

BY PARTICULAR DESIRE.

*ADVERTISING AND
SATIRICAL CULTURE
IN THE
ROMANTIC PERIOD*
JOHN STRACHAN

SIXTY SHILLINGS
BEEHAM'S,
Royal Patent
**WASHING
MILL.**
No 27 Fleet Street
London

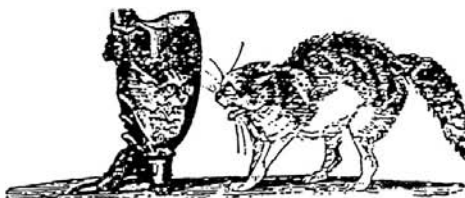


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ADVERTISING AND SATIRICAL CULTURE IN THE ROMANTIC PERIOD

Advertising, which developed in the late eighteenth century as an increasingly sophisticated and widespread form of brand marketing, would seem a separate world from that of the 'literature' of its time. Yet satirists and parodists were influenced by and responded to advertising, while copywriters borrowed from the wider literary culture, especially through poetical advertisements and comic imitation. This is the first full-length study to pay sustained attention to the cultural resonance and literary influences of advertising in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. John Strachan addresses the many ways in which literary figures including George Crabbe, Lord Byron, Thomas Hood and the young Charles Dickens responded to the commercial culture around them. With its many fascinating examples of contemporary advertisements read against literary texts, this study combines a new approach to the literary culture of the day with an examination of the cultural impact of its commercial language.

JOHN STRACHAN is Professor of Romantic Literature at the University of Sunderland.



THE CAT AND THE BOOT;
OR, AN IMPROVEMENT UPON MIRRORS.

As I one morning shaving sat,
For dinner time preparing,
A dreadful howling from the cat
Set all the room a staring!
Sudden I turn'd—beheld a scene
I could not but delight in,
For in my boot, so bright and clean,
The cat her face was fighting.
Bright was the boot—its surface fair,
In lustre nothing lacking;
I never saw one half so clear,
Except by WARREN'S BLACKING.
(WARREN! that name shall last as long
As beaus and belles shall dash on,
Immortalized in every song
That chants the praise of fashion:
For, oh! without his *Blacking*, all
Attempts we may abolish,
To raise upon our boots at all
The least of jet or polish.)
Surpris'd its brilliancy I view'd
With silent admiration;
The glass that on the table stood
Waxed dimly on its station.
I took the boot, the glass displac'd,
For soon I was aware,
The latter only was disgrac'd
Whene'er the boot was near.
And quickly found that I could shave,
Much better by its bloom,
Than any mirror that I have
Within my drawing-room.
And since that time, I've often smil'd
To think how puss was frighten'd,
When at the boot she tugg'd and toil'd
By WARREN'S *Blacking* brighten'd.

A Shilling of WARREN'S PASTE BLACKING is equal to
four Shilling Bottles of *Liquid Blacking*; prepared by

Robert Warren

30, STRAND, London;

and sold by most Venders of *Blacking* in every Town in
the Kingdom, in Pots, 6d. 12d. and 18d. each.

☞ Ask for WARREN'S *Blacking*.

Figure 1. 'The Cat and the Boot; or, An Improvement upon Mirrors'. Advertisement for Warren's Blacking. Illustration by George Cruikshank (early nineteenth century).

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For Maxwell and James Strachan
'Those two dear ones – to my heart so dear'

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The book incorporates some material published in different form elsewhere. A portion of chapter 1 appeared in *History Today* in April 2004 as “‘For the Ladies’”: Women and Advertising in the Late Georgian Period’ (vol. 54, no. 4, pp. 21–6). Some material from chapter 1 also appeared as the headnote to George Cruikshank’s ‘The Wonderful Pill’ in volume I, edited by Nicholas Mason, of *British Satire 1785–1840*, general editor John Strachan (5 vols, London, Pickering and Chatto, 2003, vol. I, pp. 267–72).

Chapter 3 contains some material from “‘The Praise of Blacking’”: William Frederick Deacon’s *Warreniana* and Early Nineteenth-century Advertising-Related Parody’, which appeared in *Romanticism on the Net* (August 1999), www.erudit.org/revue/ron/1999/v/n15/005874ar.html, and the ‘Introduction’ to W. F. Deacon, *Warreniana*, ed. John Strachan, in *Parodies of the Romantic Age*, ed. Graeme Stones and John Strachan (5 vols, London: Pickering and Chatto 1999, vol. IV, pp. vii–xl). A shorter version of chapter 4 was published in the *Charles Lamb Bulletin* in January 2000 as “‘Man is a gaming animal’”: Lamb, Gambling, and Thomas Bish’s Last Lottery’ (new series, vol. 109, pp. 15–35). Chapter 6 draws on “‘Trimming the *Muse of Satire*’”: J. R. D. Huggins and the Poetry of Hair-Cutting’, in Steven E. Jones (ed.), *The Satiric Eye: Forms of Satire in the Romantic Period* (New York and Houndsmill, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, pp. 188–206). My thanks go to editors and publishers for their permission to redeploy this material.

Introduction

The ‘constant reader’ of the newspaper always reads, or at least glances at the advertisements. Those who merely take up the broad sheet to glean the passing news of the day, might think time so employed wasted or ill-bestowed; but the experienced and leisurely newspaper reader knows better. He has discovered that the department mentioned contains bits of news, and information, and amusement, very varied, often very curious and useful, and such as are to be obtained through almost no other channel. He has learned gradually to find in it something more: something to open his mind, to excite his imagination, to soften his heart. In the case of a metropolitan print, it appears to him to be an epitome of London, just as London is an epitome of the world; and his soul expands as he sees within its grasp, in one sweep, as it were, of his mental vision, the joys, the sorrows, the recreations, the sufferings, the longings, and attainments of society – in short, the whole social microcosm.

Chambers’ Edinburgh Journal (1851)

This book is the first within the field of Romantic studies to pay close and sustained attention to the discourse and cultural resonance of advertising copy, and the first full-length account of the importance of advertising to the satirical and parodic writing of the late Georgian period. I write this somewhat immodest sentence not in imitation of the self-promotional strategies of the advertisers discussed in this book, but, in part, to explain its genesis. My decision to write it owes much to the experience of a sense of contextual absence, felt when I came across an intriguing but long-forgotten image which was common in the advertising columns of periodicals published during the 1810s and 1820s, a display advertisement for shoe polish which portrays a cat hissing at a boot, ‘The Cat and the Boot; or, An Improvement upon Mirrors’.

The accompanying copy, in verse, tells the story of a hapless feline who attacks her reflection in the boot, mistaking it for a rival. This item of footwear has reached its lustrous eminence, it transpires, because of the application of ‘Robert Warren’s Matchless Blacking’. Though this advertisement was very well known in its day, its cultural context and significance are now difficult to piece together. Who was Robert Warren, and why did his advertisement take this singular form, yoking together a striking cut, by no less a figure than George Cruikshank, with sprightly comic verse? I shall return to this particular image below, but, for now, the key questions addressed in this study are those initially prompted by the Warren puff. How are we to read and interpret the advertising copy of the Romantic age? How do the aesthetic strategies employed by advertisers relate to the wider culture of the period? And, building on this last question, given that so many of the advertisements of the age use comic literary and visual strategies, can one usefully study this body of work against the general contemporary satirical culture?

Warren’s blacking, as E. S. Turner once wrote, was ‘launched on a sea of poetry’,¹ and the manufacturer’s jingles were extremely familiar in their day. Indeed, by 1824, they provided the governing conceit of the masterpiece of late Georgian parodic writing, W. F. Deacon’s *Warreniana* (1824). *Warreniana* is a volume of parodies which envisages notable Romantic period authors (Byron, Coleridge, Scott and Southey among them) being paid to provide advertising copy – in their own particular literary styles – for Robert Warren, whose advertisements, as demonstrated in the puff reproduced above, often employed eulogistic verse. This conceit allows Deacon to construct a world where the likes of William Wordsworth become hired copywriters for Warren’s blacking, as demonstrated in his parody of *The Excursion*:

It chanced one summer morn I passed the clefts
Of Silver-How, and turning to the left,
Fast by the blacksmith’s shop, two doors beyond
Old Stubb’s, the tart-woman’s, approached a glen
Secluded as a coy nun from the world.
Beauteous it was but lonesome, and while I
Leaped up for joy to think that earth was good
And lusty in her boyhood, I beheld
Graven on the tawny rock these magic words,
‘Buy Warren’s blacking’ . . .²

I edited Deacon's collection in 1999 as part of the five-volume Pickering and Chatto collection, *Parodies of the Romantic Age*.³ In researching the context of contemporary advertising that informs Deacon's book, it became clear to me that there was little in the way of sustained critical attention to the significance of advertising in the Romantic period and almost nothing that dealt with the relationship between parody, satire and contemporary advertisements. Furthermore, as my bibliographical research for volume II of *Parodies of the Romantic Age* (an anthology of parodic verse)⁴ demonstrated, this is despite the fact that *Warreniana* is by no means the only parodic or satirical work of the period to engage closely with puffery. From the early numbers of the *Anti-Jacobin, or Weekly Examiner* (1797–8) to Robert Montgomery's *The Puffiad* (1828), from anonymous *jeux d'esprit* in satirical magazines to individual works by such writers as George Daniel, William Hone, Thomas Hood, W. H. Ireland, Thomas Moore and Horace Smith, the period's satirical and parodic heritage includes a significant number of absorbing and thoughtful treatments of advertisements and advertisers. Nonetheless, despite this wealth of material the only critical work on the interrelationship between advertising and parody and satire in the Romantic period remains Marcus Wood's excellent 1994 study of William Hone and George Cruikshank, *Radical Satire and Print Culture 1790–1822* (though my focus here is much wider than that of Wood, his is a ground-breaking study, and one to which this book is indebted). Consequently, I became convinced that there was a real need for a book that deals with the two interrelated issues addressed above: the cultural strategies employed within late Georgian advertising copy, and advertising-related satire and parody. This study examines the relationship between Romantic period advertising and Romantic period satire and parody, cultural forms which, though generally seen as diverse and unconnected, frequently intertwine. It addresses the ways in which satirists and parodists exploited, reacted to and debated contemporary brand marketing, and, conversely, examines the widespread use of comic genres, notably parody, in the language of contemporary advertisement.

I

The late Georgian period is a time of real significance in the development of modern advertising, in terms of technical

innovation (the use of display copy most particularly), marketing methods (the move to nationwide campaigns, the use of advertising vehicles, systematic wall-posting, hand-billing and roadside advertising, the increasingly important role of the agent) and thematic techniques (notably in a greater emphasis upon brands and their proprietors). Satirists and parodists were quick to respond to this key aspect of contemporary commercial culture. The late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries saw a diverse and fascinating range of satirical encounters with advertising and its techniques: Juvenalian assaults upon the supposed excesses and iniquities of mercantile society; more sympathetic and amused Horatian satire which touches upon the social significance of brand marketing and the self-presentations of advertisers; opportunistic advertising-related burlesque; spoof advertisements; ideologically partisan parody which utilises formal models drawn from advertising copy; book-length satirical treatments of ‘puffery’; broadsheet lampoons and graphic satires on advertising culture. These satirical responses are of great interest to the literary historian, offering insights into both advertising and the wider literary culture of the Romantic period, and much of this book is spent discussing them.

More generally, this study is part of an ongoing body of work that attends to Romantic period parody and satire, both in terms of scholarly editions (David A. Kent and D.R. Ewen’s *Romantic Parodies, 1797–1831* (1992), Graeme Stones and John Strachan’s *Parodies of the Romantic Age*, (5 vols, 1999) and my own *British Satire 1785–1840* (5 vols, 2003)), and important critical monographs (Wood’s *Radical Satire and Print Culture*, Steven E. Jones’s *Shelley’s Satire: Violence, Exhortation and Authority* (1997), the same author’s *Satire and Romanticism* (2000) and Gary Dyer’s invaluable survey *British Satire and the Politics of Style, 1789–1832* (also 1997)). Historically, much work on Romantic period satirical culture,⁵ notably on Byron, has generally been preoccupied with its encounters with ‘high’ literature (what it has, for example, to say about the critical reputations of Wordsworth, Southey and Coleridge, or those of Keats, Hunt and the ‘Cockney School’) rather than to its attention to more quotidian cultural forms. The consequential neglect of advertising-related parody and satire was redressed by Wood and, more recently, by John Barrell’s *Exhibition Extraordinary!!: Radical Broad­sides of the Mid 1790s* (2001), an entertaining and perceptively introduced selection of ultra-Radical

broad­sides, many of which borrow the discourse of advertising copy. Building on these groundbreaking works, *Advertising and Satirical Culture* attempts to provide a wider context for contemporary satirical encounters with advertising.

This book also participates in ongoing research into the materiality of culture and the economics of publishing. Though its close attention to the satirical handling of these issues breaks new ground (as does its tracing of the importance of the analogy between publishing and the advertising of consumer goods in Romantic period literary journalism), this volume's attention to the marketing of literature and what one might call the materialist underpinning of high culture addresses issues discussed in a number of recent books which have followed Colin Campbell's *The Romantic Ethic and the Spirit of Modern Consumerism* (1987) in analysing aspects of Romanticism in terms of emerging forms of commercialism: James Raven's *Judging New Wealth* (1992), Lee Erickson's *The Economy of Literary Form: English Literature and the Industrialisation of Publishing, 1800–1850* (1996), and Philip Connell's *Romanticism, Economics and the Question of 'Culture'* (2001). It might also be seen, in its discussion of consumer gender, goods and groups, as dealing, albeit tangentially, with the literature that has sprung up around issues of consumption in the wake of Neil McKendrick, John Brewer and J. H. Plumb's *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England* (1982): Brewer and Roy Porter's *Consumption and the World of Goods* (1993), Maxine Berg and Helen Clifford's *Consumers and Luxury: Consumer Culture in Europe, 1650–1850* (1999), E. J. Clery's *The Feminization Debate in Eighteenth-Century Britain: Literature, Commerce and Luxury* (2004) and Berg's *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (2005).

As well as addressing the ways in which contemporary satirical culture (which, throughout, I take to include graphic as well as literary satire) engaged with advertising, this book also demonstrates, in accounts of famous campaigns and close readings of individual puffs, that comic genres, notably parody, were used extensively by advertisers themselves. Advertising and parody are linked dialogically in the late Georgian period; certainly parodists often used advertisements as formal models for their work, but copywriters also employed parodic and imitative methods, appropriating a wide range of literary styles drawn from both

‘elevated’ literature and ostensibly less prestigious formal models: cod-Shakespearian rhetoric, spoof broadsheets, Socratic dialogues, picaresque travel narratives, mock playbills, and so on. Much of this study focuses upon the literary discourses and assimilative cultural strategies of advertising itself, notably in advertisers’ widespread use of cultural forms borrowed from the wider literary scene. I pay particular attention to the most important generic assimilation evident in the advertising of the late Georgian period: the frequent use of poetical advertisements. As a form of writing that languished near the foot of the cultural ladder (assuming it was granted a place at all), advertising copy had much to gain from co-opting poetry, that supposedly highest of literary activities. Though there are occasional early to mid-eighteenth-century examples of sole traders eulogising their wares in verse, the late Georgian period sees the emergence of the systematic use of verse, or ‘jingle’, advertisements in nationwide campaigns. Balladry, Popean heroic couplets, medievalist poetry in imitation of Scott, Horatian verse in the manner of Christopher Anstey’s *New Bath Guide*, Miltonic blank verse; all are assimilated into the rhetoric of contemporary advertisement.

In their use of poetical advertisement, as in so much else within the aesthetics of commercial promotion, copywriters mimicked the wider literary culture that surrounded them. The spirit of the age leaves its traces in advertising copy as well as in more elevated literature: copywriters *copy*; their work does not exist in a cultural vacuum. As Abraham Hayward notes in his February 1843 *Edinburgh Review* essay on ‘The Advertising System’, ‘it is remarkable how ingeniously the style of address [in advertisements] has been adapted to the taste or fashion of the hour’. Hayward gives as an example the late Georgian vogue for poetic copy: ‘When Scott, Byron, Moore, Rogers, Wordsworth, Southey &c., were in their zenith, . . . the most attractive vehicle was verse.’ He goes on to make the point that by the 1840s prose has replaced poetry as the copywriter’s *modus operandi*. The shift evident in high literary culture from poetry to the novel is echoed in advertising literature: ‘The present, however, is an unpoetic age [which] decidedly prefers prose to poetry; . . . “The Excursion” . . . has no chance at all against the “Pickwick Papers” or “Oliver Twist”.’⁶ Jocular though his tone might be, Hayward’s point is well made, and this book shares his conviction that the language of advertisements

echoes the more general literary preoccupations of the age in which they were composed.

As well as discussing the assimilative literary strategies of advertising literature, this study also addresses the wider self-representations of advertisers, notably in the near-ubiquitous emphasis upon brand proprietors evident throughout the period. During the Romantic period, manufacturers and entrepreneurs were frequently elevated into iconic figures in a cult, or culture, of personality. Building upon the pioneering work of late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century ‘quack’ doctors⁷ and, later, that of the potter Josiah Wedgwood in establishing and marketing their brand names, an entertaining cast of resourceful self-publicists populate the pages of late Georgian newspapers:⁸ Robert Warren, who marketed his ‘original, matchless blacking’ from his premises in the Strand, Alexander Rowland the younger, proprietor of a range of beautification products such as Kalydor face cream and Macassar Oil⁹ for the hair; James Atkinson, manufacturer of Bear’s Grease; George Packwood, brilliant marketer of Razor Strops;¹⁰ the quack ‘Doctor’ Samuel Solomon, the inventor of the Cordial Balm of Gilead, and Thomas Bish, the presiding genius of the Charing Cross Lottery Office. This study examines the often remarkably inventive methods used in the promotion of such figures and their wares and offers close analyses of the sophisticated cultural manoeuvring evident in their advertising. It addresses both individual advertisements and extended promotional campaigns, but also focuses upon the neglected literary sub-genre of the ‘advertising book’ and the widespread desire among advertisers to assume the role of author, as demonstrated in such works as Solomon’s *Guide to Health*¹¹ (1795), Packwood’s remarkable advertising ‘ana’, *Packwood’s Whim, or, The Way to Get Money and be Happy* (1796) and Rowland’s *An Essay on . . . the Human Hair, with Remarks on the Virtues of the Macassar Oil* (1809). These are books that achieve a marketing dream: making consumers pay for the advertising as well as the product. However, they are also fascinating in their cultural aspiration; the desire to elevate advertising by association with a more prestigious literary culture which is evident in verse copy is also demonstrated here, with the advertiser playing the role of the man of letters, and the ephemeral nature of the newspaper column displaced by the permanence of quarto or octavo.

II

One notable exception to the critical disregard of the cultural resonance of Romantic period advertising copy is the historian Neil McKendrick's brilliant case study of the innovative and inventive campaigns for Packwood's razor strops, 'George Packwood and the Commercialisation of Shaving: The Art of Eighteenth-Century Advertising or "The Way to Get Money and be Happy"' (1982).¹² McKendrick's work informs my approach in the 'case study' chapters included here. However, excellent though his essay is, it has not launched a thousand critical ships, and there is still a demonstrable inattention to the cultural significance of late Georgian advertisements.¹³ This neglect is mysterious, given the ongoing attention being paid to more recent advertising by both cultural and literary critics. Modern advertising has been much discussed by scholars working within cultural or media studies in such books as Jib Fowles's *Advertising and Popular Culture* (1996) and there is important recent work in Victorian studies, most notably Thomas Richards's series of essays *The Commodity Culture of Victorian England: Advertising and Spectacle, 1851–1914* (1990) and Lori Anne Loeb's *Consuming Angels: Advertising and Victorian Women* (1994).¹⁴ However, both Richards and Loeb are dismissive of pre-Victorian advertisements,¹⁵ and I take issue with their slighting of a cultural form that is often as innovative, resourceful and witty as the advertising culture of the later nineteenth century. Romantic period advertisements are just as socially revealing as the Victorian puffery interpreted so brilliantly by Loeb and Richards and this book is also a work of social history, an attempt to shed light on neglected aspects of the ephemeral culture of the late Georgian period. It shares the conviction expressed by a mid-Victorian contributor to *Notes and Queries* that one 'who remembers the pressing appeals made to him to secure his fortune by "Go to Bysh's Lucky Corner", who can revive the . . . injunctions which met him on all sides of "Try Warren's" or "Buy Day and Martin's Blacking", . . . has ever an interest in all that illustrates the social history of man'.¹⁶ As my epigram from *Chambers' Edinburgh Journal* is intended to suggest, Romantic period advertisements offer insights into the 'social microcosm'¹⁷ of the age; campaigns for the State Lottery, boot polishes or hair oils are neither devoid of social nuance nor ideologically innocent. Though the advertising literature of the mid-to

late Victorian period has been much discussed in recent years, there is as yet no equivalent discussion of the significance and methodology of advertising in the period between 1780 and 1830. *Advertising and Satirical Culture in the Romantic Period* provides one.

III

This book is divided into two parts. The first, general, section (chapters 1 and 2) offers a survey of Romantic period advertising and of the satirical responses to it. The second section of the book (chapter 3 to the conclusion) borrows a technique from modern advertising textbooks in offering sustained case studies of particular, heavily marketed, products and the campaigns associated with them.

Chapter 1 opens with a survey of late Georgian advertising, drawing attention to the diversity of delivery methods and the technical innovations evident in the period, and the increasing emphasis placed upon both brand and proprietor in its advertising copy. As well as addressing the material circumstances of advertising, the chapter also addresses its cultural and literary significance, arguing that advertising is, in Thomas Hood's phrase, a 'department of literature'¹⁸ and paying particular attention to the techniques employed by copywriters, notably in their use of generic imitation and literary associationism. Chapter 2, which is also a survey chapter, offers an overview of the diverse range of responses to advertising found in Romantic period parody and satire. It examines the ways in which advertising and brand marketing informed a wide variety of contemporary comic writing and how, from Thomas Sternhold's *The Daily Advertiser, in Metre* (1781) to Charles Dickens's *The Old Curiosity Shop* (1841), late Georgian parodists and satirists reacted to the advertising culture around them. It discusses and gives examples of the various forms of advertising-related satire, introducing the literary sub-genres that resound through the succeeding chapters. Many of the satires cited in this chapter deal with the marketing of proprietary medicines during the Romantic period and the fierce contemporary arguments prompted by 'quackery' in which satirical writing played a significant role (here, as in much else during the period, satire is often at the polemical centre of discussion

rather than being an adjunct to more orthodox debates in the form of journalism or parliamentary oratory). The empirics were the great advertising pioneers, and their methods were copied by the principal consumer-good entrepreneurs discussed later in this book – the boot polishers, the lottery-office keepers, the perfumers and, much to the chagrin of literary idealists such as William Wordsworth or John Clare, the publishers.

The rest of the book is devoted to five sustained and in-depth case studies of individual advertisers, products and advertising campaigns, and of the literary responses to them. Chapter 3 examines the blacking industry and its literary figurations, attending in particular to the work of arguably the most significant single advertiser of the age, Robert Warren, and to the fascinating promotional techniques of Henry ‘Orator’ Hunt, simultaneously radical firebrand and manufacturer of branded blacking. Chapter 4 addresses the marketing strategies of that ‘mighty advertising source’¹⁹ Thomas Bish, the Cornhill Lottery Office keeper, and discusses satirical treatments of Bish and the State Lottery by Charles Lamb and others. Chapter 5 discusses the advertising of grooming and beautification products, notably hair oils and dyes, and satirical treatments of these products from the 1780s to 1840s, while chapter 6 examines the work of the almost unknown satirist and advertiser J. R. D. Huggins, the author of the long-forgotten but fascinating collection of advertisements *Hugginiana* (1808). Huggins neatly straddles my principal concerns in this book, an author who is simultaneously advertiser, gifted parodist, and literary, social and political satirist.

