159}

In addition to such exhortation Pope was ever ready with his extravagant praise for whatever his friend happened to write. Warburton had prefaced Jervas's Don Quixote with an essay on the Origin of the Books of Chivalry, and Pope, after reading it, wrote to Warburton in ecstatic terms.

"Before I got over two paragraphs," wrote Pope, "I cried out Aut erasmus aut Diabolus! I knew you as certainly as the ancients did the Gods, by the first pace and the very gait. I have not a moment to express myself in, but could not omit this which delighted me so greatly."\textsuperscript{160}

It is rather surprising that this picture of mutually admiring friends, for, as we have seen, Warburton was not sparing in his praise of Pope, should be marred by a single unguarded remark of Pope about Warburton in a letter to Martha Blount. The circumstances of the remark might probably explain its malevolence. Martha Blount was on a visit to the Allen household at Prior Park during which she found herself considerably "cold-shouldered". And in a tersely-worded letter\textsuperscript{161} Martha let Pope know about it. The opening sentence of the letter reflect faithfully, in all their brevity, her exasperation at the treatment meted out to her:—

\textsuperscript{155} Pope, ed. Elwin and Courthope, Vol. 9, p. 220.
\textsuperscript{156} Ibid., p. 234.
\textsuperscript{157} Ibid., p. 228.
\textsuperscript{158} Ibid., p. 231.
\textsuperscript{159} Ibid., p. 231, note 2.
\textsuperscript{160} Ibid., Vol. 9, p. 227.
\textsuperscript{161} Ibid., pp. 332–33.
"I hope you are well. I am not... One should do nothing but laugh. I packed up my things yesterday; the servants knew it. Mr. and Mrs. Allen never said a word, nor so much as asked me how I went, where, or when. In short, from every one of them much greater inhumanity than I could conceive anybody can show. Mr. Warburton took no notice of me—'tis most wonderful. They have not one of them named your name, nor drunk your health, since you went. They talk to one another without putting me at all in the conversation... My present state is deplorable—I'll get out of it as soon as I can. Adieu..."

It is easy to picture Pope's rage on reading this letter. In a white heat he wrote back asking her to leave the Allens without a word. "However well I might wish the man (Allen)," wrote Pope, "the woman is a minx, and an impertinent one, and he will do what she will have him." And the concluding sentence of the letter is as a flash which penetrates the effusive vapoings of the Pope-Warburton correspondence and reveals the subconscious, or, shall we even say, the real impression that Pope had of his friend. The letter ends thus:—"W. is a sneaking parson, and I told him he flattered". Having in mind, however, the context of the remark, it is perhaps best to consider it in its proper proportion and not let it outweigh the numerous instances we know of their mutual regard. But there is no doubt that the remark leaves a very nasty sting behind, making us seriously doubt the strength of a friendship, which, though it began on false pretences, yet, one thought, had developed into sincere mutual esteem.

Whatever it was, Pope seems to have quickly forgotten his resentment and, just a month before his death, we find him inviting Warburton to Twitenham "to concert measures how to enjoy for the future what I can of your friendship". And when he died on the 30th May, 1744, he left Warburton

"the property of all such of my Works already printed, as he hath written or shall write commentaries or notes upon, and which I have not otherwise disposed of or alienated; and all the profits which shall arise after my death from such editions as he shall publish without future alterations."

But Pope dealt otherwise with Allen to whom he left an insulting legacy of £150, as the moneys received by him from Allen. Ralph Allen's famous comment on Pope's bad arithmetic is too well known to be repeated here.

---

163 Ibid., p. 242.
164 Ibid., Vol. 1, p. xi, note 2.
165 Owen Ruffhead, Life of Pope, p. 546.
166 Ibid., p. 547, note.