

much censured on the score of his Latin terminology. Aside from the consideration that this was the natural mode of expression of a learned and somewhat ponderous mind, it may well be questioned whether this influx of Latin terms, much augmented by Johnson, has not been productive of much good to the English tongue. It has made it the best medium for the conveying of scientific knowledge and has given it a poetical vocabulary, as distinguished from that of prose, such as is possessed, in an equal degree, by no other modern language. An influence that produces such beneficial results cannot be unreservedly condemned.

Despite his unquestioned rule, Johnson was singularly out of touch with his time, and in consequence, his impress upon subsequent English literature, except in the matter of vocabulary, has been slight—so slight as to dwindle into insignificance when compared with that left by contemporary writers whom he, doubtless, looked down upon with lofty self-complacency. His pedestal was perhaps placed too high for him to observe those first faint heavings of the social sea which were afterwards to burst into a fearful storm.

Literature is, however, indebted to him for two great favors; he freed it from any taint of immorality that still infected it, and he raised it to the dignity of a profession. The murky stream which had sprung from the licentiousness consequent upon the sudden removal of puritanical restraint by the restoration, had been but imperfectly purified by the, sometimes, none too cleanly contributions of the classical age. It remained for Johnson to make it clear and limpid. He retained, indeed, as has been remarked, much of the artificiality of Pope's school in his balanced sentences and Latin vocabulary, but he would have none of its occasional concessions to corrupt and depraved taste. He proved in his own works that high art was compatible with the strictest morality, and his prestige enabled him to effectively frown down any outcroppings of a contrary spirit in the writings of others. And it by this line of conduct he merits the praise of all right-minded men, his efforts to gain for authorship a recognition as a distinct profession deserve yet warmer plaudits from all drivers of the quill. Hitherto, literary

men were in reality what some of them are now in fancy,—long haired, lank countenanced individuals who wore baggy trousers and slept in unfurnished garrets. Their only hope lay in gaining, by servile adulation, the favor of some wealthy lord who, in return for a fulsome dedication would donate them a few hundred pounds. When Johnson conceived the idea of writing his Dictionary he applied for the patronage of the Earl of Chesterfield, but his appeal was coldly received. Undismayed, he set to work and after seven years of patient and continuous labor, published the book which met with unqualified success. The noble Earl now regretted his churlishness and attempted to make amends by recommending the work to the public through the medium of letters to the daily press. Johnson wrote him a scathing reply in which he says: "Is not a patron, my lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and when he has reached ground encumbers him with help? The notice which you have pleased to take of my labors, had it been early, had been kind; but it has been delayed till I am indifferent and cannot enjoy it; till I am solitary and cannot impart it; till I am known and do not want it." The effect of this letter, coming from such a high authority, was to establish literature as a distinct and independent profession.

But though these are the chief lasting effects produced by Johnson, the age itself has influenced to a far greater degree the general trend of subsequent English literature and modern thought. The greatest innovation, from a literary standpoint, was the development of the novel into its present form. True, tales of fiction had been published previous to this time, some of which, such as Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, and Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, are still famous. But fictitious literature now assumed a new phase, the modern novel with its intricate plot and more or less correct study of character, took the place of disguised political pamphlets and disconnected tales of adventure. In Richardson's *Pamela*, and *Claressa*, these two characteristics were first brought out into definite and clear outline. The effect was electrical, the works, especially the former, became the rage of the town, ladies went into ecstasies over them and ministers recommended them from the