This study’s concluding chapter addresses the marketing of books, focusing upon the way in which the discussion of brand marketing informed literary journalists’ and satirists’ discussions of the contemporary publishing business. It examines important debates of the period (most notably in the late 1820s and the early 1830s) about the advertising of books and publishers’ use of the techniques of puffery. Here analogies between the sale of books and that of supposedly less exalted items play a crucial role; meditating upon branding and advertising provided an opportunity for writers to examine the increasing commercialisation of their own business, generally in a less than welcoming manner. An attention to the subject of puffing (by both manufacturers of consumer goods and publishers) allowed journalists

and satirists to examine and criticise the ethics of contemporary publishing.

One of this book's key arguments is its contention that the study of late Georgian advertisements has much to say about the literary form which we now see as the leading cultural brand of the period, Romanticism, and that the rhetoric of advertising has clear analogies with the period's central cultural formation. This is an age when marketing often focuses upon the individual proprietor of the product being promoted. Perhaps the contrast often evident between the rather more prosaic copy of early eighteenth-century advertisements²⁰ and the brand culture and ornate rhetoric evident by the 1820s indicates a shift in cultural practice in some ways analogous to that which was manifesting itself in the wider literary context. Certainly the most notable advertisers – Warren, Packwood, Solomon and the like – frequently focus upon themselves as much as upon their individual brands and my study addresses the ways in which the self-representations of advertisers resemble those commonly identified in accounts of Romantic ideology. In its widespread focus upon the 'author' of the brand, its claims of originality, creativity and genius, its egotism and its warnings about the dangers of imitation, the rhetoric of advertising copy often has a certain similarity to high Romantic argument. With reference to *The Prelude*, Wordsworth dryly noted that it was 'a thing unprecedented in Literary history that a man should talk so much about himself'.²¹ However innovative such a methodology might be in literature, it is the *raison d'être* of advertising copy. While I am not blind to the differences between these cultural forms, this book seeks to draw parallels between advertising's self-preoccupation and that of Romanticism's 'egotistical sublime'.

CHAPTER 1

A ‘department of literature’: Advertising in the Romantic period

The advertisement has long since become an independent department of literature, subject to its own canons of criticism, having its own laws of composition, and conducted by a class of writers, who though they may (we do not assert they do) acknowledge their inferiority to the great historians, poets, or novelists of the day, would nevertheless consider themselves greatly injured were we to hesitate to admit them into the corporation of the ‘gens de lettres’ . . . The advertisement writer . . . claims kindred with genius of all sorts, and considers himself entitled to a share of the glory of all undertakings under the sun, from the Thames Tunnel to the manufacture of a razor-strop. In fact, he is to the . . . shopkeeper what Homer was to Achilles, Tasso to Godfrey, Camoens to Gama, or Milton to Cromwell: without him, what would his shops avail a Mechi, his XX a Guinness, his pills a Cockle, his Chesterfields a Doudney, his locks a Chubb, or his envelope a Stocken?

Thomas Hood, ‘The Advertisement Literature of the Age’ (1843)

‘To let’ – ‘To let’, – ‘Lost’, – and ‘Wanted’. How very edifying these advertisements are! ‘Strayed!’ – ‘Rowland’s Macassar’, – Ditto ‘Kalydor’, – and a ‘Fine bear to be shot!’ . . . Capital! capital! how I doat on advertisements.

John Oxenford, *No Followers, A Burletta* (1837)

Despite recent revisionist work on the period (indeed, perhaps to a certain extent because of it), the sense that the literature of the age which we now label ‘Romantic’ is in some ways epoch-making remains difficult to shift. Such baldly idealist pronouncements as Thomas McFarland’s ‘Romanticism is the true beginning of our modern world’¹ have come under great, and perhaps deserved, pressure in contemporary criticism, but there remains a feeling that the literature of the period between 1789 and 1832 is in some ways remarkable. Similarly, the less prestigious cultural form that is

the principal subject of this book, advertising, was undergoing great changes in the late Georgian age and transforming itself into commercial and artistic forms which anticipate the development of Victorian and twentieth-century advertising. However, despite the fact that the culture of advertising in this period is at times highly imaginative, often sophisticated and always socially suggestive, it languishes in undeserved neglect. Though advertising from the mid-nineteenth century through to the present day has been the subject of much recent critical work, little attention has been paid to the promotional culture of the five decades before the accession of Queen Victoria. This study, which is rooted in a conviction that the advertising literature of late Georgian England merits sustained critical investigation, redresses this critical imbalance. Its emphasis is twofold. First, it examines the cultural practices evident in contemporary advertising literature in the context of the wider aesthetic landscape of the period. Second, it treats advertising as a cultural form that is sociohistorically revealing. As Lord Milton noted in 1818, 'we laugh at all the tittle-tattle of the newspapers, at the advertisements for the lottery, patent blacking ... &c; but if the newspapers were deprived of all of this nonsense & reduced to the paragraphs w[hi]ch announce great public events, they w[oul]d go a very little way towards presenting their readers with an idea of the English world'.²

This first chapter begins with a general survey of the nature of advertising from the 1780s to the 1830s which engages with the material circumstances of the production of advertising, notably in terms of delivery methods and multi-media modes of dissemination. It then goes on to examine the cultural practices evident in Romantic period promotional copy: the art of advertising. My work here and, indeed, throughout this book endorses Thomas Hood's 1843 argument that advertising is a 'department of literature'. Wryly expressed though it might be, this declaration is insightful and endorsed throughout this book. However, I would take issue with Hood's early brand of cultural criticism in denying the 'independence' of the advertising writer. The art of advertising is not freestanding, divorced from the intellectual and literary spirit of the age. Copywriters, it is worth repeating, *copy*, and their work demonstrates imitative strategies and generic affiliations which are much indebted to the wider culture around it. Recent work on radical politics, radical satire and on slavery³

have noted the assimilative power of their attendant print cultures and it should be noted that advertising culture manifests a similar propensity. Advertising literature is notable for the catholic range of its borrowings, ransacking both 'high' and 'low' cultural products for its formal models, imitating Shakespearian tragedy or Miltonic blank verse as easily as the pantomime or the Punch and Judy show. That said, a key strategy within the imitative manoeuvres of advertising copy is elevation by association. Advertising copy and brand names often evoke or borrow from more prestigious literary genres, demonstrating a cultural aspiration that mirrors the socially aspirational nature of much advertising copy. The most distinctively late Georgian manifestation of this associationism is the tendency to use poetical or 'jingle' copy, and this vogue is a central preoccupation of the chapter. A great deal of this metrical mercantilism consciously uses levity, and the use of humour in the culture of commodity, notably in comic imitation, is a central preoccupation here. Much of this book deals with comic engagements with advertising in contemporary parody and satire. However, advertising and satirical culture are not distinct literary genres; wit, imitation and parody resound through the discourse of Romantic period advertising copy.

I

The late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries are marked by significant innovations in advertising techniques and an increasingly sophisticated range of marketing methods. Advertisers individuated their products and built market share through varied and ingenious advertising campaigns. Paid press columns were complemented by a variety of subsidiary marketing devices: widely distributed handbills, advertising vehicles, roadside advertisements, wall-posting and wall-painting. Advertising brokers and agencies played an increasingly important intermediary role in the relationship between brand proprietor and consumer.⁴ Technical innovation in printing allowed greater use of 'display' copy in newspapers willing to take illustrated advertising (generally weeklies and provincial papers, as London dailies, *The Times* most notably, remained sceptical about display), thereby helping to build the brand iconography which had hitherto been the province of labels, trade cards and handbills. And, perhaps most

crucial of all, there is the ever more evident emphasis upon brands and their proprietors. The period saw a significant number of non-perishable goods branded and advertised in a manner which during the first half of the eighteenth century had been almost the sole province of the manufacturers of proprietary, or, less commonly, patent,⁵ medicines. (The methods pioneered by 'quacks' or 'empirics' are hugely important to the development of modern advertising; Frank Presbrey's remarks on the significance of proprietary medicine vendors to the development of advertising in the United States are equally applicable to the history of English advertising: 'They nursed mediums. They developed copy and mechanics. They tested and determined the value of position in the newspapers. At every stage in the early growth of advertising it was the patent-medicine trade that was giving the subject the most thought and developing new devices.'⁶) Domestic goods such as blacking, hair oils and razor strops, which had previously been sold either in generic unbranded form or, where branded, only within limited geographical areas, became the focus of nationwide commercial campaigns. Plainly the distinction between generic and brand-specific goods and the marketing of the latter was not at the forefront of William Blake's mind when he made his famous comments on Sir Joshua Reynolds's *Discourses*, but his axioms would not look out of place in some hypothetical textbook on early nineteenth-century branding: 'To Generalize is to be an Idiot. To Particularize is the Alone Distinction of Merit.'⁷

With the increasing emphasis upon brands comes an attendant focus on their proprietors, who become figures of some celebrity, attracting publicity that would have been the envy of many an early Georgian advertising quack. If the wider culture of the Romantic period places great stress upon the creative power of the individual genius, then the cult of the individual is certainly apparent in the publicity efforts mounted on behalf of contemporary advertisers. A host of self-promoting characters populate the advertising columns of late Georgian newspapers: the Cornhill lottery-office keeper Thomas Bish, the razor-strop manufacturer George Packwood, the cosmeticist Alexander Rowland the younger, the empiric Samuel Solomon and the blacking merchant Robert Warren. Such figures might be said to have followed the jocular prescription for advertising success contained in 'Advertising considered as an Art', an essay published in *Chambers' Edinburgh Journal* in 1844:

He, therefore, who can make himself most notorious, is the best advertiser; he, in short, who takes care that you shall not open a public print without his own name and that of his wares staring you full in the face; nay, more; if you go out into the street, that the same words shall meet you at every turn. Men, looking like animated sandwiches – squeezed in as they are between two boards, conspicuously inscribed with huge invitations to ‘Try Pott’s pills’ – slowly parade the streets. If you turn to look at the progress of a new building, you will see the boarding covered with ‘Potts’s pills’ . . . In short, you seem condemned to be perpetually taking oracular doses of Potts’s pills, till you are as familiar with the name of Potts as you are with that of Newton or of Shakspeare. What is your case is nearly everybody’s; and the name of Potts becomes famous throughout the empire. Thus it is that many men whose humble occupations would, without the art of advertising, have condemned them to the darkest obscurity, have become notorious, if not celebrated.⁸

To *Chambers*’, advertising is best understood both in terms of its aesthetic qualities (‘the art of advertising’) and in the tangible circumstances involved in the delivery of its messages. Given the widespread visibility of advertising, especially in the metropolis, and the ingenious multi-media strategies adopted by contemporary advertisers, it is small wonder that *Chambers*’ refers to the contemporary pedestrian ‘perpetually taking oracular doses’ of publicity material. This is a period where advertising manifests a demonstrably visual culture, both in street gimmickry and in the use of illustrated, or ‘display’, advertisements, whether in hand-bills or, where proprietors allowed, in newspaper advertisements. The essayist is right to envisage his imaginary publicist using a diverse range of advertising techniques and to stress the importance of street display, both in terms of immobile advertising (posted walls) and mobile or ‘ambulant’ advertising (the sandwich⁹). This last term was coined by Prince Pückler-Muskau in his travelogue of a visit to England during the 1820s, which describes the diversions utilised by London advertisers:

One man had a pasteboard hat, three times as high as other hats, on which is written in great letters, ‘Boots at twelve shillings a pair – warranted.’ Another carried a sort of banner on which is represented a washerwoman and the inscription, ‘Only three-pence a shirt’ . . . Chests, like Noah’s Ark, entirely posted over by bills, and of the dimensions of a small house, drawn by men and horses move slowly through the streets, and carrying more lies upon them than Münchhausen ever invented.¹⁰



The last Stage of the last State Lottery.

Figure 2. 'The last Stage of the last State Lottery'. From William Hone's *Every-Day Book* (1826).

Advertising vans, or carts, such as the one described by Pückler-Muskau were common in the metropolis. Figure 2 shows an example of a contemporary advertising cart, one used in the publicity efforts for the final state lottery. The lottery carts were sometimes used as part of elaborate advertising processions through the streets of London, which featured dozens of men and horses in an extravagant and theatrical commercial ritual. The

year 1826, for example, saw the following procession advertising the drawing of the last lottery:

Procession

1. Three men in liveries, scarlet and gold.
2. Six men bearing boards at their backs and on their breasts, with inscriptions in blue and gold, 'All Lotteries end Tuesday next, six 30,000*l*.'
3. Band of trumpets, clarionets, horns, &c.
4. A large purple silk banner carried by six men, inscribed in large gold letters 'All Lotteries end for ever on Tuesday next, six 30,000*l*.'
5. A painted carriage, representing the Lottery wheel, drawn by two dappled grey horses, tandem fashion; the fore horse rode by a postillion in scarlet and gold, with a black velvet cap, and a boy seated in a dicky behind the machine, turning the handle and setting the wheel in motion.
6. Six men with other Lottery labels.
7. A square Lottery carriage, surmounted by a gilt imperial crown; the carriage covered by labels, with 'All Lotteries end on Tuesday next'; drawn by two horses, tandem, and a postillion.
8. Six men with labels.
9. Twelve men in blue and gold, with boards or poles with 'Lotteries end for ever on Tuesday next.'
10. A large purple silk flag, with 'all Lotteries end on Tuesday next'.¹¹

Advertising vans continued to be a feature of the London streets well into the Victorian period. In an 1846 leader devoted to an attack on a parliamentary bill to abolish ambulant advertising, *The Economist* defended the tradesman's right to parade puffery through the streets: 'The vans, it is clear, would not be employed if they were not beneficial. Dealers in coats, and hats, and tea find them one of the cheapest and most effective means of making known whereabouts they live and what they have to sell. It seems to us to be as innocent and proper a mode of advertising as any other.'¹² Advertising vans were complemented by publicity material plastered on the outsides of omnibuses, which carried external advertisements from their introduction into the streets of London in 1829.

The street theatre of advertising is also manifested in Pückler-Muskau's references to the extravagantly behatted gentleman and



Figure 3. George Cruikshank. Detail from 'The Worship of Bacchus' (1860–2).

to the laundress's bannerman, or placard-carrier. Peripatetic advertisers were common in the London streets, notably in the forms of the placard-carrier and the sandwich, which was a late Georgian innovation.¹³ Figure 3 shows a caricature of a sandwich by George Cruikshank.

As well as employing sandwiches, advertisers also hired people to distribute handbills (the single-page, often illustrated, advertisement). These were circulated in the streets or delivered through the letter plates of houses in targeted areas. Though the handbill is a mid-eighteenth-century innovation,¹⁴ it is in the Romantic period that the practice of billing comes into its own. New printing technology allowed both greater printing volumes and more ingenious use of display cuts. Figures 4 and 5 give examples of early nineteenth-century handbills for two London lottery offices.



Grand State Lottery

BEGINS DRAWING

JUNE 28, 1808.

SCHEME.

6	Prizes of £20,000	are	£120,000
2	....	10,000	.... 20,000
2	....	5,000	.... 10,000
3	....	2,000	.... 6,000
3	....	1,000	.... 5,000
7	....	500	.... 3,500
20	....	100	.... 2,000
30	....	50	.... 1,500
1,000	....	22	.... 22,000
4,000	....	15	.... 60,000
<u>25,000</u> Tickets.		<u>£250,000</u>	

THE
ONLY
LOTTERY

THAT
EVER CONTAINED

6

PRIZES OF
£20,000.

NO FIXED PRIZE.

TICKETS and SHARES are Selling by

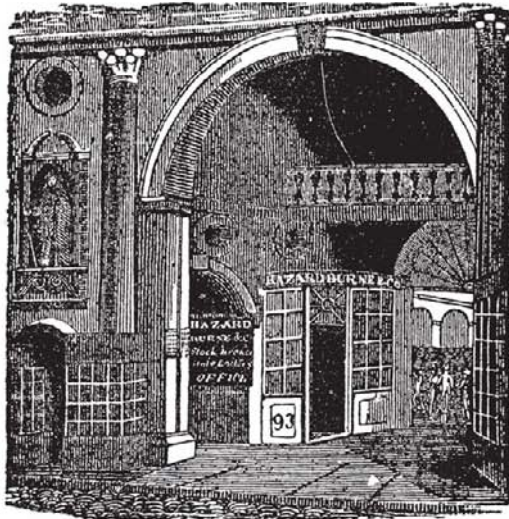
SWIFT & Co.

11, Poultry; and 12, Charing-Cross.

Cye and Balce, Printers, 38, Gracechurch-Street.

Figure 4. Handbill for Swift and Co. (1808).

South Gate of the Royal Exchange.



HAZARD

And Co. ROYAL EXCHANGE,

Who sold Five Prizes of £20,000 in the last Year's Lotteries, have Tickets and Shares on Sale for the Grand Lottery which begins 4th MARCH, containing

**3 Prizes of £30,000,
100 Capitals;**

All in Sterling Money,

And, independent of the Scheme, the Holders of the First-drawn Blanks, on each Day of Drawing, may order

12 Pipes of Port Wine,

And in Proportion for Shares, of any Wine Merchant they please, viz. 4 Pipes each.

Figure 5. Handbill for Hazard and Co. (early nineteenth century).

The posted bill was also common in the period. Sticking and distributing bills formed a kind of promotional pincer movement for the ambitious advertiser: as the author of *Real Life in London* noted in 1821, ‘The practice of advertising and billing the town has become so common.’¹⁵ Some posting sites, notably in central London, were licensed and rented out on a systematic basis, but much bill-posting was done *ad hoc*, to the point where *Tait’s Magazine* declared, in 1834, that ‘If a house by any chance becomes tenantless, on a given day, the next shall see its walls covered to the very chimney tops with posting bills, not a square foot unprofaned by paste.’¹⁶ Thomas Hood’s 1825 graphic satire, ‘The Progress of Cant’, illustrates the wide use of fly-posting. A wall bearing the legend ‘Stick no Bills’ is plastered all over with posters, which range from one-off advertisements (‘Wanted in a Serious Family A Good Gig Secondhand’ and ‘Sale of Effects Upright Piano’ – which is posted upside down) to bills for widely advertised brand names (Wright’s Champagne,¹⁷ and Pidding and Co.’s Lottery Office: ‘Lucky Corner Pidd Two of 20000 one of 30000’¹⁸). Posters, or affiches, were complemented by advertisements painted or whitewashed upon walls: Hood notes in 1825 that Robert Warren’s name was ‘whitewashed . . . upon the wall of the metropolis and the park-palings of the country’.¹⁹ Such daubing was also evident in the rather more rudimentary habit of wall-chalking. ‘John Bee’, in his *Dictionary of the Turf* (1823), defines a ‘wall-chalker’ as one of those ‘fellows who . . . scrawl balderdash upon garden walls . . . Others chalk up their trades – as “try Warren’s blacking.”’²⁰ From graffiti chalked upon walls to elaborate advertising processions through the streets, London was saturated with the language and imagery of advertising.

There are material and economic reasons for advertisers’ use of such a diverse range of media during this period. The extensive use of affiches and handbills was to a significant degree motivated by the reluctance of many newspapers, the national dailies most particularly, to admit display advertisements or, indeed, any visual imagery beyond the traditional (such as the hand and the small cuts of ships used in shipping notices). *The Times*, for instance, seemed determined to curb advertising ingenuity. It discouraged display, preferred not to have its vertical lines broken up by outsize puffs spanning more than one column, and only allowed advertisements the more modest type sizes and weights. Weekly newspapers were

more willing to admit display publicity, advertisements across column breaks and larger, bolder, or heavier typefaces, but it is small wonder that advertisers so often utilised the relatively unfettered single-sheet advertisement, whether plastered on the wall or distributed by hand. Furthermore, it has to be noted that newspaper advertising could not on its own account guarantee brand awareness, the days of mass periodical publishing being several decades away. Even the largest in terms of circulation, *The Times*, only published between 2,500 and 3,000 copies per day in 1801 (compare this to the figure of nearly 60,000 it managed by 1855).²¹ Entrepreneurs were to some extent forced into multi-media advertising by the shallowness and the conservatism of the newspaper market.

The above notwithstanding, the most significant reason for the multi-media techniques of Romantic period advertisers was financial, the consequence of the introduction of a tax on newspaper advertisements (and advertisements in pamphlets) in 1797. Pitt's wartime fiscal measures, though initially prompted by national emergency, survived long into the nineteenth century. From 1797 onwards, newspaper advertisements were taxed at a flat rate of 3s per insertion (regardless of length).²² The duty was increased in 1815 to 3s 6d and not reduced until 1833, when, after pressure from manufacturers and pressmen alike, it came down to 1s 6d. The maintenance of the duty prompted advertisers, as a means of tax avoidance, to draw extensively upon the wide range of advertising techniques that had been pioneered in previous decades. Tax was not levied on single-sheet advertisements such as posters, handbills or window-bills, ensuring that these alternative media became increasingly attractive. As one commentator noted in 1831, 'As one channel narrows, so other channels become proportionately enlarged. The advertisement duty merely swells the number of placards and circulars, and compels the shop-keeper to have recourse to roundabout and less efficient methods of setting forth the merits and cheapness of his wares, instead of courting the attention of customers in the pages of a public journal.'²³ Even the sandwich was, *de facto*, a means of dodging tax: Dickens writes in *Sketches by Boz* of 'the unstamped advertisement: an animated sandwich, composed of a boy between two boards'.²⁴ As John Crawford noted in the 1830s, even after a reduction in the advertising duty, "Bill-sticking" has become a regular profession in every considerable town in the kingdom, under the patronage

of the stamp-duty, which in its liberality allows of the publication of a single advertisement on a single scrap of paper without taxation.²⁵ Thus, to a large extent, the sheer diversity of advertising methods evident in the first fifty years of the nineteenth century is attributable to the fiscal pressure on press advertising as much as to the ingenuity of advertisers.

Advertising levy was finally abolished in 1853, leading to a rapid growth in the number of newspaper advertisements. In *The History and Development of Advertising*, Frank Presbrey sees the 1850s as marking the emergence of a 'golden age' of press advertisements,²⁶ while T. R. Nevett says that the 'result [of the abolition of duty] was a tremendous expansion of the press, coinciding with a vast increase in advertising'.²⁷ However, Nevett is careful to make a distinction between press and other advertising and to argue that 'the trends which can be observed [in advertising after the 1850s] were only accentuated versions of those already apparent in the first half of the nineteenth century'.²⁸ Literary scholars have not always been so positive about pre-Victorian advertising and have tended to see the mid-nineteenth century as marking the emergence of modern advertising and to view the advertisements of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries as prosaic and unimaginative. Recent valuable work on Victorian advertisements has underestimated the vigour and ingenuity of late Georgian advertising. Thomas Richards's *The Commodity Culture of Victorian England: Advertising and Spectacle, 1851-1914* (1990) labels it crude and rudimentary: 'The year 1851 had found advertising in a primitive state.'²⁹ For Richards, the Great Exhibition ushers in a golden age of advertising and everything before it is antediluvian. Though he is aware of the diversity and ubiquity of outdoor advertising in the 1830s and 1840s, this is dismissed on theoretical grounds, as simply ensuring that the 'advertisers also remained trapped within an economy of representation that Claude Lévi-Strauss has called "bricolage", that is, an activity that circumscribes creative expression by making it rely on "a heterogeneous repertoire which, even if extensive, is nevertheless limited"'.³⁰ It is the Exhibition which ensures that the advertising spectacles previously enacted on the streets are provided with the 'centre' needed to dispel the effect of bricolage:

The real novelty of the Great Exhibition was that it constructed a centripetal space of representation that took the commodity as its centre

and axis. In the Crystal Palace the commodity was something more than the sum of its parts; it was now the key to all the mythologies of Victorian society, the master fiction around which society organised and condensed its cultural life and political ideology.³¹

Richards's rhetoric here is high-flown, but his loading of the Exhibition with near-transcendental significance threatens to undermine its plausibility. To my mind the Great Exhibition, and the culture of spectacle that surrounded it, rather than marking a beginning, is best seen as a development of existing strands within advertising, a point of arrival rather than a point of origin.³² Certainly that pioneering Victorian account of advertising, Henry Sampson's *A History of Advertising* (1874), does not grant any importance to the Exhibition. Furthermore, it might be pointed out that Sampson's survey account of 'the education of advertisers and the development of advertisements' concludes in 1800 because 'by the commencement of the present century matters were very nearly as they are now'.³³

Lori Anne Loeb, in her fascinating study *Consuming Angels: Advertising and Victorian Women* (1994), is even more confident than Thomas Richards that the wonders of Victorian advertising emerge *ab ovo* during the 1850s. She declares baldly that 'before the mid-century, advertisements were ... almost always simple announcements'.³⁴ This dismissal of Romantic period advertising, a cultural form that is often remarkable, sophisticated and socially suggestive, survives little detailed scrutiny. It might conceivably apply to much of the advertising in the most notable London daily newspaper, but the reader who bases his or her impression of late Georgian advertising on a cursory glance at the neat advertising columns of *The Times*, which were generally prosaic, non-illustrated and full of miscellaneous one-off announcements, where each insertion was subject to tax, and where a succession of editors and proprietors opposed display copy and broken columns, is misjudging the diversity and ingenuity of advertising that was actually evident during the period.

The dismissal of early nineteenth-century advertising by Richards and Loeb can perhaps be attributed to the understandable tendency among cultural historians to stress the importance of their own particular periods. Having taken issue with their arguments, I do not wish to replace one 'year zero' approach with another. The peculiar glories of late Georgian

advertising do not spring fully formed into being with the publication of Packwood's first advertisements in the 1780s any more than Romanticism itself emerges on 14 July 1789 without any significant precursors or antecedents. There is much in the advertising culture of the earlier eighteenth century which can help to explain its late Georgian manifestations. Many of the promotional techniques used in the period can be found in the eighteenth century: handbills, posters, display copy, the occasional jingle puff. And, similarly, the late Georgian emphasis upon brands and their proprietors has eighteenth-century antecedents. Though it has been argued³⁵ that the pioneer of brand advertising was the potter Josiah Wedgwood, the true innovators were quack doctors (a fact that partially explains the air of the disreputable which surrounds advertising in much early nineteenth-century middle-class opinion). Advertisers of proprietorial medicines might be said to be the principal progenitors of modern advertising. Even so, the likes of Warren and Packwood were building upon the pioneering branding techniques of earlier eighteenth-century manufacturers, the commercial genius of Wedgwood most particularly. Asa Briggs argues that the most successful eighteenth-century industrialists were aware of the need for 'sales promotion and advertising':

Wedgwood adopted 'branding' of his products; he called his most successful line 'Queen's Ware'. [The industrialist] Matthew Boulton received so many visitors at Soho – George III himself recommended Catherine the Great to go there in 1776 – that the house resembled an inn rather than a residence. [The iron manufacturer] Wilkinson was a born publicity expert. In his lifetime a ballad was written about him by his workmen, and after he died, the legend was that he would rise from his coffin and visit the blast furnaces seven years after his death. Indeed a large crowd gathered on the appointed day to welcome his resurrection.³⁶

The manufacturers discussed at length later in this book, the likes of Warren and Rowland, share a similar flair for publicity.

Though many of the strategies used in late Georgian advertising draw on techniques pioneered in the early and mid-eighteenth century, I would endorse T. R. Nevett's argument that 'the first half of the nineteenth century was the period during which advertising evolved into something akin to its present form'.³⁷ Between 1780 and 1840, advertisers simultaneously introduced a range of new techniques and applied the lessons of the eighteenth

century in a much more methodical and systematic manner. New systems of product distribution³⁸ allowed the introduction of extensive, nationwide marketing campaigns and brand awareness permeated public consciousness at an unprecedented level. A domestic product such as blacking, which had hitherto been sold in generic form, or, when branded, only within limited geographical areas, could become the focus of country-wide advertising campaigns. And the flamboyant manner of the quack could be adopted to endorse more mundane products. Figures such as Thomas Bish or George Packwood could play the showman, proselytising for their lottery tickets and razor strops in witty advertisements and innovative promotional stunts. The impact of the advertising duty prompted a remarkably inventive use of public advertising which leaves its mark on the urban landscape to this day.

II

In a fine essay published in *The London Magazine* in 1825, Thomas Hood declared that 'Advertisement writing is an art in itself.'³⁹ This section examines the 'art' of advertising in the Romantic period, paying attention to the literary techniques used by advertisers. For the late Georgian age is a time of much resourceful and highly imaginative advertising, advertising which responded to the world around it in fascinating ways. The imitative strategies of copywriters are everywhere evident in their ransacking of both refined culture (poetry, classical learning) and popular culture (the pleasures of the Fancy, the gin-shop, the broadsheet ballad). Borrowing from high culture, say in hymning boot polish in Miltonic blank verse or in using brand names derived from Greek mythology, is part of what is, to my mind, the most significant device within the advertising literature of the age, literary associationism, whereby advertising gestures towards more prestigious discourses and is thereby dignified by association⁴⁰ or, more subtly, as in humorous and parodic advertising, is able to exploit the comic differential between literary form and commercial content in a striking and memorable fashion. For many companies, then as now, the supreme imprimatur that can be used in advertising is the royal warrant, whereby the product concerned is elevated by association with the royal family. Literary association is

its cultural equivalent. It is evident in much of the advertising of the period: in the use of multisyllabic words derived from the classical languages both in copy and in brand name, in the generic affiliations of verse copy, in the ritual incantation of scientific or medical terminology. In its use of multisyllabic words, especially those derived from ancient Greek and Latin or imported from the sciences, advertising copy frequently gestures towards more elevated discourses. The very word ‘puffing’ invokes the notion of oratorical inflation, and this is elevation by terminological association, a linguistic version of the royal warrant. Thus Hall and Co.’s boots rejoice in the brand name of ‘Pannus-Corium’, Greenwood’s market their anti-belching meat products as the ‘Celebrated Norwich Anti-Eructative Sausages’,⁴¹ and Fox and Co. offer gentlemen the ‘Korychlamyd’ hat. An early 1830s advertisement for Gregory’s Stomachic Powder demonstrates the appeal of polysyllabic and, in this case, scientific terminology:

GREGORY’S STOMACHIC POWDER. This Composition was a favourite recipe of the late Professor Gregory of Edinburgh, for affections of the Stomach (such as Indigestion, Acidity, Flatulence, &c.) and torpidity of the Bowels, consequent upon an impaired state of the secretions necessary for the process of Digestion. Its effects are antacid, carminative, and gently aperient. It is particularly serviceable to Gouty and Dyspeptic Invalids, and may be taken without any restraint whatever, according to the directions which accompany it. In Bottles at 2s. and 3s. 6d.

There is undoubtedly an element of the euphemistic here, in the use of the words ‘carminative’ and ‘aperient’ rather than ‘wind-expelling’ and ‘laxative’, but the conscious use of ornate and Latinate medical terminology enhances the advertisement’s appeal to the reader. Its assumption of a scientific register confers gravitas upon the advertiser, who becomes a disinterested man of science rather than a catchpenny barker. And the dignity of the title of the inventor, now conveniently dead and unlikely to contradict the advertiser, also adds a veneer of clinical propriety to the puff.

It was not only medicine sellers who utilised such vocabulary, as such stuff as the anti-eructative sausages demonstrates. The use of words borrowed or derived from the classical languages reaches its apogee in copy, dating from the 1830s, for Tanner’s pens:

Richard Tanner’s celebrated resplendent, unparagoned, caligraph, incomparable, pre-eminently approved graphometrical, prophylactic,

parallel, trichotomical, coadjuvant pliancy, unparalleled, self-renovating, ever-pointed, emendated, denticuled, spheroidal, transilient rectifications, mathematically serrated, of octagonal angulations, amalgamated of amaldine, zigzag, trigonal, oblong, four-springed Tannerian Pens.

Tanner's pre-eminently approved graphometrical pens should not be used with everyday ink; instead, the writer should employ an 'imarcissible cerulean atramental Limpid Fluid' (which, usefully, 'facilitates writing by flowing from the pen in a gradual stream to the paper'). Richard Tanner, unsurprisingly, is the 'sole inventor' of the Limpid Fluid, 'the only ink which can be used with his pens without disgracing them'. This puff is quoted by Abraham Hayward in the *Edinburgh*, who comments: 'This is hardly worthy of Mr Tanner. Any one can write down a string of hard words at random.'⁴² For once, Hayward misses the point; Tanner's gleeful co-option of classical languages and scientific discourses is conscious drollery. It makes no attempt to offer an accurate description of his pens: one imagines that Tanner was not besieged by customers complaining that their pens were not 'spheroidal', 'octagonal', 'trigonal' and 'oblong' in simultaneity. Tanner's plethora of adjectives denies rather than serves specificity, provoking amusement at his showmanship rather than offering a visual image of his pens. As so often in the Romantic period, here wit is used as a marketing device; Tanner self-consciously parodies the addiction to hard words evident in much contemporary advertising copy, using quack language in a knowing and ironic fashion. The best of the period's advertising has a playful edge, with comic modes and genres highly visible. Tanner's rodomontade puts one in mind of Thomas Love Peacock's *Melincourt* (1817), which features that orthoepically challenging character, the 'poeticopolitical, rhadsodicoprosaic, deisidæmoniacoparadoxographical, pseudolatreiological, transcendental meteorosophist, Moley Mystic, Esquire, of Cimmerian Lodge'.⁴³ However, where Peacock uses sesquipedalianism in a wry lampoon of Coleridgean obscurantism, Tanner's use of the practice directs its wit to more commercial ends.

As the large sums spent by modern companies in developing brand names through market research and focus groups testify, finding the appropriate nomenclature is seen as crucial to the launch of any product. This commercial opinion is not new; brand names were also of great significance in historical

advertising. And the rhetorical strategies of elevation by association evident in contemporary advertising copy are also common in the late Georgian brand name, where Alexander Rowland announces his new medicine for the headache as the ‘Elixir of Cerelæum’ and Samuel Solomon peddles his ‘Cordial Balm of Gilead’ as a universal panacea. As *Chambers’ Edinburgh Journal* notes in 1851, ‘manufacturers and shopkeepers’ are ‘remarkably prone to the use of fine hard unknown names . . . it is in the names of commodities that this superhuman learning shews itself: we do not know how great our Greek and Latin knowledge is until we have studied the sign-boards and shop advertisements’.⁴⁴ In an 1823 passage which combines awareness of the linguistic techniques of brand-name nomenclature with the ritual baiting of William Hazlitt, *Blackwood’s* derided ‘that prevailing fashion, in virtue whereof the new tooth-powder is announced as *dentifrice*, the new pimple-wash as *Kalydor*, the new long-coach as *dodecahedron*, and the new smutty chap-book, as *Liber Amoris*’.⁴⁵ A principal target here is Rowland, proprietor of the Kalydor brand (to ‘remove Cutaneous Eruptions’) and Rowland’s Odonto, or Pearl Dentifrice (an ‘efficacious ANTI-SCORBUTIC’). ‘Has not Mr Rowland’, asks the *Chambers’* article, ‘sold much more “Macassar”, and “Kalydor”, and “Odonto”, and “dentifrice”, than if those perfumes had more simple names? . . . we may safely consider the little bits of Greek and Latin comprised in these names as so much capital to the seller, yielding good monetary returns’.⁴⁶

Sometimes the neoclassicism of advertising informed the product as well as the brand name or copy. In 1814, Ross’s Ornamental Hair Warehouse in Bishopsgate produced a wig based upon figures on the Elgin Marbles, announcing ‘To the NOBILITY, GENTRY, and the Fashionable World. – ROSS’S newly invented GRECIAN VOLUTE HEAD-DRESS’. This spiralling ornamentation, which was ‘formed from the true marble models, brought into this country from the Acropolis of Athens by Lord Elgin, rivals any other hitherto invented’. Three years before John Keats writes his ‘On seeing the Elgin Marbles’, Ross is similarly inspired to create his own neoclassical cultural product. In the same decade in which the likes of Hunt and Keats were investing the contemporary preoccupation with classical culture with radical resonance, Ross assimilates it to his own commercial purposes.

The 'Ode on a Grecian Urn' and the 'Grecian Volute Head-Dress' both assimilate Greek relic into contemporary artefact. In this period, both shopmen and Cockney poets use Greek culture to their particular ends, and both are attacked by the ultra-Tory *Blackwood's* for their presumptuous attempts to co-opt classical culture. It is not insignificant that 'Maga' compares Hazlitt with Alexander Rowland and advises Keats to go 'back to the shop Mr John'. Advertising Greek shares the Cockney School's fervid embrace of neoclassicism and its literary associationism draws the same response from *Blackwood's* as that of Hunt and his cohorts. Both have ideas above their stations, both utilise the classical inheritance in a vulgar manner, and both, to borrow Lockhart's words, have 'acquired a sort of vague idea, that the Greeks were a most tasteful people, and that no mythology can by so finely adapted for the purposes of poetry', or, indeed, advertising, 'as theirs'.⁴⁷

'We must walk through Holborn and the Strand with a Greek dictionary in hand!'⁴⁸ declares *Chambers*'. During the 1830s, 'The Light House' premises at 201 Strand were occupied by the experimental chemist, inventor and match-maker Samuel Jones, who ransacked Greek and Roman myth and scripture for images of combustion to provide his brand names. 'A New Light' (figure 6) is an 1831 advertisement for Jones's igniferous products.

Jones's water-heating device and his matches (brands in two senses of the term, it might be pointed out) are given names charged with a fiery incandescence: the 'Patent Promethean', the 'Lucifer' and the 'Ætna' (and, incidentally, his portable kitchens, or 'Peripurist Conjurors', are dignified with a word unknown to the *Oxford English Dictionary*). Significantly, the brand names for the matches demonstrate allusive strategies commonplace in the wider literary culture, in their references to two of the most important mythological figures in Romantic art: Satan and Prometheus. Lighting a Promethean utilises the chemical process of sublimation and, appropriately, Jones uses sublime imagery to denominate his products. Despite his status as a significant experimental chemist, Jones avoids the use of multisyllabic scientific jargon evident in much contemporary advertising, instead opting for a near-alchemical discourse. The brand name for Jones's earliest invention is particularly interesting, given the cultural resonance of Prometheanism in the period in the work of

A NEW LIGHT.

JONES'S PATENT PROMETHEANS, for producing instant Light, without the aid of a Bottle or any apparatus, and, unlike any other fire-box, of whatever description, there is no possibility of their getting out of repair in any climate. This is the most simple and best mode of producing Light ever invented. No bed-room, drawing-room, or counting-house should be without them; for cigar smokers they are unequalled: on coach, horseback, or sea, in any current of air, they still retain their fire, and emit, on being burnt, a fragrant perfume; are perfectly innocent and free from danger.

JONES'S LUCIFERS, OR CHLORATE MATCHES.

This is a very simple and cheap mode of producing instant Light, simply by drawing the Match through Sand Paper, and will never impair by keeping. 1s. per Box. May be had of all respectable Chemists, Tobacconists, &c. throughout the Kingdom.—As these Matches are now imperfectly imitated by an unprincipled fellow, to prevent disappointment please to observe that others are now substituted without the name and address, 'S. Jones, Light House, 201, Strand.'—The following inventions and improvements by S. Jones, are sold wholesale and retail:—

S. JONES'S NEW PHILOSOPHICAL PASTILE,

For perfuming and disinfecting dining, drawing, and bed rooms; the most simple and elegant Pastile ever invented, for large parties or crowded apartments. They will be found to emit the most fragrant perfume that can be imagined. They burn with any kind of spirituous perfume, such as Eau de Cologne, Lavender Water, &c., which may be varied at pleasure. The expense of burning is not One Penny per Hour.

S. JONES'S ETNAS,

for boiling half a pint of water in three minutes.

BACHELOR'S DISPATCH,

for boiling a quart of water, and cooking a steak, chop, or eggs, in nine minutes.

PERIPURIST CONJURORS, and every description of **PORTABLE KITCHENS**, for ships, boats, gipsy and water parties from 10s. 6d. to 14 guineas, to cook from one to twenty dishes Merchants and Captains will find it to their interest to visit the **LIGHT HOUSE, 201, STRAND.**—N.B. The New Kitchen is kept going on Tuesdays and Fridays, from one to three o'clock.

Figure 6. 'A New Light'. Advertisement for Samuel Jones (1831).

the Shelleys, Byron and Godwin. There is nothing redundant or empty periphrastic about the name 'Patent Promethean', a name in which commercial property and cultural capital intertwine. In the same year that saw the publication of the Bentley's Standard Authors edition of *Frankenstein*, here is another modern Prometheus at work. And if Mary Shelley uses the myth of Prometheus to engage with scientific invention and its implications, then here

we have a contemporary scientist himself utilising the same mythological terrain, willingly embracing the role assigned to Victor Frankenstein to serve the commercial marketing of his products.

Samuel Jones was more than a coiner of brand names laden with mythological and literary associations; the launch of the Promethean, patented in 1828, is an important moment in the development of modern match-making. The head of the match was a tiny glass bead, filled with sulphuric acid and coated with an igniting agent, which lit when broken⁴⁹ (generally by a pair of pliers, though some foolhardy individuals used their teeth⁵⁰). The Lucifer, on the other hand, was a friction match, which, if the warning on the package is a reliable indicator ('Persons whose lungs are delicate should by no means use the Lucifers') was probably highly toxic. The Lucifer match was the source of a fascinating quarrel conducted in the advertising columns of the public prints between Jones and a rival chemist. In the Lucifer section of 'A New Light'⁵¹ Jones warns: 'As these Matches are now imperfectly imitated by an unprincipled fellow, to prevent disappointment please to observe that others are substituted without the name and address, "S. Jones, Light House, 201, Strand"'. This knocking copy is decidedly more focused than the usual copywriter's blanket denunciation of perfidious imitators: unlike the Promethean, which he had previously patented, Jones did not obtain patent for the Lucifer and the 'unprincipled fellow', a Mr Watts, began to market his own Lucifer match, claiming to be its 'sole inventor'. Jones's attack on Watts in his advertisements led the latter to reply, in puffs published in the *Age* in April and May 1831, that he 'would no more imitate Jones's "Lucifer" than Sir Thomas Lawrence would, when he was yet alive, have resorted to the daubers in his profession to exalt his fame' (here again an advertiser attempts to elevate himself by association, in Watts's self-identification with the fine artist). He adds for good measure that 'Jones's "Prometheans" are dangerous, and will not stand the climate'. This led Jones to sue for libel, in a case held before the Court of Common Pleas on 22 November 1831. Mr Serjeant Bompas, counsel for Jones, opened thus:

The plaintiff, Mr Samuel Jones, was an experimental chemist living in the Strand, and the defendant was in the same profession. Mr Jones had,

some time ago, invented a match to produce an instantaneous light . . . and he had given his ingenious invention the name of 'Promethean'; and which, although an alarming name, there was nothing injurious in its construction . . . Subsequently the plaintiff invented another description of match, which he designated with the frightful name of the 'Lucifer', but which was equally harmless. For the 'Prometheans' he had secured . . . letters patent; but for the 'Lucifers' he had not so secured his right as the patentee. The consequence was, that in about a year afterwards, when the invention of the plaintiff had been lectured upon at the London and Royal Institutions, the defendant made an exact imitation of the 'Lucifer Match' and represented himself to be the sole inventor, in various advertisements.⁵²

It is interesting to note how counsel for the plaintiff, in his quest to prove the safety of Jones's products, feels it necessary to retreat from the Hadean overtones of his client's brand names. Bompas goes on to muster scientific evidence to disprove the allegedly libellous section of Watts's advertisement, calling expert witnesses to testify to the fact that the intact matches were innocuous:

In the same advertisement the libel now complained of was contained, viz.: – 'That Jones's "Prometheans" were dangerous, and would not stand the climate.' These statements had materially tended to injure the sale of the 'Prometheans', and were a malicious libel to the injury of the plaintiff. The Learned Serjeant then called Mr Cooper and Mr Everett, experimental chemists, and Mr Hennel, the chemical operator of the Apothecaries' Hall, all of whom had tried experiments on the 'Prometheans', and declared that they would not ignite under 415 deg. F., (nearly double the heat of boiling water,) four times hotter than any climate in the world . . . Several other scientific witnesses were called, who proved they never considered Jones's 'Prometheans' dangerous. – Mr Pollock having addressed the Jury for the defendant, and Mr Serjeant Bompas having replied, Mr Justice Park summed up. The Jury instantly found a verdict for the plaintiff – damages to the full amount claimed, and costs.⁵³

Unlike the story of his brother chemist in *Frankenstein, or the Modern Prometheus*, Jones's hour of trial ends in the defeat of the malign doppelgänger. Watts, Promethean himself in his theft of fire, was forced to cease production of his imitation Lucifers.⁵⁴

III

The quarrel between Jones and Watts focuses upon originality, a word as potent in the commercial culture of the early nineteenth century as it is in the literary culture of Romanticism. Advertising

copy manifests a preoccupation with innovation, originality and creativity. If such concepts resound through the wider literary scene, they also have economic value; advertisers boast of the unique and original nature of their products, warn against imitation and pursue imposition through the courts. There are many contemporary court cases involving patent protection, imposition, counterfeiting and the misuse of brand names.⁵⁵ Contemporary manufacturers guarded their brands as zealously as the law allowed, particularly when their goods had patented status. The patent, which seeks to guarantee brand originality, is second only to the warrant in the hierarchy of intellectual property in the period.⁵⁶ From Jones's matches (the 'Patent Prometheans') to Viner's alarm clocks (the 'Patent Warning Watches') a wide range of brand names emphasised a product's patent status. An advertisement for Millard's Imperial Twine Cloth published in 1814 demonstrates the utility of the patent:

By His Majesty's Royal Letters Patent. – MILLARD'S IMPERIAL TWINE CLOTH (for regulating the perspiration, and prevention of taking cold). This article, so desirable for its economy, and its conduciveness to health, is manufactured on a mathematical principle (*ayant toute l'agréable de la toile du lin*), and is suitable to every climate and season. It is sold, marked with the patentee's name, & c. at the East India Warehouse, 16 Cheapside, and other houses.

This advertisement foregrounds the patent, while also disingenuously implying, in the use of the superfluous phrase 'His Majesty's Royal Letters', that the product is also warranted. The writer packs his copy with associationist manoeuvring: the 'Imperial Twine Cloth' is wrapped in the cloak of empire, constructed in an impressively scientific manner, granted medicinal properties, and saluted in an alluring foreign language (here that of the fashionably sophisticated French).

Samuel Jones's preoccupation with the protection of his product from imposture is widespread in the period. Court cases apart, a great deal of advertising ink is spilt in admonishing the customer against counterfeits and inferior imitations. If imitation becomes a debased literary concept in high Romantic art when viewed in the light of original genius, then the same applies in contemporary manufacturing. The purchaser must have the real Simon Pure and be made aware of the danger of impostors; as Hood writes in 'The Art of Advertizing Made Easy', 'The public

must be cautioned against every thing on earth but the identical item advertised . . . The inventor must be “ever anxious”, or “always emulous”, to check imposition.’⁵⁷ Enthusiastic salute to the particular qualities of the brand must be accompanied by dire warnings about the pernicious nature of inferior imitations. ‘Singular & Particular Detail is the foundation of the Sublime,’⁵⁸ writes William Blake, and it is also the foundation of the branded good. Customers must be made to feel that the particular brand being advertised is the only one to be countenanced. Unbranded generic products must be abandoned in favour of the branded good, and exhortations given as to the dangers of imitation, generally through the medium of the ‘Singular & Particular Detail’ of label design:

CAUTION.

CHING’S WORM LOZENGES. – The public are particularly cautioned against a spurious imitation of this valuable Medicine, which a number of unprincipled individuals are endeavouring to impose upon them. The criterion of authenticity will be, as heretofore, ‘Charles Butler, 4 Cheapside, St. Paul’s’ being engraved on the Government Stamp, which is attached to each box, and without which cannot be genuine.

Similarly, an 1832 puff for Perring’s Beaver Hats⁵⁹ (figure 7) warns that copyists of his headwear ‘have sprung up like mushrooms’.

Cautions are sometimes headed by the public notice banners so beloved of contemporary advertisers: ‘To the Public’, ‘Notice’, ‘To the Ladies’ and so on. Such attention-grabbing banners work by subterfuge, tempting the reader in under false pretences. If literary associationism within advertising gestures towards elevation by generic aspiration, these hidden advertisements attempt a form of generic escape, only revealing their true nature once the reader’s attention is caught. Though highly anti-pathetic towards advertisers (whom he labels ‘abandoned hypocrites’), Leigh Hunt’s conviction, expressed in 1808, that advertisers’ ‘greatest quackery is their denial of being quacks’⁶⁰ is insightful. A sophisticated form of the hidden advertisement is, to use Mr Puff’s taxonomy from R. B. Sheridan’s *The Critic* (1779), the ‘puff collateral’ which, disguising its own promotional status, initially masquerades as an article before its true purpose is revealed. In 1853, Edward Bradley (the comic novelist ‘Cuthbert Bede’) writes of ‘the ingenious artifices by which . . . advertisers thrust their wares upon the attention of newspaper

**BEAVER HATS, at 21 SHILLINGS—
THE BEST THAT CAN BE MADE.**

Short Mole Fur Naps, in 100 different shapes, to suit *contour*. The universal *patronage* bestowed upon my *Hats* has caused a set of *unprincipled pretenders* to copy my advertisements, and doorway; it is therefore necessary to caution the public against such shameful infringements. To prove my ability as a hat-maker, I have been in the business eighteen years, during which period I have introduced many important improvements in the manufacture of Beaver Hats, and was the first person who ever introduced the well-known *Light Beaver Hat*, weighing four ounces. Since then, copyists have sprung up like mushrooms. This has not been confined to London; it has extended to India, Spain, and Portugal, where Hats have been sent with my name forged in them.—Please to observe my Address—*John Perring, Cecil House, 85, Strand*, corner of Cecil-street: the only house where my Hats can be purchased as follows: The very best Beaver Hats in London, 21s.; Second Qualities, 16s.; Best Livery Hats, 16s.; Best Silk Hats, 12s.; Shooting and Fishing Hats, 10s. 6d.; Summer Caps, three ounces weight, 8s. 6d.; Travelling and Fancy Caps in every variety.

Youths' Hats and Caps, various.

Observe—Cecil House, 85, Strand, corner of Cecil-street.

Figure 7. 'BEAVER HATS, at 21 SHILLINGS – THE BEST THAT CAN BE MADE'. Advertisement for Perring's Hats (1832).

readers', paying particular attention to the stratagem whereby the reader is 'tempted with a paragraph that commenced with "a clever saying of the illustrious Voltaire", and dovetailed into a panegyric of Messrs. Aaron & Son's Reversible Paletots'. 'We may have applauded', Bradley goes on, 'the clever logician who so clearly demonstrates, that as Napoleon's bilious affections so frequently clouded his judgment in times of greatest need, the events of the present century, and the fate of nations, would have been reversed had that great man been persuaded to take two boxes of Snook's Aperient Pills, price 1s. 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ d., with the government stamp on a red ground.'⁶¹ Leigh Hunt was less admiring of the same strategies: the public is 'tempted to listen to somebody in the shape of a Wit who turns out to be a lottery-keeper, [and] seduced to hear a magnificent oration which finishes by retreating into a peruke or rolling off into a blacking ball'.⁶² A good example of the puff collateral is 'The Don Cossacks', a puff published around 1812 in which the lottery-office keeper Thomas Bish offers a spoof news report that uses the visit to London of the celebrated Russian anti-Napoleonic warriors to sell tickets. Readers are tempted into the puff, which initially presents

itself as a press column, before its true mercantile purpose is revealed:

THE DON COSSACKS

When these heroes arrived in town, and were apprised of our liberal subscriptions for the relief of the suffering Russians, their iron countenances were bedewed with tears of gratitude. Observing a number of persons crowding into No. 9, Charing Cross, and being informed that it arose from the eagerness of the public to secure their fortunes in the state lottery, they instantly sent for two tickets, resolving to add their prizes to the above-mentioned subscriptions. When told that every ticket would be drawn a prize on the 6th of May, they exclaimed – Hurrah! Bish for ever!!

IV

Bish's ingenious puffs notwithstanding, the most notable advertisement of the period is the most contemporaneously well-known of the many puffs for Warren's blacking, an advertisement which is common in the 1810s and 1820s, 'The Cat and the Boot; or, An Improvement upon Mirrors' (figure 1 above). The illustration, by no less a figure than George Cruikshank, shows a cat spitting at a boot. The hapless feline has been alarmed by her reflection in the brilliant lustre of the garment, which, of course, is polished by the good offices of the 'Easy Shining and Brilliant BLACKING, Prepared by Robert Warren, 30, STRAND'. In the modern context of televisual or cinematic advertising, when one sees this frequently smudged, monochrome advertisement in yellowing Georgian periodicals, it is hard to appreciate its striking effect. Nonetheless, this was the most famous advertising image of its day. It employed most of the eighteenth-century conventions evident within text-only copy (capitalisation, italicisation, small caps, varied dividing lines and the hand), adding some of the innovations made possible by the increasing use of display: a large trade-mark (only recently possible) and, most importantly, a memorable illustration. The cut was used in multi-media promotion, on pot labels, handbills, posters and publicity carts, and was eventually used as an all-purpose illustration to top press columns and bills that featured text entirely unconnected with felines and boots.⁶³ All of this was complemented by jovial light verse, replete with Byronically humorous feminine rhymes ('dash on'/'fashion'), offering a memorable comic narrative.

As E. S. Turner has written, 'Warren's Shoe Blacking ... was launched on a sea of poetry.'⁶⁴ Warren's advertisement⁶⁵ is the most notable example of contemporary jingle copy, poetic effusions eulogising the quality of the brands being promoted. As William Combe writes in Canto XXV of *Doctor Syntax in Search of the Picturesque*, 'tradesmen ... court the Muse/ In Magazines and in Reviews'.⁶⁶ In the wake of jingle advertisers such as Bish, Packwood⁶⁷ and Warren, advertisers often used poetry to salute their wares. For example, the most notable brand of champagne in the period, that of Charles Wright of the Haymarket, was consistently advertised using jingle copy.⁶⁸ Readers of *The Times* in the summer of 1826 saw new verse puffs for Wright's on a regular basis, with no fewer than seven running in July and August alone. On Tuesday 7 July, Byron is pressed into service as a copywriter for Wright's:

CHARLES WRIGHT'S CHAMPAGNE

'And the small ripple spilt upon the beach
 Scarcely o'erpressed the cream of your champagne;
 When o'er the brim the sparkling bumpers reach,
 That spring-day of the spirit! the heart's rain!'
 Lord Byron 63s., 72s., and 84s. per dozen.
 Opera Colonnade, Haymarket

The poet is also quoted in a short but suggestive puff published on 28 August:

'And then there was Champagne with foaming whirls,
 As white as Cleopatra's melted pearls!'
Don Juan CHARLES WRIGHT'S CHAMPAGNE,
 Opera Colonnade. 63s., 72s. per dozen.

In the 'Appendix' to *The Two Foscari* (1821), Byron had wryly repudiated rumours that he had composed puffs for Day and Martin's blacking;⁶⁹ here the poet unwittingly acts as a writer of jingle copy for another of the period's most notable advertisers.

On Thursday 23 July, Wright's product is saluted in cross-rhymed ballad stanzas addressed 'A Tout le Monde':

The Poets say the Cordial Hope,
 Within our cup is thrown,
 To make of life (so runs the trope),
 The bitter draught to go down;
 No – Wine's the best of all delights

To quell our countless pains;
 Champagne's the best of Wines, and WRIGHT'S
 The best of all champagne.
 CHARLES WRIGHT, Opera Colonnade, Haymarket. –
 Champagne 63s., 72s., and 84s. per dozen.

This jingle is printed directly above another vintner's advertisement, an announcement for Joseph Sparrow of Cheapside. For reasons of contrast, Sparrow's advertisement is worth quoting in full:

PALE SHERRY 30s. and 36s.; Madeira 36s.; Port, old in wood, 30s.; also a lot of Rousillion 32s.; Creme de Novau 60s.; and Cherry and Raspberry Brandy (pints) 28s. per dozen; bottles 3s., hampers 1s. per dozen; not charged if returned by the porter. The above are worthy of notice and may be tasted of the broker's, and a single dozen, or any quantity of each, or the whole of the one sort, delivered carriage free within 4 miles of London, or to the carriers to the country, properly packed, on a letter (enclosing cash or a bill at sight, payable in London) being addressed to JOSEPH SPARROW, Sworn Wine and Spirit Broker, Fountain-court, 30 Cheapside. N.B. Persons procuring or sending orders for 6 dozens will be allowed a discount of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.; and 12 dozens or upwards 5 per cent.

Sparrow's prose copy is undeniably more informative than Wright's jingles, but the latter's are more effective: while Sparrow appeals to the facts, Wright catches at emotion, and the promise of intoxication and exhilaration triumphs over the promise of convenience and economy and Sparrow's modest declaration that his drinks are 'worthy of notice'.

On 25 July, Wright's copywriters co-opt the love poetry of Thomas Moore in their usual ingeniously tendentious fashion, borrowing from the *Irish Melodies* 'The Young May Moon':

TOM MOORE gaily says –
 'The best of all ways,
 To lengthen our days,
 Is to steal a few hours from the night.'
 But, deny it who can,
 A far better plan
 To lengthen life's span
 Is to quaff the Champagne of Charles Wright.

This has a certain literary critical acuity: Moore's amatory verse is the poetic equivalent of champagne. In the previous year's *The Spirit of the Age*, Hazlitt had written of the 'liquid softness' and the

‘flow of voluptuous thought’⁷⁰ evident in Moore’s lyric poetry, and Wright’s copywriter presses these aspects of the poet’s verse into service. To borrow the language of the wine critic, Moore’s poem provides an appropriately frothy base, allied to a gratifying hint of licentiousness, even lubricity.

On Wednesday 2 August, Wright’s is saluted in ode, and here again there is a hint of sexual promise in the copy:

CHAMPAGNE! Imperial, glorious, bright Champagne!
 Come, purest essence of the gifted vine!
 Foaming and Sparkling like the joyous main,
 When new-born Venus cleft the liquid plain, –
 Draught for the Gods! in my proud goblet shines;
 Nectar avaunt! Champagne be theirs and mine!

On Friday 4 August, under another French banner, Wright offers an epigram:

COMME À PARIS
 Champagne for five and sixpence, try it,
 In all its native radiance, bright;
 And own, that (let who will deny it),
 The Colonnade’s the place to buy it,
 And your only man, CHARLES WRIGHT.

On the following Friday, 11 August, *Times* readers are treated to Wright’s ‘ACROSTIC’, addressed to ‘the beautiful and sparkling Miss C.’:

C harming Nymph! Ah, how inviting!
 H earts of mortals thus delighting,
 A ll our dearest joys exciting.
 M atchless still, in beauty glowing,
 P leasure from thy smile bestowing,
 A nd with radiant wit o’erflowing;
 G ods! while mine, those sweets possessing;
 N ough I’d seek of other blessing;
 E ver grateful – still caressing!

Champagne is here gendered as a tantalising and ‘inviting’ feminine presence. As in their advertisements that echo Byron and Moore and as in their earlier vision of the naked Venus, here Wright’s use sensuality to sell their products. Lyric poetry, especially erotically charged lyric poetry, is a literary analogue of champagne and the one complements the other, allowing Wright to offer veiled hints of sensual gratification while simultaneously

being absolved from the charge of indecency or vulgarity by his copy's elevated artistic alliances.⁷¹

Jingle copywriters were not the only poets to contribute verses to contemporary advertisement. Advertisers would sometimes append tribute verse by enthusiastic customers to their advertisements in the manner of the praise verses that prefaced many eighteenth-century poetic collections. An 1830s advertisement for Grimstone's Eye-Snuff includes this commendation from Elizabeth Robson of Bell Street:

Great was the power that did to man impart
 Creative genius and inventive art;
 The second praise is, doubtless, Grimstone, thine!
 Wise was thine head, and great was thy design!
 Our precious sight, from danger now set free,
 Wives, widows, father, praises sing to thee.
 'ELIZ. ROBSON. 19, Bell Street,
 Edgeware Road, Marylebone.'

The recipient of this idolatrous eulogy, Mr Grimstone of 39 Broad Street, Bloomsbury, claimed that his snuff cured all ophthalmic disorders: 'Cataract, Gutta Serena, Inflammation, and all Diseases of the Eye and Head completely eradicated'. Like most medical entrepreneurs, Grimstone used testimonials extensively, and another example in prose, published in the *People's Police Gazette* for 5 May 1834, well illustrates the attraction of verse copy when compared with Robson's memorable, if ludicrous, heroics. This decidedly more mundane testimonial emanates from Mr H. Pluckwell, 'Governor of the Poor, Poor-House, Tottenham': 'Dear Sir, – You may make use of my name, for a true fact, in taking your eye snuff, I have received great benefit, that I *can now see to write without glasses*, which I could not do before I took your Eye Snuff, my eyes being so very weak, they are now *perfectly strong*.'⁷²

However important metrical mercantilism might be in the period, it is nothing new: what individuates the jingle copy of the Romantic period is its widespread currency and the systematic use of verse copy in nationwide campaigns such as those for Thomas Bish or Robert Warren. Poetic advertisement has a long history. Its antecedents are perhaps to be found in public house signboards which sometimes used snippets of poetry,⁷³ and, most particularly, in street cries, which on occasions used jingles such as

the tradesman's catch that informs the children's nursery rhyme ('Hot cross buns, hot cross buns/ One-a-penny, two-a-penny, hot cross buns') or the eighteenth-century London waterman's cry:

Twopence to London Bridge, threepence to the Strand,
Fourpence, Sir, to Whitehall Stairs, or else you'll go by land.⁷⁴

Advertising jingles in their manifestations in display advertisements are also perhaps indebted to the books of cries aimed at children which would have been familiar to most early nineteenth-century consumers. These reproduce the cry above a woodcut illustration and some poetic editorial letterpress on the theme of the particular trade of the crier. Figure 8 gives eighteenth-century examples.

Jingle copy accompanied by display, such as Warren's 'The Cat and the Boot', is a sophisticated variation on these familiar images. In the Romantic age, where a child-like perspective held especial currency, advertisers frequently used imagery relating to childhood: chapbooks and mnemonics, primers, puzzles and pantomimes. The image of Mother Goose, for example, was used by both Robert Warren and Thomas Bish,⁷⁵ part of the persistent use of archaic imagery geared towards children drawn from nursery rhyme or fairy tale. This is part of advertising's heady cultural mixture of modernity and nostalgia, of course, but it might also be seen as a form of cuddly capitalism, an attempt to soften or disguise the competitive nature of commodity culture. As well as Mother Goose, Thomas also used a child's rebus⁷⁶ and nursery rhyme in his copy; furthermore, that most brilliant of advertising lottery-office keepers also paid direct homage to the cry book itself in an 1821 handbill (figure 9) which features fourteen poetic cries in favour of the lottery.

There are also occasional examples of sole traders using jingle copy in pre-Romantic period advertising copy.⁷⁷ For example, an anonymous London dentist based at the sign of the Two Heads in Coventry Street uses verse in a 1760 advertisement published in *The Evening Post*:

Ye Beauties, Beaux, ye Pleaders at the Bar,
Wives, Husbands, lovers, every one beside,
Who'd have their heads deficient rectify'd,
The Dentist famed who by just application
Excels each other operator in the Nation,
In Coventry's known street, near Leicester Fields,
At the *Two Heads* full satisfaction yields.

"Knives to Grind!"

Young gentlemen attend my cry,
 And bring forth all your Knives;
 The barbers Razors too I grind;
 Bring out your Sciffars, wives.

"Hot Spice Gingerbread!"

"'Tis all hot, nice fmoaking hot!"
 You'll hear his daily cry;
 But if you won't believe, you fot,
 You need but taste and try.

Figure 8. 'Hot Spice Gingerbread' and 'Knives to Grind!' From Andrew W. Tuer's *Old London Street Cries* (1885).

Teeth artificial he fixes so secure,
 That as our own they usefully endure;
 Nor merely outside show and ornament
 But every property of teeth intent;
 To eat, as well as speak, and form support
 The falling cheeks and stumps from further hurt.⁷⁸

Later in his eulogy, the tooth-drawer, whose sign of the Two Heads featured before and after pictures of an unfortunate toothless



Come buy my Cross-buns ; but that is all stuff ;
 Perhaps you will say, you've had crosses enough ;
 If your crosses and troubles you wish at an end,
 Buy a Lottery chance, and your fortune may mend.



Tho' a *dab*, I'm not *scaly*—I like a good *plaiice*,
 And I hope that good luck will soon smile in my face ;
 On the 14th of June, when Prizes in *shoals*
 Will cheer up the *cockles* of all sorts of *soles*.

Figure 9. 'Come buy my Cross-buns' and 'Tho' a *dab*, I'm not *scaly*'. From an 1821 lottery handbill for Thomas Bish.

individual and a man with a splendid set of wooden teeth fitted on the premises, puffs his toothache application and toothpaste:

Doth the foul scurvy fierce your Gums assault?
 In this he also rectifies the Fault
 By a fam'd Tincture. And his Powder nam'd
 A Dentifrice is also justly fam'd.
 Us'd as directed 'tis excellent to serve
 Both teeth and gums, cleanse, strengthen, and preserve;
 Foul mouth and stinking breath can ne'er be loved,
 But by his aid these evils are removed.⁷⁹

This splendid jingle is a worthy ancestor of the best of the later verse puffs by the likes of Packwood, Bish and Warren.

The use of verse in late Georgian copywriting is another example of advertisers' use of associationist literary strategies, subtly linking advertising copy with the most prestigious of cultural products, poetry. However jocular and comical the yoking together of rhetoric celebrating consumer goods with more elevated generic materials might be, the side-effect of this allusive manoeuvring is that the brand is, by association, elevated. Simultaneously, advertisers' use of predominantly comic models, notably in comic imitation and parody, is itself suggestive. Wit, it would seem, sells goods, and the tendency in present-day British television commercials to use comedy has deep roots. In the late Georgian period, the literary principles underpinning the use of droll jingle advertisement are decidedly sophisticated. What is happening in an advertisement for Robert Warren's shoe-blackening which employs a Petrarchan sonnet, or a puff for the barber J. R. D. Huggins which imitates *Paradise Lost*, is a subtle variant on the tradition of English burlesque, notably that part of the burlesque tradition initiated by John Philips's *The Splendid Shilling* (1701)⁸⁰ and Isaac Hawkins Browne's *A Pipe of Tobacco* (1736). Hawkins Browne uses idiomatic parody of the likes of Milton and Thomson to salute the pleasures of smoking, exploiting the comic differential between a trivial subject matter and an elevated poetic form and describing mundanities in an elaborate and highly wrought fashion. Advertising copy in the late Georgian period, in using exalted cultural forms to salute its polishes, wines and lottery tickets, exploits similar humorous possibilities. Furthermore, because of its verve and engaging comic brio, while it exploits the cultural dislocation between form and content, jingle copy does

not involve the diminution of the product, which is subtly celebrated and, in the final analysis, elevated. Mercantile burlesque has its comic cake and eats it too.

By the 1840s, the vogue for jingle copy had begun to wane amid the almost ubiquitous use of prose. As Abraham Hayward notes in 1843:

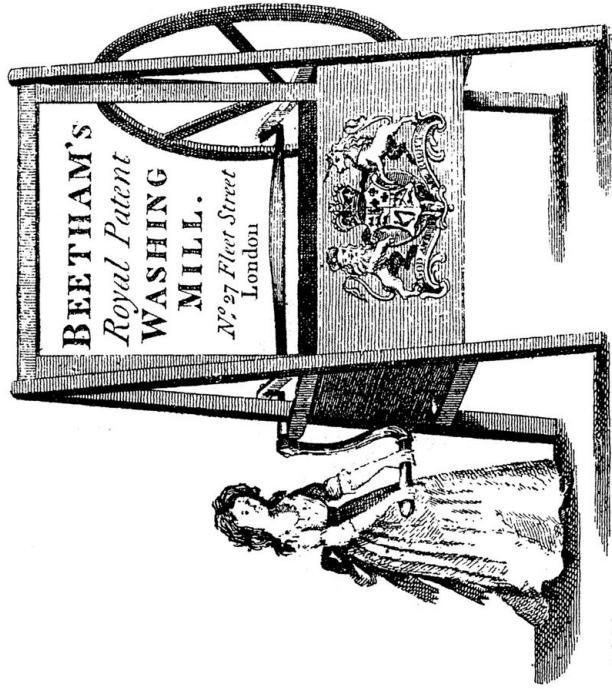
It is remarkable how ingeniously the style of address [in advertisements] has been adapted to the taste or fashion of the hour. When Scott, Byron, Moore, Rogers, Wordsworth, Southey &c., were in their zenith, . . . the most attractive vehicle was verse, and the praises of blacking were sung in strains which would have done no disservice to 'Childe Harold' himself . . . The present, however, is an unpoetic age [which] decidedly prefers prose to poetry; . . . 'The Excursion' . . . has no chance at all against the 'Pickwick Papers' or 'Oliver Twist'.⁸¹

Verse copy is yet another example of the tendency evident in late Georgian advertising for promotional copy to echo and imitate the predominant cultural forms evident in society at large. As Hayward notes, advertising copy is informed by the literary fashions of the day: given that the first thirty years of the nineteenth century are most notable for poetry, then it is only logical that advertising should gesture towards this fact. Similarly, in the era of the Dickensian novel, it follows that advertising's associationist posturings should be conducted predominantly in prose. For Hayward, literary imitation is a principal characteristic of advertising copy and, in the Dickensian age, prose has replaced poetry as the copywriter's *modus operandi*. Indeed, just over a decade later, in 1855, R. W. Hackwood published a gently elegiac article on 'Poetical Advertisements', declaring that 'The fashion of advertising poetically appears of late to have fallen sadly into disuse.' Only rarely, he laments, do we 'light upon any specimens of a style once so prevalent, the perusal of which takes us back to "better days", and the . . . polished effusions of a Warren'.⁸²

v

Another important part of the literary associationism evident within advertising culture is the desire among many advertisers to assume the role of author. Throughout the late Georgian period, advertisers not infrequently produced books and pamphlets that saluted their wares, either implicitly or – more commonly –

explicitly. The pamphlets often tend to contain fairly straightforward puffery: for instance, one J. Jekyll, patentee of a vapour bath (for which he charged twelve guineas), barks his product in 'Important Facts, proving the great Utility and the very great Superiority of Captain Jekyll's Patent Portable Vapour Bath' (1832),⁸³ and Mr White, the man-midwife and proprietor of the Restorative Salo Pills,⁸⁴ advertises both his pills and his 'Address to the Community, respecting Concealed Pregnancy' (the 'Address' encouraged the community to purchase the Salo Pills, of course; White employs a cross-marketing technique that underpins many advertising publications of the period). Figure 10 shows part of a late eighteenth-century tripartite advertisement for E. Beetham's Royal Patent Washing Mill which also announces an advertising pamphlet, 'The Trial of an Action, brought by E. Beetham, against S. Bird for the infringement of a Patent the plaintiff had obtained, for a PORTABLE WASHING MILL'. The pamphlet tells the story of Beetham's triumphant battle against the counterfeiter Bird. In the end, Beetham's 'original' vision prevails against the copyist, providing reassuring evidence that 'there still exists, in this country, tribunes of law, to which the injured may resort for protection of right and property': 'In a word, the whole of this trial, in which the plaintiff obtained a complete verdict, is replete with evidence of Beetham's Washing Mill being one of the most beneficial inventions that has been discovered for the service of mankind.' The advertisement is fascinating in other ways. At the centre of this advertising triptych is a striking cut lettered in variegated typeface which features a royal crest (the product is not only patent but also 'VIVANT REX ET REGINA') and a picture of the ideal consumer (a woman, inevitably). Many of the associationist devices of contemporary advertising are here: the patent, the royal patronage, the use of classical languages. And the advertisement also features a sprightly parodic handbill in the manner of a bill for a performance by the likes of Gustavus Katterfelto,⁸⁵ which casts a demonstration of the Washing Mill as 'a favourite EXHIBITION called THE WONDER, OR, THE MAGIC MILL'. In the same decade as the radical Robert Merry had parodied exhibition advertisements to attack Pitt in 'Signor Gulielmo Pittachio',⁸⁶ Beetham's copywriter makes the same imitative manoeuvre for capitalistic ends.



BY PARTICULAR DESIRE.

AT No. 27, Fleet Street, This and every Day
will be presented a favorite EXHIBITION called

THE WONDER,

OR,

THE MAGIC MILL.

Consisting of a very curious and simple piece of MECHANISM, which, with the assistance of one Person only, will wash

SIXTY SHIRTS IN AN HOUR,

So effectually as greatly to surpass the common mode, and so safely that Bank Bills will undergo the same operation without receiving the least injury.

Proportionate Prices.

A Mill large enough to wash 8 shirts, 4l. 4s. --- 14 shirts, 4l. 14s. 6d. --- 18 shirts, 5l. 5s. --- 24 shirts, 6l. 6s.

* * * The EXHIBITION is not only to be seen Gratis, but every Purchaser of the Article will assuredly save Fifteen shillings in a Guinea.

VIVANT REX ET REGINA!

Figure 10. Advertisement for Beetham's Royal Patent Washing Mill (1790s). Reproduced from M. Phillips and W. S. Tomkinson, *English Women in Life and Letters* (1927).

Advertising books are generally subtler than the pamphlet, while being no less commercially minded. They take two principal forms. One is the ‘ana’, or collection of advertisements, as per *Packwood’s Whim, or, The Way to Get Money and be Happy* (1796), which brings together the brilliant and witty puffs which the razor-strop manufacturer George Packwood composed in the 1780s and 1790s, and the barber J. R. D. Huggins’s *Hugginiana* (1808).⁸⁷ Both books reprint advertisements that previously appeared in the public prints, skilfully making consumers pay for the advertising as well as for the product. However, the more common form of advertising book presents itself as a handbook, manual or guidebook. Works such as Samuel Solomon’s highly successful *Guide to Health* (1795), which supposedly went through over sixty editions, are extended puffs which disguise themselves as works of instruction. These are puffs collateral writ large, books that masquerade as improving treatises while being ultimately intended to encourage the purchase of proprietorial brands. Thus the cosmeticist Alexander Rowland the younger,⁸⁸ proprietor of the famous Macassar Oil for the hair, backs up his extensive press columns with a series of advertising books, his name adorning at least five volumes: *An Essay on the Cultivation and Improvement of the Human Hair, with Remarks on the Virtues of the Macassar Oil* (1809), *An Historical, Philosophical and Practical Essay on the Human Hair* (1816), *A Treatise on the Human Hair* (1828), *A Practical Treatise on the Human Hair* (1839), *The Human Hair Popularly and Physiologically Considered* (1843) and the posthumously published *Rowland’s Guide to the Toilet and Personal Adornment* (1861). Rowland’s writing also assumes a scholarly tone, mixing testimonials from gratified purchasers⁸⁹ with a survey of hair and hair care through the ages, from the coiffures of Boadicea and Lady Godiva through to those of the ladies and gentlemen of the Regency. His first book, *An Essay on the Cultivation and Improvement of the Human Hair, with Remarks on the Virtues of the Macassar Oil* (1809) explains the antecedents of the Oil and offers a fanciful account of the fabled isle of Macassar:

The Island of Macassar is situated in the East Indies and is one of the Celebes Islands . . . it contains Six petty Kingdoms, which are all subject to Macassar or Celebes, as it is called by both names. The Natives live in Houses, accessible only by Ladders, which they pull up in the Night, to prevent the Attacks of Wild Beasts and Venomous Animals.⁹⁰

The tree-dwelling natives of this island have fabulously thick and lustrous hair, the consequence of their treating it with oil from the Macassian Vegetable Tree:

This island produces a great Quantity of Vegetables; amongst these are the Vegetable Trees, from which flow the Ingredients that compose the Macassar Oil, which the Natives are very curious in extracting. The Hair of the Females who make constant use of it, is amazing thick and beautiful, hanging in flowing Curls; and they consider it so great an ornament, that they never wear any covering on their Heads, on account of the Quantity of their Hair . . . The Hair of the Men is equally thick, but much shorter; they ornament it but never wear any Covering on the Head. They continue the Use of this Oil from Infancy to mature Old Age.⁹¹

The Macassar Oil came to England, according to the *Essay*, because of the fact that the Rowland family were fortunate enough to have a cadet branch resident on the island:

The proprietors, with the Assistance of a Relation in the Island, and by the permission of the Governor, got possession of a great Quantity of those Ingredients, prepared the Oil and found it to have such extraordinary Virtues, that it excited general Astonishment. Nothing but a full Conviction of its incomparable Excellence, would have induced them to have Submitted the Macassar Oil to the Public; they have spared no expense in preparing of it. It has already received the Sanction of *Royalty*, and is extensively circulated in the fashionable World.⁹²

Rowland presented the same story in verse in his next book, *An Historical, Philosophical and Practical Essay on the Human Hair* (1816):

Lines, addressed to Messrs. Rowland and Son, on experiencing great benefit from their celebrated Macassar Oil.

In ancient times a flow of Hair
 Reclining on the shoulders bare,
 Was view'd a mark of beauty's pride,
 A fact which ne'er can be denied.
 In modern times, your famous Oil
 Should well repay your care and toil;
 The hair could ne'er grow full and free
 But from the fam'd Macassar Tree:
 Yours was the task to bring from far –
 No weapons of destructive war –
 But from Macassar's Island gain'd
 That knowledge which was ne'er obtained:
 To you belongs that art most rare,
 To cultivate the Human hair.⁹³

A particularly brazen example of the advertising manual is William Henderson's *Plain Rules for Improving the Health of the Delicate* (1831), and the *Athenæum* review of this volume captures the underlying purpose of such books well:

This book may be divided into three parts. The first is an attempt to explain, in a popular way, the mysteries of medicine; the second, (but by far the better), contains plain rules for the preservation and improvement of health; and the third, some cases of disorders produced by indigestion, a sort of history of a disease from which the author suffered for many years, and of the discovery of a medicine by which he was cured. The author being an M.D., we expected, of course, to have found in his work not only the process of reasoning which led to this valuable discovery, but also a minute account of a medicine which has such wonderful powers: but we were disappointed; for all we learn, and that only in the last page, (the book itself, being, we suspect, but an introduction to this one page) is, that this extraordinary medicine is prepared only by Dr Henderson, wholesale and retail, in pint bottles at 4s. 6d., half-pints 2s. 9d. each!⁹⁴

The *Plain Rules* is but one of a plethora of commercially motivated medical books, book-length advertisements, the literary equivalent of the horse-drawn advertising vehicles. Some of these books construct and endorse entirely new systems of medicine (James Morison's *Morisoniana*,⁹⁵ Samuel Solomon's *Guide to Health*), while others, as per Henderson, offer popular, and cheaper, echoes of establishment medical authority. They feature a mixture of 'unsolicited' testimonials from satisfied customers (the more socially elevated the better) and 'before' and 'after' illustrations. They boast sanction from the most elevated of medical professors and practitioners (most of whom are, conveniently enough, dead: 'a particular favourite of the late Professor X'; 'the invention of the late renowned Sir William Y, FRS' and so on). The pages teem with sesquipedalian language, elephantine classical neologisms and technical obfuscation. While some modestly restrict themselves to *en passant* mention of the medicine they seek to endorse, other, more brazen examples feature their particular panacea on every page and end with a list of prices and of premises at which it might be purchased. Proprietorial testimony features large, notably in accounts of the invention of the elixir for which the book is a veiled advertising tool: narratives of discovery, sometimes telling of Damascene conversion or instantaneous revelation, sometimes offering tales of the proprietor's many years

of slow and persistent application before the magical potion was perfected.

While the associationist strategy of Henderson's *Plain Rules* is to identify the medicine vendor as a man of science, a number of the most notable advertising books in the period demonstrate the advertiser's wish to present himself as a cultivated man of letters rather than an advertising hack. The most famous example of this literary sub-culture is Doctor Samuel Solomon's highly successful *Guide to Health*, first published in 1795. Solomon's work was very well known in the late Georgian period and provided Lord Byron with yet another opportunity to attack 'Johnny Keates'. Using the tried-and-tested satirical technique of undermining one's target by association with the quack, in 1820 Byron wrote to John Murray condemning the praise of 'that little dirty blackguard KEATES in the Edinburgh', adding 'Why don't they review & praise "Solomon's Guide to Health" it is better sense – and as much poetry as Johnny Keates.'⁹⁶ The *Guide to Health* is the most interesting of the medical advertising books, and certainly the most successful, going through, its author claimed, over sixty editions in two decades and selling 'UPWARDS OF *one hundred and twenty thousand COPIES*'.⁹⁷ Even allowing for the common advertising strategy of exaggerating the number of editions, it is clear that there was a great appetite for Solomon's book, and for his most notable product, the Cordial Balm of Gilead, advertised in an 1810 handbill as 'an infallible restorative to the weak, the relaxed and debilitated'. The Cordial Balm supposedly cured intestinal problems, restored those of weak constitution to full health and, while possessing aphrodisiac qualities, simultaneously prevented debauchery and self-abuse. It is probable that at least some of the appeal of the Balm was attributable to the fact that it contained a high percentage of brandy. With a recipe that sanctioned tipping to the genteel, a gift for self-promotion that P. T. Barnum would have envied, and a real, if highly eccentric, literary talent, Solomon became the most notable advertiser of proprietary medicines in the Romantic period.

A Liverpoolian Jew, Samuel Solomon was a former shoeblick⁹⁸ turned quack doctor (appropriately, Solomon's career neatly straddles two of the most well-advertised products in late Georgian culture, blacking and proprietary medicines). In the chapter on quacks in *Letters from England* (1807), Robert Southey writes that 'The most notorious of these worthies who flourishes at present

calls his composition the Cordial Balm of Gilead.' The product was puffed in the following manner:

CORDIAL BALM OF GILEAD. This Medicine has been uncommonly successful with young people, who have the appearance and air of old age; who are pale, effeminate, benumbed, stupid, and even imbecile; whose bodies are become bent, whose legs are no longer able to carry them . . . The virtues of the Cordial Balm of Gilead are daily demonstrated in eradicating the worst and most dangerous symptoms of nervous debility; and nothing has tended so much to establish the fame of this medicine, as its certain success in those complaints which strike their roots so deep in the constitution, and are so fatal to the happiness of mankind.

Armed with an M.D. purchased from a Scottish university,⁹⁹ Solomon saw himself as the direct successor to Hippocrates, as a 1797 advertisement demonstrates:

Since the days of Hippocrates, no physician has been more fortunate in discovering a remedy for nervous affections in general than Doctor Solomon of Liverpool. It is he who invented and brought to perfection that divine medicine, the Cordial Balm of Gilead . . . Besides its agreeable flavour, it offers the most invigorating powers. It warms and enlivens the heart, raises the spirits and promotes digestion, eases or cures nervous, hypochondriac, consumptive and female complaints, and lifts lassitude, debility and weakness arising from juvenile imprudences. So noble, safe and efficacious a remedy has never before been offered to mankind.

The reference to the 'divine' nature of the Cordial Balm is typical. Not for Solomon the endorsement of the *haut ton*, of dowager duchess or fifteenth baronet; God is on his side. Where other empirics borrow from the classical languages, Solomon's brand name is taken from the good book itself,¹⁰⁰ and the majority of his advertisements are prefaced with a text from Jeremiah, 'Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there?' (Solomon even named his premises accordingly, as an April 1813 advertisement in *The Star* demonstrates: 'Dr Solomon, when consulted, expects the usual fee of £1, to whom such letters should, for safety, be addressed: – "Money Letter, Dr Solomon, Gilead-House, near Liverpool. Paid double postage".) Solomon rejoiced in his status as the sole proprietor of the oldest brand of them all, exercising his scholarship to establish the date of its discovery ('1730BC'). Adorned with the name of a Hebrew king proverbial for his sagacity, Solomon offered his own wisdom in his *Guide to Health*, or,

to give its splendid subtitle, *Advice to Both Sexes in a Variety of Complaints. With an Essay on the Venereal Disease, Gleets, Seminal Weakness; and that Destructive Habit called Onanism; Likewise, an Address to Parents, Tutors, and Guardians of Youth.* In the usual manner of such advertising books, the *Guide to Health* is an extended puff for its author's patent product, the great medicinal elixir that is the Cordial Balm. However, what individuates Solomon from the mob is his extravagant prose style, autodidact's learning and irrepressible, shameless egotism. As Roy Porter has written, the *Guide to Health* was 'entertaining, learned, informative, diverting and intriguing . . . a cornucopia of classical mythology, anecdotes, warnings, tales of the trials of young love and of love-melancholy . . . advice as to the control of "wild imaginations" and "extravagant fancies", indexes of the symptoms of self-abuse (for example, "the eyes are clouded") and endless name-dropping of the heroes of medicine – Rhazes, Galen, Montanus, etc.'¹⁰¹ The work's opening paragraphs certainly demonstrate the 'name-dropping' utilised throughout Solomon's learned *modus operandi*:

MELANCHOLY, or HYPONDRIASIS, is said to be the inexorable parent of every mental disease; but *Paracelsus* ridicules the idea of its being incurable; and certain it is, that this dreadful malady, even in its most affecting stages, seldom causes immediate death, except indeed by the ungoverned hand of the miserable sufferer. *Montanus*, however, is of opinion, that to whatever extent the patient may be relieved, some dregs and vestiges, the *vestigial flammæ*, will still remain and accompany him to his grave; and unquestionably it is a disease much more easy to be prevented than entirely cured . . .

Amongst other symptoms of this disease we may reckon costiveness, and keeping in of our ordinary excrements. *Galen* says inflammation of the head, dullness, cloudiness, head-ach, &c. are its consequences. *Prosper Calenus* will have its distemper not the organ only but the mind itself by troubling it; and sometimes it is a sole cause of madness. Likewise the suppression of the menses in women, or of any other customary evacuation, is apt to produce this disorder, as well as a single life persevered in too long. Too great a vegetation of the semen (according to *Asculanus* and *Maginus*) sends up poisoned vapours to the brain and heart; and *Galen* holds, that if this natural seed be overlong kept (in some parties) it will turn to poison. Intemperance is however as bad in the other extreme, and is frequently productive of this lamentable disorder.¹⁰²

In the *Guide to Health*, Solomon explicitly declares himself a latter-day Robert Burton, and his remarkable work, though perhaps not

quite as poetical as 'Johnny Keates', certainly ransacks the canon to sell its wares, pressing *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, Shakespeare and classical mythology into the cause of selling the Cordial Balm. Though his book is shot through with endorsements of 'the famous and highly-exalted medicine, the Cordial Balm of Gilead', Solomon's learned wit wraps the barker in the mantle of the philosopher.

In such works as the *Plain Rules* and the *Guide to Health*, the advertiser attempts to transcend his status as an advertiser, and presents himself in supposedly more disinterested roles (scientist, scholar, historian, man of letters, or encyclopaedist), thereby elevating his claims to truth and presenting himself as offering facts rather than exaggerated promotional rhetoric. According to this line of reasoning, the author's commercial rivals 'advertise' while he merely states the 'truth'. For example, the razor-maker Benjamin Kingsbury's *A Treatise on Razors; in Which the Weight, Shape, and Temper of a Razor, the Means of Keeping it in Order, and the Manner of Using it, are Particularly Considered; and in Which it is Intended to Convey Knowledge of All that is Necessary on this Subject* (1799) condemns Packwood as a mere advertiser; though *Packwood's Whim* demonstrates 'skill in puffing', Kingsbury's *Treatise* is superior as it is 'plain matter of fact'.¹⁰³ Packwood is 'ingenious', an 'artist',¹⁰⁴ but Kingsbury relies on 'knowledge' and 'truth' alone. His learned disquisition chides Packwood, whose name is dependent upon puffery rather than long contemplation of the mechanics of razor maintenance, like an acerbic scholar reviewing a rival's poor book:

It has been asserted by some, that a hone is not a necessary appendix of a razor, excepting when in the hands of a workman; and that the razor-strop alone is sufficient to keep a razor in order, without either setting or grinding. This opinion has proceeded from the most despicable of the razor-strop-makers, who, without a knowledge of the subject, and, evidently, without having attended to it, have attracted the notice of the public by the unceasing repetition of their advertisements, and their impudent commendations of their own articles.¹⁰⁵

'What will not puffing effect?' wonders Kingsbury. 'It can . . . give to the simplest of preparations the semblance of mystery and darkness. It will procure for unblushing confidence the character of genius.'¹⁰⁶ Against the obfuscatory 'mystery' of Packwood, Kingsbury presents himself as armed with knowledge and facts

alone. That said, his claims to disinterestedness bear little examination. His book's final page lists the products to be had from his shop at No. 10 St James's Street and issues the customary caution ('in many instances, razors and other articles . . . have been stamped with his name, which were neither made nor furnished by him. Two proofs of this deception have been received lately; one occurring in this country, the other in North America'. Customers must look for his seal: 'His razors . . . are all finished with his own hands, are all examined by him with a microscope, to ascertain their quality and their state, and . . . are all SEALED UP'). And within the main body of the text, the usual disingenuous cross-promotions occur. Considering the soap which should be used to facilitate the best shave, Kingsbury adds a footnote:

In this last particular, Naples soap, so much admired by some persons on account of the strength of its lather, is extremely defective . . . No soap has escaped my examination, and I have myself made many experiments; but the best soap for the purpose of shaving which I have yet found, and which I always use, is the OLIVE-SOAP [which has] a thick and durable lather with the power of softening the skin of the person using it.¹⁰⁷

Inevitably, Kingsbury's book ends with a puff for this product and for his razors: 'At NO. 10 ST. JAMES'S STREET, are MADE and SOLD the under-mentioned Articles; Namely, RAZORS, RAZOR-STROPS, COMPOSITION (sharpening and smoothing) for Razor-Strops, SHAVING POUCHES, SHAVING and TOOTH BRUSHES, SHAVING-POWDER, and OLIVE-SOAP.' The commercial imperatives which underpin the book, despite Kingsbury's best efforts to disguise them, will eventually out. His work, like so many advertising books, marks an ingenious attempt to escape its genre, eloquent testimony to advertising's frequently manifested unease with its own cultural status.

VI

A key part of the art of advertising is ensuring that commercial rhetoric suits the audience for which it is intended, that the discourse of advertising copy be tailored to its audience. The remaining part of this chapter looks at advertising aimed at two particular – and particularly neglected – types of consumer: women, specifically bourgeois women, and the working classes, specifically the radical and artisan readership of post-Napoleonic

unstamped newspapers. It also looks at the promotional strategies adopted by female and working-class entrepreneurs (not all Georgian advertising was aimed at the middle-class male by the middle-class male).

The sexual politics of advertising in the Romantic period is a fascinating but critically neglected subject. Contemporary advertisers frequently targeted women consumers, both in ordinary newspapers and in periodicals intended for a female audience such as *La Belle Assemblée*, the *Lady's Magazine* and the *Lady's Monthly Museum*. Advertising within the general periodical press often addressed a female audience in gender-specific terms. Unsurprisingly, a great deal of copywriting ink targeted at women is spilt on endorsing clothing and cosmetics, and on the aspirations of contemporary ladies: to wear finer clothing, to have a beautiful complexion, to copy the fashions and personal appearance of those of a higher social status. The pre-eminent aspiration is to beauty. Early advertisements for Pears soap and cosmetics, which date from the 1810s, market the company's goods as 'modern appendages to beauty'. Ladies are urged to try 'Pears's Liquid Bloom of Roses and White Imperial Powder which, by beautifully tinting the cheeks and lips, bestows a delicacy to the female countenance'. Pears also marketed a toothpaste, which rejoiced in the exotically oriental name of Pears's Malabar Dentifrice ('for beautifying the teeth and rendering them a personal adornment to the decline of life'). Their most notable brand, however, is their wash ball, a brand which survives to this day, a honey-coloured soap which ensures that feminine skin remains 'delicately clear and beautiful':

MODERN APPENDAGES TO BEAUTY. – PEARS'S TRANSPARENT SOAP. This soap stands unrivalled as a Discovery of the highest importance, for its superior excellence in cleansing the skin, preserving it from the weather, sun, air, and co., and improving its appearance. It removes every blemish from its surface, and by due perseverance never fails to render it delicately clear and beautiful.

Such gendered rhetoric excludes the gentleman consumer, of course, and sometimes cosmetic advertisers selling a product which might be used by both sexes addressed men and women separately, marketing the same product differently to the two sexual constituencies. For example, John Gowland's spot cream, Gowland's Lotion for 'cutaneous eruptions', a mid-eighteenth-century product

which was still popular in the 1850s, was advertised thus in the *Sussex Weekly Advertiser* in February 1791:

TO THE GENTLEMEN

THIS LOTION is an EFFECTUAL REMEDY for all SCORBUTIC and HERPETIC ERUPTIONS of the FACE and SKIN, from the most trivial to the most DISFIGURING and INVETERATE; from the smallest PIMPLE or TETTER to the most universally SPREADING Eruptions or Ulcerations. – For redness of the NOSE, ARMS, or other part, and in short for every train and species of EVIL to which the Skin is liable, whether VIVID and INFLAMED, or LANGUID and OBDURATE.

TO THE LADIES

It is an acquisition of the first moment to those Ladies whose Faces are impaired from the use of PAINTS and COSMETICS, as there is nothing which it performs as readily as the entire removal of those SALLOW EFFECTS; restoring ALMOST IMMEDIATELY the complexion to its natural Bloom. A moderate application of this Lotion on going to bed, allows the free use of paints in the day, as it infallibly PREVENTS their pernicious, as well as those UNPLEASANT EFFECTS ON THE SKIN.

In this sexually differentiated rhetoric men are encouraged, warrior-like, to conquer ‘vivid and inflamed’ cutaneous eruptions, which are portrayed as evil enemies, invaders of the body, while women are encouraged to worry about their personal appearance and the potentially malign side-effects of cosmetics. The advertisement then appeals to the social aspirations of ‘the ladies’, noting the effect of Gowland’s Lotion on ‘the late celebrated Duchess of Kingston’: ‘The sudden transition in her complexion, when Maid of Honour . . . is a circumstantial fact in the fashionable world.’ Evidences, or – even better – testimonials, from the gentry are prized in the period’s advertising, elevating the brand by association with the great and the good and aligning the consumer with her betters. As Samuel Warren writes in his 1841 satirical novel *Ten Thousand A-Year*, advertisers liked nothing better than to boast of the ‘numberless instances of [their products] efficacy’ among the aristocracy, ‘detailed in brief but glowing terms – as – the “Duke of * * * * – the Countess of * * * * – the Earl of, &c. &c. &c. &c. – the lovely Miss – –, the celebrated Sir Gossamer Goosegiblets (who was so gratified he allowed his name to be used)”.¹⁰⁸

Advertising aimed at women plays on both aspiration and anxiety: the Gowland copy simultaneously appeals to social

aspiration (middle-class ladies can ape the habits of the aristocracy) and to fears about damaged beauty (the 'sallow effects'). The same periodical, in the same month, carried another address to the ladies, but this time to women with rather more pressing cares than skin blemishes. The *Sussex Weekly Advertiser* for 22 February 1791 contains a puff for the midwives Mr and Mrs White, offering services to women during unwanted pregnancies:

PREGNANT LADIES

WHOSE station requires a temporary retirement, may be accommodated with an Apartment to Lye-in, agreeably to their circumstances, and depend upon being treated with honour, attention, and secrecy; their infant put out to nurse, and humanely taken care of, by applying to Mr White, Surgeon and Man Midwife; or Mrs White, Midwife, at the Square Lamp, in London-house-yard, the Northside of St Paul's Church-yard.

Where may be had the Restorative Salo Pills, at £1. 2s. per box; an effectual remedy to remove all obstructions or irregularities. Also Mr White's Address to the Community, respecting Concealed Pregnancy, Price 1s. Letter post paid, taken in and attended to.

The lying-in house¹⁰⁹ is promoted in reassuring terms; women pregnant with illegitimate children are still 'ladies', and are treated with 'honour, attention, and secrecy'. And the Salo Pills, which were probably intended to cause the miscarriage of unwanted pregnancies, are described in language that uses the euphemisms common in much contemporary medical advertising, exploiting periphrasis to permit a less scandalous interpretation than the one presumably intended, that of an illegal abortifacient (certainly the high price of the Pills – at least eighty pounds a box in today's terms – suggests such a purpose).

During the 1810s, women who had delivered children were addressed in another, decidedly reprehensible, appeal to feminine anxiety in an advertisement for Johnson and Williams's American Soothing Syrup, a preparation designed to assuage teething pains. The advertisement uses Regency women's well-founded anxiety about infant mortality to sell medicine: mothers who do not buy the American Soothing Syrup might lose their children to the secondary complications prompted by teething:

A CAUTION TO MOTHERS. At a critical season like the present, where children are teething, the utmost attention ought to be paid them, particularly as the measles and chill-cough are so prevalent; if the irritation of the gums comes with any other disorder, very few infants

recover; mothers ought never to be without the AMERICAN SOOTHING SYRUP in the nursery, for if a child wakes in the middle of the night with pain in its gums, this valuable medicine will immediately open the pores, heal the gums, and thereby preventing fever and convulsion; for should it come in competition with any other disorder, it often destroys the mother's brightest hopes.

Though much contemporary advertising copy is gendered, playing on the aspirations, ambitions, and sometimes fears, of women, not all advertising aimed at women addressed them in terms of their sex or promoted products 'For the Ladies'. For example, the monthly advertising supplements to the *Lady's Magazine; or Entertaining Companion for the Fair Sex* in the early nineteenth century were not generally focused on products specifically targeted at women or girls, cosmetics, ball-gowns and the like. Indeed, analysis of this material challenges our perception of the behaviour of late Georgian 'ladies'. In 1804, for instance, the most common puffs in the journal are those for the lottery offices of Thomas Bish and James Branscomb, betokening a surprising level of female involvement in public gambling. Indeed, by this time, Branscomb's was run by Sir James Branscomb's widow, and in Lady Branscomb's puffs we see a female entrepreneur encouraging middle-class women to gamble. The *Magazine* also features salutes to Dolland's Patent Periscopic Spectacles ('Recommended by William Hyde Wollaston, F.R.S.') and to Lardner and Co.'s medicinal products: Chalybeate Aperient, Rhubarb and Ginger Pills, Tonic Pills ('composed of Bark and Steel') and so on. The same company also advertised its Charcoal Tooth Powder, announcing that 'Charcoal has long been recommended . . . as the safest and best *Tooth Powder* that can be used':

It possesses the desirable qualities of rendering the teeth beautifully white; destroying the fœtor arising from carious teeth, which contaminates the breath; and stopping the progress of the scurvy in the gums: at the same time, that it is incapable of either chemically or mechanically injuring the enamel.

Publishers provided much of the *Lady's Magazine's* advertising in 1804, and their puffs also contain a distinct gender coding. Sometimes they explicitly address the female readership of the journal in terms of their roles as mothers or sisters (J. Harris offers a list of 'New Publications for the Instruction of Young Minds in the Christmas Holidays'),¹¹⁰ but the most frequent, and notable,

aspect of book publicity in the *Lady's Magazine* is its stress upon self-improvement and female education. Here again, advertisers play on the aspirations of their readers, encouraging and commercially exploiting a female desire for intellectual betterment in the same way as copy for brand cosmetics targeted women's wish to be seen as genteel and socially elevated. Just as newspapers and journals aimed at the radicalised working class (such as Cobbett's *Register* and unstamped newspapers such as Henry Hetherington's *Poor Man's Guardian*) featured column after column of publishers' advertisements, testimony to a belief among the socially marginalised that knowledge is power, the paid columns of the *Lady's Magazine* are peppered with advertisements for cheap popular editions of the classics of English literature: the Prospectus to Sharpe's Cabinet Edition of the British Poets, for example, or a lengthy list of the volumes currently available in the Cooke's Pocket Editions series (Select Poets, Select Novels, and Bell's British Theatre). An eight-page supplement for B. Crosby and Co. includes a large number of publications intended for women. One of Crosby's specialities is the woman's textbook, couched in plain language and aimed at demystifying learned discourses (medicine, grammar, mathematics) which might otherwise be seen as the province of men: Elizabeth Bellamy's *The Young Lady's Easy Introduction to English Grammar*, John Greig's *The Young Lady's New Guide to Arithmetic* and Martha Mears's splendidly named *The Midwife's Candid Advice to the Fair Sex, in which the Latin Terms are omitted*. Crosby's list includes a significant number of educational and medical works for women such as Dr Willich's *A Familiar View of the Domestic Education of Children*, the same author's *Willich's Directions to Midwives* and William Moss's *An Essay on the Management, Nursing, and Diseases of Children, from the Birth, and on the Treatment and Diseases of Pregnant and Lying-in Women*. It also offers tracts on female behaviour, including Thomas Gisborne's *Female Egis, or the Duties of Women*, and an anthology of conduct literature, *Angelica's Ladies Library* ('written entirely for the Instruction of the Fair Sex, forming the completest Female Library ever published'). If Crosby's educational works speak to female potential, some of his other books highlight female achievement, as in the extended promotion for Matilda Betham's *Biographical Dictionary of Six Hundred and Seventy-three Celebrated Women*. While Betham's book is no radical tract (the volume pays attention to 'morality of

character, as well as celebrity of talent'), her work possesses a subtly feminist perspective. Here the polemical prose of the 1790s, in the manner of Wollstonecraft, which called for social reform to improve the lot of women in general, is replaced by an empowering attention to individual women's lives. Betham's book testifies to an upsurge of interest in female biography in the early 1800s. Indeed, it is explicitly announced as a rival to Mary Hays's recent *Female Biography: Memoirs of Illustrious and Celebrated Women, of all Ages and Countries* (1802), replacing historical anthology with considered biographical writing (Hays's work is 'but a selection of historical extracts' whilst Betham's is 'a digested compilation of female biography'). If the Revolutionary feminism of the 1790s had not led to political reform of women's circumstances, then perhaps Betham's book, like much of the advertising in the *Lady's Magazine*, is a gesture towards a more personal transformation, enabling women to improve themselves as individuals, whether by education or by illustrious example rather than by wider social or institutional reform.

As well as being the subject of advertisements, women were sometimes themselves advertisers, and there are occasional examples of female brand proprietors in the late Georgian period. Lady Branscomb, as a lottery-office keeper, is unusual: the more customary entrepreneurial roles for women in the period were those of manufacturers of clothing (notably as milliners and dress-makers) and of proprietorial medicines. For example, during the 1830s Mrs Smithers's advertisements for Widow Welch's Pills are common:

THE ONLY GENUINE WIDOW WELCH'S PILLS, prepared by Mrs SMITHERS, grand-daughter of the original proprietor WIDOW WELCH (the recipe was handed down by the Widow Welch to Mary and Sarah Welch, and by them to the present proprietor); and are prepared by her without the least variation whatever.

This medicine is justly celebrated for all Female Complaints, Nervous Disorders, Weakness of the Solids, Loss of Appetite, Impurity of Blood, Relaxation by Intense Heat in Warm Climates, Sick Head Ache, Indigestion, Debility, Consumption, Loss of Spirits, and particularly for irregularities in the Female System. Mrs SMITHERS recommends Mothers, Guardians, Managers of Schools, and all who have the Care of Females at an early age, never to be without this useful medicine.

The advertisement goes on to offer a testimonial on behalf of the decidedly Austenian figure of Miss Hannah Bennett of

Southborough Grove, Weybridge (whose female maladies have all been remedied by Widow Welch's Pills), alongside the customary label description and caution. Smithers's copy presents Widow Welch as the modern equivalent of the wise woman, the feminine healer of women. Where the most notable contemporary male empirics (Doctor Solomon, Doctor Eady, Doctor Long) cloak themselves in the mantle of learning conferred by the purchased M.D., Welch's wisdom is more suggestive of domestic and feminine common sense, and a nationally available product is promoted as if it were a village remedy passed from one gossip to another. And her status as a widow is indicative of the exclusively female nature of the business, whose secrets have travelled down the distaff side only and whose product treats 'Female Complaints' alone.¹¹¹

Women not infrequently ran clothing emporia. For example, in 1814, Mrs Morris of 100 Oxford Street announces in *The Times* that her premises are currently well-stocked with a range of ladies' underwear, and in particular with her patent invisible petticoats:

MRS MORRIS'S PATENT INVISIBLE PETTICOATS, Opera Elastic Under Dresses, Ladies' Drawers, and Waistcoats.

MRS MORRIS respectfully informs the Ladies who have honoured her with their patronage for several years past, and the Nobility at large, she continues to make large supplies of her celebrated patent invisible petticoats, elastic opera under-dresses, waistcoats, hunting and other drawers, for the winter season, made of Virginia and real Spanish lambs' wool, articles which for safety against cold, warmth, and comfort, cannot be equalled, and at the same time will add much less to the size than any other article that can be worn for the warmth, all of which cannot be shrunk by washing.

It would seem that the modern anxiety about visible panty lines is nothing new.

Certainly advertisements such as Mrs Morris's frequently play on women's fears: for their complexions, figures, social standing, and even for their children. Inevitably, concerns about personal appearance figure largely. The Gowland's puff quoted above which speaks to 'Ladies whose Faces are impaired from the use of PAINTS and COSMETICS' is but one of a wide array of such advertisements. An issue of *The Times* in January 1819 contains such notices as the following:

ATKINSON'S AMBROSIAL SOAP. – The baleful effects of common soaps are generally known: to notice a familiar instance, look at the hands of a

woman who has been washing; their use invariably causes smarting, redness and ultimately wrinkles: to remove these evils has been the object of the Ambrosial Soap, which is prepared by a new process, free from all irritating qualities, and composed of balsamic essence; it removes redness, hardness, and freckles from the skin, prevents it chapping, and makes it luxuriously soft, white and even.

BEAUTIFUL WOMEN: – The greatest blemish to beauty is superfluous hairs on the face, neck, and arms; HUBERT'S ROSEATE POWDER immediately removes them.

The first advertisement here is for the perfumer James Atkinson, then of 44 Gerrard Street, who was later to produce one of the most notable and well-advertised brands of the period, Atkinson's Bear's Grease, which supposedly allowed bald men to grow hair at will (Atkinson's copy warned purchasers to use gloves when applying bear's grease for fear of sprouting hair on the hand, leaving it to resemble an animal's paw). Unlike the ursine advertisements for his hair tonic, in which the themes of bears and baldness dominate, Atkinson's copy for the Ambrosial Soap exploits women's fears: of skin blemishes, freckles and, the ultimate horror, wrinkles.¹¹² Against wrinkles, the herald of ageing, comes a 'new process' (advertisers never tire of claims of novelty) which has facilitated the production of the Ambrosial Soap. Hubert's advertisement also plays on feminine fears in its focus upon the 'greatest blemish to beauty', superfluous hair. The principal rival to the Roseate Powder was Trent's Depilatory, which uses similar tactics: 'REMOVAL OF SUPERFLUOUS HAIR. Ladies are respectfully informed that TRENT'S DEPILATORY, in a few minutes, actually removes superfluous hair from the face, neck, arms &c., and leaves the skin soft and fair.' Whereas Atkinson's puffs for his bear's grease claim that the balding male will be able to grow vast amounts of hair at his own leisure, the advertisement for Hubert's and Trent's play on women's fears that they might be sprouting 'superfluous hair' in a disagreeably masculine fashion. Depilatory creams, like soap or rouge, protect femininity, and here, as so often in late Georgian England, copywriters exploit women's anxieties over the potential loss of that invaluable quality, testimony to their ingenuity – some might call it brazenness – but also testimony to their awareness of the importance of the female consumer.

VII

The puffs for Trent's Depilatory and Hubert's Roseate Powder, like the majority of advertisements addressed in this book, are addressed to the middle classes. However, it should not be forgotten that the working classes were consumers too and that a significant amount of late Georgian advertising targeted the artisan or the hourly-paid employee. This particular strand of the literary sub-culture of advertising is both fascinating and often socially revealing in its attempt to exploit the political sympathies of its targeted audience. And while the principal brand manufacturers (Warren, Rowland, Solomon and the like) were not slow to advertise in periodicals intended for the 'lower orders', a small number of radical entrepreneurs, with Henry 'Orator' Hunt the most notable, were just as ingenious in their use of advertising as their more apolitical brethren in the capitalistic mainstream. Such advertisers trade on their political credentials and attempt to make money out of the political sympathies of the readers of their copy.

Attitudes towards advertising among British radicalism in the early nineteenth century varied widely. While Leigh Hunt and William Godwin saw advertisers as charlatans and quacks, William Hone and Henry Hunt, the hero of Peterloo, readily embraced the art and ethos of advertising. Certainly the distrust of advertising evident in the idealist literary coterie populated by the likes of Wordsworth was sometimes echoed in certain radical literary circles. A small number of Romantic period radical journals, before economic pressures made them concede the point, began by taking what they saw as a principled stand against advertisements and refused to carry them. Leigh Hunt, in the prospectus to the *Examiner* (1808), declares that 'NO ADVERTISEMENTS WILL BE ADMITTED IN THE EXAMINER':

They shall neither come staring in the first page at the breakfast table to deprive the reader of a whole page of entertainment, nor shall they win their silent way into the recesses of the paper under the mask of general paragraphs to filch even a few lines; the public shall neither be tempted to listen to somebody in the shape of a Wit who turns out to be a lottery-keeper, nor seduced to hear a magnificent oration which finishes by retreating into a peruke or rolling off into a blacking ball . . . the New Paper shall not be disgraced by those abandoned hypocrites, whose greatest quackery is their denial of being quacks.

Within five years, economic realities had made the Hunts take advertising. William Cobbett, though his series of journals took advertising, drew the line in the *Porcupine* at empirics, whom he saw as the most debased type of advertiser: 'While all other advertisements will be gratefully received and carefully inserted, the obscene and filthy boastings of quackery will, on no consideration whatever, be admitted.'¹¹³ The forthright radical anti-mercantilism found in Hunt's prospectus is best exemplified in William Godwin's *The Enquirer* (1797), which argues that 'The earth is the sufficient means . . . of the subsistence of man. A small quantity of human labour, when mixed and incorporated with the bounties of nature, is found perfectly adequate to the purposes of subsistence.'¹¹⁴ Ideally, human beings should share the superfluity of their labours with others without the need for a system of trade. However, for Godwin the introduction of 'the grovelling and ungenerous methods of barter and sale' as a means for the distribution of goods marks an economic Fall of Man, the exact point where 'the inequality of fortunes took their commencement'.¹¹⁵ The advertising tradesman is the epitome of this exploitative system: 'this being, this supple, fawning, cringing creature, this systematic, cold-hearted liar, this being, every moment of whose existence is centred in the sordid consideration of petty gains, has the audacity to call himself a man'.¹¹⁶

Though Godwin condemns the art of advertising, 'the servile and contemptible arts which we so frequently see played off by the tradesman',¹¹⁷ the majority of oppositionalist periodicals carried a small number of paid announcements. That said, some radical journals were more concerned to spread the revolutionary gospel than to make money. For example, the unstamped *Radical Reformer* of 26 November 1831 offers free access to its columns to those advertisers who share its ideological position:

Advertisements of a political nature, relating to, or promotive of, Radical Reform and Republicanism, are inserted in the 'RADICAL' *gratis*. All other advertisements are inserted on condition of the advertiser purchasing six 'Radicals' for every line of advertisement. He can then resell or distribute them gratis, as convenient. If resold, the Advertiser has the satisfaction of advertising without expense; or, if circulated *gratis*, every copy given away renders the advertisement more public, and, at the same time, proportionally promotes the CAUSE of the PEOPLE.

In the 10 December 1831 issue of the *Radical Reformer*, there were 124 lines of classified advertisements, of which only ten were non-political. Therefore these non-ideological advertisers took sixty copies at a penny each, leaving the periodical's weekly gross income for advertising a mere five shillings (plainly the *Radical* evaded advertising stamp duty as well as newspaper tax). The vast majority of the number's advertisements are, indeed, 'promotive of Radical Reform and Republicanism', including booksellers' announcements for an incendiary pamphlet, 'Swinish Multitude: A Catechism for the Instruction of the Hogs' (a post-Honeian liturgical parody), the latest edition of the *Republican*, a new edition of Paine's *Common Sense*, *The People's Book*, and William Carpenter's *An Address to the Working Classes*. As the *Radical's* columns demonstrate, the advertisements in radical periodicals of the post-Napoleonic era, notices of public meetings apart, mirror those of contemporary literary weeklies such as the *Literary Examiner* and the *Athenæum* inasmuch as they are dominated by publishers' announcements. However, unlike the more diverse booksellers' advertisements in the general weeklies, the radical prints' columns are dominated by heavily ideological books and pamphlets: progressive books and tracts, notices of new or existing incendiary journals and where they are to be obtained, freethinking polemic. A typical page of classified advertisements taken from Henry Hetherington's *Poor Man's Guardian*, that for 28 April 1832, includes an advertisement for *Thomas Paine's Political Works*, notices of meetings of the National Union of the Working Classes, a statement of the recent resolutions of the Leeds Radical Union, an advertisement for a Cruikshank engraving of the Peterloo massacre, and a cross-promotional salute to another unstamped newspaper, the *Republican*. The one non-political advertisement, which looks, perhaps, slightly incongruous in this incendiary company, is a puff for the first number of the *Visual Magazine*, which features 'a beautiful portrait of Miss WOOD'.

Apart from popular, cheap editions of the English classics, advertisements for imaginative literature also tend towards works with a similar political bias: the likes of Volney's *Ruins*, Shelley's *Queen Mab* and Southey's *Wat Tyler*. However, this sea of worthiness and self-improvement is sometimes parted by overt commercialism. Robert Warren, for instance, who advertised in the illegal

prints as willingly as in *The Times* or the *Chronicle*, advertised his blacking in the *Ballot* and the *Cosmopolite*, and there are also fascinating examples of brand proprietors or shopkeepers overtly pitching their advertisements at the ideological sympathies of radical readers. In the early 1830s, for example, E. Stour and Co. market their Souchong Tea to the trade unionist and radical artisan readers of the *Poor Man's Guardian* as 'Important to the Working Classes', and a similar banner adorns the advertisement for Evans's Pills of Health. The baker W. Liddelow offers an 'Address to the Brothers in the Union' in the 13 April 1834 number of *The Man: A Radical Advocate for Universal Liberty and Equality*, declaring that 'he is determined to supply them with the best Wheaten Bread at the lowest possible price' (however, Liddelow's fellow-feeling does not extend to the extension of credit, as he states that his Wheaten Bread is available 'for ready money' alone). 'W. L. trusts', he continues, 'that the Socialists and Brothers in Union will not forget him as a Brother'. There are also examples of radical entrepreneurs in the period who used marketing targeted at 'the people', of whom the most notable is 'Orator' Hunt of Peterloo, manufacturer of ink, roasted corn and blacking,¹¹⁸ a figure who was unafraid to adorn his blacking-pot labels with the motto '*Equal Laws, Equal Rights, Annual Parliaments, Universal Suffrage and the Ballot*'.

Another such is the proprietary medicine manufacturer R. Mallett, whose advertisements in such unstamped incendiary journals as the *Cosmopolite*, the *Poor Man's Guardian* and the *Radical Reformer* featured appeals to his 'Brother Radicals' and 'Brother Reformers' couched in the plain speaking of the working man: 'Brother Reformers, if you have a cough or an asthma . . . make trial of the remedies which he presents you with.' Mallett's banners for his herbal remedies (such as the 'Compound Balsam of the Herb Lungwort') declared that his products were 'Patronised by the People', 'Patronised by the Working Classes' and 'Patronised by the Working Classes and Members of the Political Union', boasts which, in working against the usual appeals to social aspiration evident in the more customary claims of patronage by the nobility, represent a significant piece of class solidarity. Mallett's brand names are sometimes charged with egalitarian resonance – 'The Working Man's Medicinal Friend' for example.

The *Poor Man's Guardian* for 1 June 1833 contains the following advertisement:

PATRONISED BY THE PEOPLE

THE WORKING MAN'S MEDICINAL FRIEND, OR, MALLETT'S BRITISH HERB APERIENT PILLS, (price 1s. 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. each box) are the best and most effectual cooling, opening, tonic medicine yet known, their action being that of a perfect purifier of the blood; but they will not, like the 'Universal Medicine,' cure broken limbs, and bring the dead to life! No, they will do no such thing; but they will give more satisfying relief in all cases of stomach complaints, and others arising therefrom, than any boasted *Cure-all*. Brother radicals, do not believe any longer that the moon is made of green cheese, but make trial of the above-mentioned medicine, and judge for yourselves. Prepared and Sold by R. MALLETT, Herbalist and Licentiate in Medicine, Great Charlotte-Street, Blackfriars Road.

Attempting to set himself apart from the exaggerated claims of conventional advertising rhetoric, Mallett explicitly distances himself from the customary boasts of the empiric, and in particular the fabulous braggadocio of James Morison,¹¹⁹ proprietor of the Universal Pills. Morison's panacea, alleged to 'cure broken limbs, and bring the dead to life', is dismissed as a preposterous example of specious rodomontade. Mallett, on the other hand, is no advertising quack, and when his banners do not resound with appeals to the working classes they declare themselves set apart from quackery: 'Positively neither Quackery nor deception', declares one from the 14 April 1832 *Poor Man's Guardian*.¹²⁰ In the *Cosmopolite* for 30 March 1833, Mallett, in an advertisement headed by the banner 'Patronised by the Working Classes and members of the Political Union', proselytises for his Compound Balsam for asthma and coughs: 'Mallett's Balsam is totally unlike those wretched preparations (laudanum in disguise) which are made and advertised by Druggists and Quacks. Yes, Mallett's Herb Medicines are entirely different articles . . . Only give them a trial and they will speak for themselves'. Here again Mallett differentiates himself from the empiric. Whereas the advertising of the likes of Morison is simple quackery, Mallett's puffs state the truth, baldly 'speak for themselves'.¹²¹ Of course, despite his protestations that he is different from the 'Quacks', Mallett frequently utilises their advertising techniques: cautions, testimonials, challenges,¹²² case histories, invitations to inspect documentary evidence of cures, label descriptions and so on. And even his

testimonials implicitly endorse the cause. A March 1833 advertisement in the *Cosmopolite* ('A Cheap Substitute for a Stamped Newspaper') for the Compound Balsam of the Herb Lungwort contains, not unusually, a eulogistic testimonial from a clergyman. However, the clergyman in this case is no orthodox divine, but the maverick Anglican the Reverend Robert Taylor, deist freethinker and founder of the Christian Evidence Society and Association of Universal Benevolence, who had spent time in prison for blasphemy.¹²³ On other occasions, Mallett's case histories are drawn from among the socially modest rather than the usual array of fine ladies, dowager duchesses and distinguished gentlemen:

MRS HARDY, of No. 111, Broadwell, Blackfriars road, had been dreadfully afflicted with Cough and Asthma for upwards of 20 years, so much so, that she could not lie down in bed at all; or get any relief from any other Medicines, of which she had tried every sort, but on taking a few bottles of Mallett's 'Compound Balsam of Herb Lungwort' was completely cured.¹²⁴

Mallett's advertisements are a late Georgian form of ethical advertising. Presenting himself as a plain-speaking man of the people, his appeals to class solidarity mix self-promotion with radicalism. Yet however ideologically agreeable his position might be, Mallett's copy is carefully pitched to exploit the political sympathies of his consumers, another example of the skilful art of late Georgian advertising, a cultural form often marked by ingenuity and wit, alongside an undeniable chicanery and charlatanry, and, indeed, no small measure of imagination.

CHAPTER 2

'Humbug and Co.': Satirical engagements with advertising 1770–1840

They are hooting the empiric,/ The ignorant and incapable
fool.

Robert Browning, *Paracelsus* (1835)

In 1825, *The Times* published a 'Parody of a Cambridge Examination Paper' in which students, instead of being assessed on their knowledge of scripture or the classical languages, were examined on subjects of decidedly more interest to the would-be fashionable Corinthian: London theatres, the finest tailors and shoemakers, and the pleasures of the Fancy ('Who was Prime Minister when Cribb defeated Molyneux? and where did the battle take place? Explain the terms – "milling, fibbing, cross-buttock, neck and crop, bang up, and prime"').¹ Advertisers feature heavily in the examination, with the candidates being asked to 'enumerate the patentees . . . of liquid blacking' and to engage in practical criticism of a sole-proprietor jingle by a poetical barber-surgeon:

15. Scan these lines:

'But for shaving and tooth-drawing,
Bleeding, cabbaging, and sawing,
Dicky Gossip, Dicky Gossip is the man!
What is known of the character and history of Dicky Gossip?'²

The examination also tests students' command of the best-advertised quack medicines, beginning with an exhortation to sketch the topography of Samuel Solomon's premises in Liverpool and concluding by asking candidates to demonstrate a sound knowledge of some of the principal brands of proprietorial medicines:

5. Give a ground-plan of Gilead-house. Mention the leading topics of the *Guide to Health*, with some account of Fothergill's Cough Pills, Daffey's

Elixir, Blain's Distemper Powders, Beddome's Powders for Children, and Hooper's Female Pills.³

This *jeu d'esprit* is testimony to both the ubiquity of commercial culture in late Georgian England and the comic potential of advertising and advertisers. During the Romantic period, satirists and parodists responded to the advertising culture around them in a variety of ways. The late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries saw a disparate and fascinating array of satirical encounters with advertising and its techniques: mock-advertisements, classical satires on the supposed excesses and iniquities of advertising and of commercial society in general; more sympathetic Horatian satire which engages with the self-representations of advertisers, notably in variants of burlesque; spoof advertising 'anas', broadsheet lampoons, graphic satire. This chapter discusses and gives examples of the various forms of advertising-related satire, introducing the literary sub-genres that resound through each of the succeeding chapters below. Like the 'Parody of a Cambridge Examination Paper', most of the satires here, sometimes principally, sometimes tangentially, deal with the marketing of proprietary medicines in late Georgian England and the fierce contemporary debates prompted by 'quackery' in which satirical writing played a significant role. The empirics, those great advertising pioneers, blazed the trail for the consumer-good entrepreneurs discussed in the later chapters of this book – the blacking manufacturers, the lottery-office keepers, the hair-oil salesmen and, much to the chagrin of literary men such as Wordsworth, Clare and Macaulay,⁴ the publishers of books – and the priority granted them here reflects this importance.

I

From Francis Grose's spoof collection of advertisements, *A Guide to Health, Beauty, Riches and Honour* (1785),⁵ onwards, the most common advertising-related generic form within Romantic period satirical culture is the mock-advertisement. In newspaper and literary magazine, in broadsheet and handbill, spoof advertisements had wide currency and circulation. Parodic advertisements take many forms and have widely differing significance: some exploit advertisements for straightforward comic effect, while others contain acute social satire or are highly politicised. Some directly

engage with the ethics of advertising, while others simply utilise formal models drawn from advertisements to target other aspects of social, literary or political life. Certainly the mock-advertisement is a supple and flexible parodic tool. Take, for example, *The Times's* 1825 'Advertisement (Extraordinary)', where 'Henry Humbug and Co.' announce that they have 'An Extensive assortment of "Puffs" always kept ready for the commercial interest – Bears' Grease, Portable Soup, Solomon's Drops, Cobbett's Register, Bochsa's Music, Lectures on Phrenology, and all other quackeries, foreign and domestic'.⁶ Here, in one sentence, the paper is able to point the finger of scorn at journalistic rivals, contemporary advertising and currently voguish social preoccupations. 'Henry Humbug' is William Clement, the proprietor of the *Morning Chronicle* and the *Observer* (*The Times's* most notable rivals for advertising revenue, it might be pointed out), and the paper's *bête noire* William Cobbett is damned as a self-publicising charlatan by association with the likes of Samuel Solomon and James Atkinson. The mock-advertisement also glances at the fashionable French musician Nicholas Charles Bochsa (who had been badly reviewed by the newspaper) and the current fascination with the craniological thought of Gall and Spurzheim. Clement's literary empire is meretriciously obliged to the 'commercial interest', but the newspaper that generated the highest contemporary advertising revenues sees no irony in targeting advertising 'quackery'. In its own eyes, *The Times* is Parnassian while the *Observer* reeks of Grub Street. To borrow the terminology of Roy Porter's fine book on empirics, quacks are 'other people. Everybody felt happy in execrating the quack, because, everybody could agree, the quack was someone else.'⁷ Clement's *Observer* is complicit with the advertising system, but *The Times*, despite the heavy reliance of its income stream upon advertising, is a disinterested purveyor of truth.

In the same year as *The Times* published its 'Advertisement (Extraordinary)', the *Southampton Herald* carried a spoof bookseller's advertisement, 'Literary Announcements Extraordinary! or, Great News for the Booksellers!' which similarly targets contemporary publishing as a hotbed of charlatanism:

NEW WORKS IN THE PRESS.

1. THE TATLER, an original work, with most ingenious Inventions. By Medwin. (Colburn)

...

6. BLUE GAUNTLET, by the *Little Well-known*, a short story, spun out to an immeasurable length, after the manner of the Great Unknown ... (Hurst & Co., Pall Mall).

N. B., a competent Person to write capital puffs, in Blue and Red ink, for the Booksellers' windows. (One concern).

7. The DOUBTFUL CHARACTER, a Novel; by John Murray, with Notes by the Editors of the Examiner (John Hunt, Tavistock Street).

...

10. COLMAN on the MORALITY of the STAGE, with notes by Shee, and a Postscript, shewing how the Author of Broad Indecencies was reclaimed. (Butterworth, Fleet Street).

...

15. TRADE MAXIMS, shewing the whole Art and Mystery of Bookselling, with an Essay on *Grinding* and *Extortion*, by an Experienced Author.⁸

Setting aside the *ad hominem* satire in the squib (on the prolixity of Sir Walter Scott, the ribaldry of George Colman the younger and so on), here the *Herald*, which devoted its entire front page to paid columns, many of which were taken out by publishers, declares that the 'Art and Mystery' of the contemporary book trade is dependent upon puffing advertisement, 'Grinding and Extortion'. In such parody, newspapers bite the hand that feeds them: *The Times* takes the advertising shilling, carrying puffs for Solomon's Cordial Balm of Gilead and Atkinson's Bear's Grease while simultaneously condemning the advertising of both products as a species of 'quackery'; the *Herald* takes column after column from booksellers while by implication remaining above the sharp practices of contemporary publishing. This antipathy to advertising 'quackery' is not uncommon in mock-advertisements. While some spoof advertisements simply borrow the form of commercial announcements to address wider social or political issues, often the creators of the formal models themselves, the advertisers, are parodied:

ADVERTISEMENT. – We never admit puffs into our paper in any disguise or under any circumstances, for we are sure that 'the man who would make' a *puff* 'would pick a pocket'. It is a love for veracity alone which induces us to state that MONSIEUR CHARLATAN'S TUSKOLATUM MYSTIFICATUM for renewing decayed TEETH is the most wonderful and surprisingly efficacious invention ever invented. How will those ancient maidens rejoice, who have only a calf's tooth in their heads, when they are told, that by sowing this panacea in their gums overnight, a fine crop of full-grown grinders will sprout up by the following morning! We speak

from our own experience; and whereas, before we used this extraordinary invention, our great anxiety was how to get teeth for our food, the only matter that now troubles us is how to get food for our teeth.⁹

This mock advertisement from *Cruikshank's Comic Almanack for 1836* lampoons the brazen promises of the empirics, portraying proprietary medicine vendors as modern Münchhausens. However, it widens its focus to address the devious purposes of advertisers in general, all of whom are tarred with the brush of quackery: advertisers are little more than pickpockets, their worthless puffs dependent upon specious braggadocio, empty rodomontade and the promotion of worthless trash.

From its establishment in 1835, the *Almanack* and its satirists had lampooned quacks and their advertising methods, and during the mid-1830s it gleefully joined in the sustained period of satirical blood-letting over the scandals associated with the marketing methods and malign side-effects of Morison's Pills. It is worth dallying over the satirical campaign against James Morison and his pills in some detail, as it illustrates the way in which satire played an important role in contemporary social debate and, indeed, the potency of the mock-advertisement within the period's satire. In the controversies over empirics and their proprietary medicines, satire is often at the polemical centre of discussion rather than being an adjunct to more orthodox debates in the form of journalism or parliamentary oratory. For every prose polemic such as the anonymous 'Essay on Quackery, and the Dreadful Consequences of taking Advertised Medicines' (1805) or 'Castigator's' *Dreams and Realities; or John Bull awakened to a sense of his Danger and Cautioned against Poisonous Drugs and Nostrums recommended by Advertising Quacks* (1835) there is a satirical equivalent such as *The Triumph of Quackery, A Satirical Poem by 'Tim Bobbin the younger'* (1818) or George Crabbe's 'Present State of Advertising Quacks' (1810).

For many years, late Georgian satirists condemned empirics as dangerous charlatans, men more likely to kill than to cure; one of Robert Montgomery's notes to *The Age Reviewed* (1828) is exemplary:

Among quacks, the medicinal ones are very conspicuous. It is very probable, that through the means of increasing quack doctors, the overplus of the poor population will in time be removed. I will freely give this bright idea to Malthus, and if he choose to write a treatise from my

valuable suggestion, I here promise faithfully, that he shall not be prosecuted for piracy!¹⁰

During the 1830s, the mordant predictions of contemporary satirists were realized in the case of James Morison (1770–1840),¹¹ self-styled founder of the ‘British College of Health’. Morison was a highly successful marketer of proprietary medicine who claimed to have recovered from sustained and recurrent bouts of ill-health through the use of a vegetable pill of his own invention (which he washed down with lemonade). After his Damascene recovery, he launched this ‘Hygeian’ medicine as ‘Morison’s Pills’, a cure-all (the ‘Universal Medicine’) which was often taken in vast quantities. The Pills were extensively marketed in the 1820s and 1830s and achieved great success, with Morison’s directions for use boosting trade volumes by encouraging customers to consume as many as twenty or thirty pills a day. Morison, like Solomon before him, also assumed the roles of medical authority and author, publishing his *Morisoniana* in 1831, a thinly veiled book-length advertisement in which he detailed his mastery of ‘the Hygeian art’ (‘Hygeian’, meaning ‘healthy’, is Morison’s coinage, and his product was often described as the ‘Hygeian Pill’) and attacked the medical establishment: ‘THE OLD MEDICAL SCIENCE IS COMPLETELY WRONG’.¹² ‘Every man his own doctor’ was Morison’s principal advertising banner, echoing the opening of *Morisoniana*: ‘Every one may now be his own doctor and surgeon, at a cheap rate, and enjoy a sound mind in a sound body.’¹³ Contemporary satirists were not slow to engage with Morison’s panacea and the exaggerated claims of its advertising. For instance, ‘The Vegetable Pills’, an anonymous broadside from the 1830s, offers the following rough and ready satire:

In battle what a charming thing for all who have to go,
That they may cut and slash away, nor loss of limb can know,
For should they lose a leg or arm, the cure is at their will,
They’ll grow again if they but take the Vegetable Pills.

...

In short the blind may gain their sight, the dumb
may find a tongue,
The lame may quickly run a race, the old again be young,
One dose will make you laugh or cry, the hungry belly fills,
In fact, if you would never die, take the Vegetable Pills.¹⁴

Similar in tone is the cover illustration for 'Dr Morison's Pills', a song published in the early 1830s. Parodying the 'before' and 'after' convention so frequently used in display advertisements for medical and health-related products, the caricature shows a scraggly and emaciated 'before' figure, who is dwarfed in comparison with a huge and elephantine 'after' character, who is enthusiastically shovelling Morison's pills down his throat, doubtless at the rate suggested on the label packaging (once 'every $\frac{1}{4}$ of an hour'). The cartoon none too subtly levels the charge of mercantile greed against Morison; the manufactory in the background sees the British College of Health transformed into the 'British College of Wealth'.

Unfortunately for James Morison, and for several of his clients, his medicinal business empire took a severe jolt in 1836, with the prosecution of the London apothecary Robert Salmon for manslaughter caused by the use of Morison's Pills. The case is recorded in the *Newgate Calendar*:

ROBERT SALMON

Convicted of Manslaughter, in administering 'Morison's Pills,' and fined Two Hundred Pounds, 4th of April, 1836.

At the Central Criminal Court sessions which commenced on Monday, the 4th of April, 1836, Mr Robert Salmon, a medicine vendor in Farringdon Street, was indicted for the manslaughter of Mr John M'Kenzie, by administering to him certain large and excessive quantities of pills composed of gamboge, cream of tartar and other noxious and deleterious ingredients. The deceased was the master of a vessel, and lived in the neighbourhood of Commercial Road. He was induced to take some of 'Morison's Pills' as a purgative, upon the representations of a Mrs Lane, a woman who was employed by his wife as a sempstress, and who sold the Hygeian medicines. Subsequently Mr Salmon's aid was claimed, on account of his suffering from rheumatism in the knee, and he recommended increased and still-increasing doses, until at length the deceased became so ill that his life was placed in jeopardy. Medical aid was now called in, but it was too late, and death soon put an end to his sufferings. A post-mortem examination left no doubt that the medicine prescribed by the prisoner had been the cause of this termination of the case, and the present indictment was in consequence preferred.¹⁵

A large part of Salmon's defence involved the calling of witnesses¹⁶ who were prepared to swear to the efficacious qualities of Morison's cure-all: 'On the part of the defendant a great many persons were called from all parts of the kingdom, who stated that they had taken

large quantities of these pills, with the very best results, as a means of cure for almost every species of malady to which the human frame was subject.’¹⁷ Most notable of all was an individual who had supposedly consumed an average of nearly thirty pills a day over a sustained period of time (as Robert Southey notes in his meditation on quacks in *Letters from England* (1807): ‘Every Man his own Poisoner’):¹⁸ ‘One person stated that he had taken no fewer than twenty thousand of them in two years, and had found infinite relief from swallowing them in very large doses’. However, despite this personage’s almost heroic devotion to the Hygeian Pills, sadly for Salmon and, indeed, for Morison (who, on the face of the judge’s summing up, was lucky not to have been in court), such testimony was in vain:

Mr Justice Patteson left the case to the jury, who had to decide upon the facts which had been proved; and after about half-an-hour’s consideration they found a verdict of guilty, with a recommendation to mercy – upon the ground that the defendant was not the compounder, but only the vendor, of the medicines. On the following Saturday, the 9th of April, the defendant was brought up to receive judgment. The learned judge sentenced him to pay a fine of two hundred pounds, and added: ‘I think it right to caution you that, in the event of your being again found guilty of conduct of a similar description, the character of your offence will be materially altered. I hope that the punishment which is now inflicted on you will deter others from rashly administering medicines, with the nature of which they are unacquainted, in large quantities, as the result may be fatal’.¹⁹

Unfortunate though the demise of Mr M’Kenzie may have been, the shaming of James Morison was greeted with undisguised glee in satirical circles. Fig. 11, taken from *Cruikshank’s Comic Almanack for 1837*, shows a parodic trade card for James Morison and Co., here in the new guise of undertakers: ‘Funerals Furnished’, boasts the card, with ‘Corpse Included’. The accompanying satirical song, ‘The Wonderful Pill’, forthrightly condemns Morison as a demonic figure, a heartless and implacable charlatan who trades on the ‘folly, stupidity [and] weakness’ of his clients.

Morison was a familiar target for the *Almanack’s* satirists,²⁰ but here the ground has changed and the tone darkened. Previously, and before the Salmon case, the attack, though systematic, had been less acerbically *ad hominem*, focusing upon the avarice of the vendors of the Pills and the credulity of their purchasers rather


THE WONDERFUL PILL.	
<p style="text-align: center;">A CARD.</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">MORRISON And Co. <i>Undertakers.</i></p> <hr style="width: 20%; margin: auto;"/> <p style="text-align: center;">FUNERALS FURNISHED, Corpse included.</p>	<p>Take gamboge, as you find it, for better or worse, And aloes,—the strongest,—a drug for a horse; A few peppermint drops, a few turns of a mill, And you get the contents of the Wonderful Pill. Take the head of a monkey, be-whisker'd & frizzl'd, The eyes of a tiger, be-demon'd and devill'd; Add a magpie, a fox, and a vulture in one, And a heart with less blood than a pillar of stone:— Take of folly, stupidity, weakness—enough:— Of credulity, ignorance, fear—quantum suff:— These ingredients, combin'd with discernment & skill, Give the knave and the dupe of the Wonderful pill.</p>

Figure 11. George Cruikshank. Parodic trade card for James Morison and co.; 'The Wonderful Pill', anonymous satirical poem. Both from *Cruikshank's Comic Almanack for 1837*.

than the homicidal results of over-consumption. For instance, two years earlier, in a parodic advertisement for the 'Brutish Humbug College of Health', the *Almanack* had used spoof quack advertising copy to condemn the money-grubbing reality behind the vegetable pills:

The wonderful efficacy of the MORNING PILLS becomes every day more perspicuous. The discerning public swallows 'em 'like winking'; and we defy all opposition . . . We tells those as calls us quacks, that . . . we have found a sovereign remedy for ourselves; having, for a long while, been afflicted with an emptiness of the chest, and a great deficiency of the yellow-stuff, all of which terrible symptoms have disappeared.²¹

The puff goes on 'to prove the never-to-be-enough-wondered-at wonderful efficacy of the Hy-gee-wo-ian Medicines', and features several testimonials by grateful customers (Gregory Gudgeon, Giles Gosling, and Giles Gammon). Of the gulls' eulogies, Gammon's is well worth quoting:

SIR,

I BEG to inform you that a poor man was blown to atoms by the explosion of the Powder Mills on Hounslow Heath. His affectionate wife, who happened to be passing at the time, carefully picked up the fragments, and placed them together; and, by administering a dose of the Universal Medicine, he was able to walk home, and eat a hearty dinner of beef and cabbage . . .

Your obedient Servant,

GILES GAMMON

P. S. I forgot to add, that the poor woman, in the hurry of the moment, made a small mistake, by placing the head of a donkey, which had been blown off by the explosion, upon her husband's shoulders, instead of his own; but she says it is of very little consequence, as very few of his acquaintance could perceive any difference.²²

The squib also features a letter from a Morisonian sales agent, the splendidly named Francis Fleece'em, in a passage that exploits and condemns Morison's well-known disdain for the medical profession and, again, implies that a business rather than a medical rationale underpins his trade:

MOST RESPECTED SIR,

BEING clearly convinced, from a proper use of my reasoning faculties, that it is perfectly consistent with probability and good sense to believe that one medicine, made of I don't know what, by I don't know who, is certain to cure every disorder, and is equally efficacious in all ages and constitutions, from the infant of a week old, to the old man of eighty; and being, moreover, equally well convinced that it is quite unreasonable to place any sort of trust or dependence on the prescriptions of men of scientific education, who have merely devoted their whole lives to the medical profession; – and, further, being struck with the astounding fact, and exceeding likelihood, that an universal panacea could only be reserved for those who are quite innocent of all medical knowledge, and whose perfect disinterestedness is manifested by their being contented with the trifling remuneration derived from the credulity of the British public; I say, Sir, for all these reasons I have become a zealous advocate of the Hy-gee-wo-ian medicines . . .

Yours ever to command,

FRANCIS FLEECE'EM.

P.S. – Please to send me a dozen wagon loads of No. 1 Pills, and the same of No. 2 Pills, as early as possible.²³

The *Almanack* satirist also takes aim at the over-prescription of the Hygeian Pills: 'I make it a point to recommend them . . . in sufficiently large doses . . . for does it not follow . . . that if six pills do a certain quantity of good, six thousand, must, as a natural consequence, do six thousand times as much good.'²⁴ Nonetheless, Fleece'em protests his lack of self-interest in patients taking the Pills in such Herculean quantities: 'There are some censorious folks who insinuate that the more pills I sell the more money I get by them; but I need not assure you that, in this respect, my motives are quite as disinterested as your own.'²⁵

Morison was not the only empiric at whom the *Almanack* jeered, given that they had previously lampooned John St John Long, the Harley Street empiric who claimed that his 'rubbing lotion' could cure tuberculosis. Indeed, the 1835 *Almanack*, writing on the death of Long (ironically enough, of consumption), declared that the baton of charlatanry had now been passed to James Morison:

Tho' St John (I said) is gone, – that curer of all ills, –
We still have modest Morison's fam'd Vegetable Pills.²⁶

John St John Long,²⁷ born in 1798 in Ireland as plain John O'Driscoll, arrived in London in 1822, aiming to establish himself as a portrait painter. Struggling in his ambition (his enemies sneered that he spent more time house painting than portrait painting), he is supposed to have developed an interest in medicine by being commissioned to make anatomical illustrations. Without the benefit of medical training, he set himself up at 41 Harley Street as a doctor, and invented a liniment which he claimed would cure consumption. When anointed by the lotion, which contained a mild irritant, a body which Long had diagnosed as consumptive would manifest an external lesion through which the internal tubercular infection would supposedly drain away (consumptives who actually presented clear or advanced symptoms of the disease were turned away on the grounds that they had consulted Dr Long too late in the day). Long, reserving his treatment to the relatively healthy and the hypochondriac, would treat the wound with an anodyne, leaving it to heal naturally, and the patient would be pronounced cured. He became fashionable and wealthy (earning some £12,000 a year by the late 1820s) until, unfortunately for Long and his business, eventually a number of patients presented extreme side-effects to the irritant contained in his liniment. The doctor featured in two notorious manslaughter trials, the first in 1830 and the next in the following year. In both cases Long had raised a wound to 'draw off' the internal disease, but his lady patients, a Miss Cachin and a Mrs Lloyd, had died in agony from infected and festering wounds. Cachin was a hitherto healthy young woman of twenty-four. Her younger brother had died of tuberculosis in the previous year and her mother had brought her to Long concerned, erroneously, that she might also been consumptive. The account of the post-mortem into her death makes grim reading:

Dr Alexander Thompson, who had examined the body of the deceased, Mr Thomas King, surgeon, Mr Wildgoose, surgeon, Dr John Hogg, Dr Thomas Goodeve, Dr James Johnson, Mr John Maclean and Mr Thomas Evans, who had all been present at the post-mortem examination, were examined. They all concurred that it was a perfectly healthful subject, beautiful in form, and free from all disease, save that occasioned by the wound in the back. Few people would have recovered after such a local injury, which appeared to them perfectly unjustifiable.²⁸

Long was found guilty in the Cachin case, and fined £250, but acquitted in the second trial. He died three years later, in 1834. He is the subject of a dark 1831 caricature by Robert Seymour in which Long, his face transformed into that of a vulture, languishes in gaol, a bottle of his lotion at his hand. The letterpress takes the form of a mock advertisement, a parodic lost and found notice: 'Lost, £12,000 per annum, medical practice. Whoever will return the same to Mr St J. L-g, shall receive the benefit of his advice'. Seymour's caricature was originally published in *Valpurgis; or, the Devil's Festival* (1831), where it accompanies a satirical song by Richard Harris Barham:

You may talk of your Celsus, Machaons, and Galens,
Physicians who cured all incurable ailings,
But ne'er yet was doctor applauded in song
Like that erudite Phoenix, the great Doctor Long.

...

Through all regions his vast reputation has flown,
Through the torrid, the frigid, and temperate zone;
The wretch, just expiring, springs healthy and strong
From his bed at one touch of the great Doctor Long.

...

Great house-painting, sign-painting, face-painting sage!
Thou Raffaele of physic! – thou pride of our age!
Alas! when thou diest, and the bell goes ding-dong,
Sure Hygeia herself will expire with her Long!
Then fill every glass, drink in grand coalition,
Long life, long await this *long-headed* physician;
Long, long may Fame sound with her trumpet and song,
Through each nation the name of the great Doctor Long!²⁹

II

While Robert Seymour's satirical mock-advertisement for Doctor Long, like those directed by the *Almanack* satirists at Doctor Morison, targets the advertising quack directly, many mock-advertisements

simply utilise advertisements as formal models for satire aimed elsewhere. Thus, for example, the majority of the *Comic Almanack's* spoof advertisements are not targeted directly at their formal models. In the same year as the 'TUSKOLATUM MYSTIFICATUM' squib was published, most of the parodic yearbook's mock columns dealt with matters apart from advertising. For example, figure 12, which shows the mock-advertisements for August 1836, offers whimsicality and mild social satire rather than any engagement with advertising *per se*.

Parodic advertising pages such as this are not uncommon in the Romantic period, whether in satirical journals such as the *Scourge* and the *Satirist*, comic annuals such as the *Almanack*, or indeed as part of the related comic sub-genre of the mock newspaper, from *The Times's* famous anti-Jacobin self-parody *The New Times* of 6 November 1794³⁰ to William Hone and George Cruikshank's *A Slap at Slop and the Bridge-Street Gang* (1821).³¹ There are also highly engaging collections of parodic advertisements in book-length form such as Francis Grose's collection of absurd puffs *A Guide to Health, Beauty, Riches and Honour* (1785) and William Frederick Deacon's *Warreniana* (1824),³² the latter a brilliant example of the parodic 'ana', the satirical counterpart of *Packwood's Whim*. And John Fairburn's *The Quizzical Gazette Extraordinary, and Wonderful Advertiser*, an annual principally composed of mock-advertisements, founded in 1819, survived well into the 1830s. Figure 13 shows the first page of the 1821 *Gazette*.

As Marcus Wood has written, '[b]y far the most numerous advertisements ... in *The Quizzical Gazette* are for books, patent medicines, and new inventions',³³ with the everyday familiarity of such puffs providing the base for the *Gazette's* mixture of whimsy and social satire. Occasionally, however, advertising becomes the target of the journal's satire rather than its tool, and the *Gazette* glances at the very source that it had mined so profitably, as in its rough handling of Henry 'Orator' Hunt's election to the Reform Parliament for the constituency of Preston, which uses Hunt's status as a manufacturer of blacking and inveterate self-promoter to attack his politics,³⁴ and its earlier rough handling of jingle poets in the 1821 number:

LOTTERY LAUREAT WANTED. – He must possess a sufficient poetical talent to undertake all the rhyming gullery, and be able to envelop

Advertisements Extraordinary.

THEATRE ROYAL, ENGLISH UPROAR.—The Proprietor respectfully announces that, while the cold weather lasts, he will present each visitor to the Boxes or Pit with a bucket of "thick-ribbed ICE;" and assures the Public that the temperature of the Theatre is so comfortably regulated that it is never more than 50 degrees below the freezing point.

THEATRE ROYAL, DREARY LANE.—This Evening, their Majesties' Servants will perform
T H E M A N A G E R I N D I S T R E S S ;
 To which will be added the serious Extravaganza of
T H E H O T C R O S S B U N N ;
 The principal Character by the Manager.
 The whole to conclude with
T H E D E V I L T O P A Y .

On Monday next, Mr. SWING will exhibit his extraordinary performances on the Tight Rope.—*N.B.* On this occasion all persons on the Free List will be *suspended*.

WANT PLACES.

AS TOADY, an unmarried Female of an uncertain age. She is so soft in her disposition as to take any impression; says yes or no, just as she is bid; prefers Cape to Madeira, and dislikes Champagne; and has no objection to wash and walk out with the poodles.—*N.B.* Is very skilful in backbiting, and would be delighted to assist in the ruin of reputations. Can have a good character from her last place, which she left in consequence of the lady marrying her tall Irish footman.

AS DINER-OUT, an Irish Captain on half-pay, who has at his disposal a plentiful supply of small talk and table wit; does the agreeable to perfection; is a good laugh at stale jokes, and a capital retailer of new ones; never falls asleep at the repetition of a dull story, and always laughs in the right place. He has a variety of other qualifications too numerous for insertion in an advertisement.

NOTICE is hereby given, that a considerable portion of **CIVIC DIGNITY**, conjectured to be equal in quantity to a *Winchester Measure*, has been lost since the 9th of November, 1834. This *in-valuable* appendage is supposed to have been dropped from the person of an *illustrious Mayor*, during certain squabbles which took place in spite of common sense and *common counsel*. It is hoped it will be recovered by his successor, and any information respecting the same may be communicated to a **HOBLER**, at the *Mare's Nest* in the Poultry.

LOST—by **NOBODY**, in the neighbourhood of **NOWHERE**, an article more easily conceived than described, known by the name of **NOTHING**. The fortunate finder may keep it on paying the expenses of this Advertisement.

THE QUIZZICAL
Gazette Extraordinary,
AND WONDERFUL ADVERTISER.

No. 3.]

*Αριστες Εὐφροσύνα πόνων τελεφεσμένων ἰατρικῶν ΠΡΕΣΒΕΡΙΑΣ ΠΡΕΣΒΕΡΙΑΣ ΠΡΕΣΒΕΡΙΑΣ PRICE 6d.

* Numbers I. and II. having been reprinted, may now be had of the Publisher at the same price each.

THE EDITOR'S ADDRESS TO HIS READERS.

THERE is not, perhaps, a more difficult task, throughout the various labours of periodical literature, than that of conducting a Newspaper with perfect truth and impartiality. But, convinced that the estimation this Work has risen into with the public, is as much attributable to our strict adherence to *Truth*, as to the merit of the original idea, or to any abilities we have yet had an opportunity of exhibiting in its development, we will never for an instant lose sight of candour and manliness of character in our writing. It has obtained for our efforts unexampled patronage, and produced in our minds feelings of the deepest gratitude: that approbation it will ever be more our honest pride to have really deserved, than our vaunting boast to have completely obtained. Involved as we are in the maddening vortex of the present political whirlpool, threatening insidious ruin to all around us, it shall be our task—and we dread not to stand alone—to steer clear of the Scylla and Charybdis of the present day; and sail down the smooth-gliding stream of public estimation, unswayed by the syren voice of party patronage, unawed by the threatening tempest of political persecution: nor will we, to obtain the smile of courtier sycophants, sully our pages with degrading insults on an Illustrious Lady, or dare (even for a playful moment) to wield our weapon, the pen, in rebellious warfare against our country's Ruler.

GAMMON.

Advertisements.

GENTEEL and PROFITABLE CONCERN to be **DISPOSED OF**. The Advertiser, about to retire, will transfer, on very advantageous terms, to a successor, a business he has long and prosperously carried on, in the **DOG-FINDING LINE**; which, on an average, has for several years, from rewards and the sale of skins, produced a very handsome income.

The Purchaser will have the benefit of two evening apprentices being turned over to him, both equally expert at finding and skinning; also the advantage of some respectable and decent persons, who call daily for orders, who will carry home the found animals at a very moderate poundage on the rewards.

None need apply who cannot command 200*l.*—Direct (post-paid) to G. GROWLER, Whelp-Yard, Dog-Kennel Lane.

GRAND LOTTERY SCHEME.

Six Twenty Thousand Pound Prizes, with Two Prizes to One Blank.

MESSRS. PISH, PIDLING, SONG, and RISK, the Contractors, offer this most advantageous Plan to the Public, which far exceeds all others in the number and large amount of the **PRIZES**, and in the inconceivably small proportion of the Blanks.

1 . . .	20,000 lb.	Sulphur
1 . . .	20,000	Carbon
1 . . .	20,000	Nitre
1 . . .	20,000	Soap
1 . . .	20,000	Water
1 . . .	20,000	Pipes
5 . . .	2000 <i>l.</i>	German Loan Stock
10 . . .	1000 <i>l.</i>	Prussian do. do.
100 . . .	500	Russian do. do.
200 . . .	200	French do. do.
300 . . .	100	Sardinian do. do.
400 . . .	50	Dutch do. do.
500 . . .	20	Spanish do. do.
6000 . . .		12 <i>d.</i> Money

11,270 Tickets

†† Tickets only 2*3*l. 1*8*s. 0*d.*

This Lottery is to be drawn on three separate days; on St. Tib's Eve, 30th of February, and 1st of April next ensuing. Should the fortunate holder of three Tickets obtain the first three Prizes, he will have the means of obtaining the glory of Buonaparte, by making the same use of them which he did. The holders of the three next Prizes, by a proper application of them and their breath, may make millions of beautiful emblems of Lottery Schemes, adorned with all the colours of the rainbow, equally vivid and intense. The holders of the Prizes of Stocks shall be paid the very instant that the respective Loans are returned to this country; and the Money Prizes shall receive unexceptionable drafts on Messrs. SUCKER and ROY, Aldgate Pump, the most anciently established firm in London; who have done business for the Advertisers for many years, and who are well known never to hesitate at supplying the largest drafts, and never keep any holidays, except during intense frost.

MR. BUGLE-BLAST, the Proprietor of the **AMERICAN FLUID**, so successfully advertised in a former Gazette, begs to inform his Friends and the Public in general, that he has invented another Fluid, which he calls **MORPHEUSIAN** or **DREAMING FLUID**; a few drops of which applied in the ears on going to rest, agreeably to the sealed Directions given with each Phial, never fail to procure to the Patient the most delightful and pleasing Dreams,—so that persons who sleep twelve hours out of the twenty-four are certain to pass half of their allotted time agreeably.

Before the publication of the next April Gazette, Mr. B hopes to bring to perfection another Fluid, to be called **Artimedorean Drops**, which will not only interpret the most unconnected, but will at pleasure realize the most delusive Dreams.

Apply, as usual, very near Westminster Bridge.

Fraudulent Schemes in lucky hieroglyphic obscurity. A preference will be given to a Designing Person, as he might assist in decorating the puffs. Salary £5, and a firkin of porter for drawing. – Enquire at any unlicensed Offices.³⁵

Like so many other satirical journals, the *Gazette* also took aim at the promises of quacks, as in the parodic advertisements below, which target, successively, the specious claims of empirics in general and the urine-gazing practices of Theodore Myersbach, the famed ‘uroscopist’:

A CARD.

To the Nobility, Gentry, and Others, who indulge in the polite and elegant Luxury of Snuffing.

DR DUNDERHEAD, of DUNBAR, begs to announce his Arrival from the North, and that he has taken commodious premises in Addle Street, where the public may be supplied with the real MENTORIAN or MNE-MOSYMEANEAN SNUFF, which, the Doctor assures his patrons, is not a hasty preparation of Empiricism or Quackery, nor a nostrum invented to fill his own pockets at the expense of the credulous or deluded; but, that it is a revival of the component materials manufactured in the halcyon days when the Muses held their conversaziones on the Mounts of Helicon and Parnassus, and there used to regale themselves with ambrosia, sip nepenthe, and snuff the nasal dainty now submitted to the Nobility of Great Britain.³⁶

A CARD.

DR LACHRYGRIEF begs to announce, that from this day he discontinued to cure any bodily complaints by the inspection of the patient’s urine; and for the future intends to confine his practice to subduing Mental Diseases only. – All such persons so afflicted may depend on speedy relief, by sending a two-ounce vial full of their tears (accompanied by a golden fee); out of which the Doctor, by a method peculiar to himself, will extract every cause for the sadness that occasioned their being shed, and undertake to supply the ullaage made by the process with his real MOMUSIAN DROPS, which, when applied agreeably to the directions will momentarily change the most violent grief into almost convulsive fits of laughter.

The excessive flowing of widows’ tears effectually stopped in a few hours after the funeral.

LACHRYMALIS SQUARE.³⁷

The *Gazette*’s squibs on Henry Hunt are among the significant number of ideologically motivated satires that appeared around the time of the Reform Bill and the reformed parliament, many of

which took the form of mock-advertisements. To give an example from the opposite end of the political spectrum to the crepuscular years of the *Gazette*, a spoof medical announcement, 'Russell's Purge', published in the ultra-Radical unstamped newspaper the *Republican; or, Voice of the People* for 2 April 1831 (or 'Year of the People 1', as the *Republican* somewhat optimistically calls it) hymns the Whig dignitaries Grey, Russell and Althorp, and the Reform Bill itself:

Russell's Purge.

This celebrated medicine is recommended by the most eminent radical Physicians, as a safe and valuable remedy for removing the numerous train of troublesome symptoms attendant on Boroughmongering, or a weak, debilitated Constitution, such as *monarchy, aristocracy, standing army, national debt, pensions, nausea, loss of strength associated with Costiveness*. In small doses, taken daily, and continued for some time, it strengthens the Cause of the People, and operates as a powerful anti-monarchic. Prepared and *sold* by Russell, Grey, Althorp, and Co., Chemists to his Majesty, and distributed *gratis* by most respectable Republicans and Radicals.³⁸

Grey and his administration are portrayed as wise empirics, 'Chemists to his Majesty', and their Bill is an efficacious palliative that can cleanse the 'weak, debilitated Constitution' of all its 'troublesome symptoms'. Lord John Russell, the proposer of the Bill, is a virtuous physician, and here, before the radical disillusion with the Whig administration had set in, government and people are allied.

Lord John Russell's close friend Thomas Moore also used advertising parody in his own newspaper squibs at the time of the Reform controversy. His 'Advertisement', published anonymously in *The Times* on 15 November 1830, borrows the form of a lost and found notice to attack the Duke of Wellington, who had advised the King not to attend the Lord Mayor of London's Day Dinner on 9 November 'for fear of the people'. The hero of Waterloo is now a cowardly figure whose currency is debased (many commemorative coins had been produced after the 1815 battle):

ADVERTISEMENT.

Missing or lost, last Sunday night,
 A Waterloo coin, whereon was trac'd
 The inscription, 'Courage!' in letters bright,
 Though a little by rust of years defac'd.

The metal thereof is rough and hard,
 And ('tis thought of late) mix'd up with brass;
 But it bears the stamp of Fame's award,
 And through all Posterity's hands will pass.
 How it was lost, God only knows,
 But certain City thieves, they say,
 Broke in on the owner's evening doze,
 And filch'd this 'gift of gods' away!³⁹

Squibs such as Moore's and the *Republican's* are only two of the many highly politicised mock-advertisements of the early 1830s. In periods of political turmoil, the spoof advertisement is a useful ideological weapon. From the time of the English Civil War,⁴⁰ satirists had used advertisements as formal models for politically motivated parodies and, unsurprisingly, mock-advertisements are common during the principal periods of political upheaval during the Romantic period: the 1790s, in the immediate post-Napoleonic period and at the time of the passing of the Reform Act (as per 'Russell's Purge'). As Marcus Wood⁴¹ and John Barrell⁴² have demonstrated, ideologically partisan parody that utilised formal models drawn from advertising copy was common during the 'Revolutionary Controversy', part of what Wood labels 'the extreme satiric experimentation which the French Revolution generated in England in the early 1790s'.⁴³ The most famous radical mock-advertisement of the period is 'Signor Gulielmo Pittachio' (figure 14), attributed to Robert Merry, which first appeared in the *Courier* on 28 November 1794, and was republished in both handbill and broadside format later that year. This parody introduces a thematic strategy widely evident in Romantic period satire, whether from the left or from the right, from the 1790s to the 1830s. S. T. Coleridge once described oppositionalist politicians as 'political empirics, mischievous in proportion to their effrontery, and ignorant in proportion to their presumption',⁴⁴ and satirists frequently portrayed ideological adversaries as conjurors, as here, empirics, and mountebanks. Merry's squib borrows the form of the advertising handbill, utilising many of its techniques: the royal warrant, the woodcut illustration, the *nota bene*, varied type weight and sizes, italics, multiple exclamation marks, caps small and large, Latinate diction, and variegated break lines. As Wood points out, the comparison between charlatan and politician is a powerful one, ideologically speaking: 'Of all forms of advertisements the mountebank's

WONDERFUL EXHIBITION!!!

SIGNOR



Gulielmo Pittachio

The SUBLIME WONDER of the World!!!

Condescends to inform the Public at large, and his Friends in particular, that he has now opened his

Grand Hall of Exhibitions at Westminster, with a grand display of his

ASTONISHING AND MAGNIFICENT DECEPTIONS;

Which have been approved by all the Crowned Heads in the Universe, and which are unparalleled in the History of Mankind.

First—The Signor will bring forward

A Magical *ALARM BELL,*

At the ringing of which, all the Company shall become Mad or Foolish.

Secondly—He will produce his justly celebrated **CURIOUS SPY GLASSES**, which distort and misrepresent all Objects that are looked at through them, and occasion in the Company A **SUDDEN AND SOCIAL DISMAY**; such as has never before been witnessed in this Country.

Thirdly—By Means of an **ENCHANTED DRUM**, he will set all the Company a **FIGHTING**, for the avowed Purpose of preserving **ORDER AND TRANQUILLITY**.

During the Battle, Signor Pittachio will convey their **MONEY OUT** of their **POCKETS** in a New and Entertaining Manner.

Fourthly—He will produce a most extraordinary Effect in the Optics of the Spectators, by means of some Gold Dust, so that they shall not be able to distinguish Colors; but shall call (at the Signor's command) **BLACK, WHITE, and WHITE, BLACK**, to the Edification of all Beholders.

Fifthly—He will make some Marvellous Experiments upon his own

MEMORY,

By forgetting the most Material Incidents of his Life, with an almost incredible Precision.—N. B. To remove Doubts, these Experiments upon **MEMORY** will be made upon **OATH**.

Sixthly—By his Oratorical Efforts, he will in the Course of a few Minutes persuade the greater Part of his Audience to salute him *à posteriori*, then to give him three cheers and nominate him

THE HEAVEN-BORN CONJUROR;

With various **Sight-of-hand Performances** and Whimsical Exuberances too tedious to mention.

In the Course of the Entertainments the Sublime Pittachio will exhibit **UPWARDS OF TWO HUNDRED AUTOMATA, OR MOVING PUPPETS**, Who will rise up, sit down, say Yes, or No, Receive Money, Rake among the Cinders, or do any Dirty Work he may think proper to put them to.—N. B. This is a most fascinating Trick.

Afterwards Signor Gulielmo Pittachio will discover to the Company the unrivalled Treasures of his **PRIVATE CABINET**, formed on a mere Mechanical Principal, without Hinges, Joints, Dove-tail, or Glue.

The Whole to conclude with a Dramatic Piece in One Act, called

The Humbug; or John Bull a Jack Ass,

In which Signor Pittachio (not having yet engaged any female Performers) will indulge the Company with a Solo on the Viol *d'Amour*.

N. B. The Hall is commodious, but the Company will be kept as much in the **DARK** as possible, to give greater Effect to

The *DECEPTIONS*.

Signor Pittachio is extremely sorry to inform the Public, that owing to some unaccountable Mismanagement in the Person he employed he has been disappointed of several capital Performers whom he had hoped to have brought forward, for the Purpose of exhibiting various Feats of Activity on the **TIGHT ROPE**, this Part of the **ENTERTAINMENT** therefore **MUST BE DEFERRED**.

To Supply this Deficiency Signor Pittachio will close his Wonderful Performances by exhibiting his own Person on

The *TIGHT ROPE.*

FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE SWINISH MULTITUDE.

VIVANT REX ET REGINA.

[Copied from the *COURIER*, Friday, Nov. 23, 1794.] Sold by all Newsvendors.

Figure 14. Attrib. Robert Merry, 'Wonderful Exhibition!!! Signor Gulielmo Pittachio' (1794).

and quack doctor's were the most disreputable. By the end of the eighteenth century there was a history of hostile criticism and Merry brings this opprobrium down on Pitt's head.⁴⁵

Powerful political satire is, of course, not the sole province of the radical during the French Revolutionary period, as the great reactionary satire of Gifford's *The Baviad* and the *Anti-Jacobin* demonstrates. And Pitt's protégé George Canning of the *Anti-Jacobin* was perfectly capable of reversing Merry's satirical manoeuvring, labelling Pitt's enemies quacks in his 'Ambubaiarum Collegia, Pharmocopolæ' (1803), written during Henry Addington's short-lived administration of 1801 to 1804. Rallying to the defence of his fallen master, Canning inverts the terms of Merry's onslaught. Here it is Pitt's opponents who are explicitly likened to quack doctors, an unsavoury gang of fools and knaves led by the biggest charlatan of them all, 'Doctor' Henry Addington (Addington was labelled 'the Doctor' because, usefully for the patrician Canning and his acolytes, he had comparatively middle-class origins as the son of a physician). Addington is likened to a dangerous quack threatening the life of the body politic, and members of the new Tory administration are compared to some of the chief empirics of the age: Theodore Myersbach the piss-gazer, Martin Van Butchell who famously exhibited the embalmed corpse of his wife,⁴⁶ Benjamin Perkins whose metallic 'tractors' supposedly drew out disease from the body of his patients, and, inevitably, the proprietor of the Cordial Balm of Gilead, Doctor Solomon:

If the health and the strength, and the pure vital breath
Of old England, at last must be *doctor'd to death*,
Oh! why must we die of *one* doctor alone?
And why must that doctor be just such a one
As Doctor Henry Addington?

...

Where are Somnambule Mesmer's convulsions magnetic?
Where is Meyersbach, renown'd for his skill diuretic?
Where is Perkins, with tractors of magical skill?
Where's the anodyne necklace of Basil Burchell?
Oh! where is the great Van Butchell?

...

While Sam Solomon's lotion the public absterges,
He gives them his gold⁴⁷ as well as his purges;
But *our* frugal doctor this practice to shun
Gives his *pills* to the public, the *pells* to his son!

Oh! fy! fy! Doctor Addington!
Oh! where is Doctor Solomon?⁴⁸

Canning goes on to compare those former Pittite loyalists (Castle-rough, Vansittart and the like) who had joined Addington's administration to the most famous quack of the age, he of the 'wonderful wonders', the talking cat, and the instant cure for the influenza: 'That wonderful wonder, the great Katterfelto!'⁴⁹ Doubtless, says Canning ironically, an England in the possession of this motley crew of unprincipled careerists will be able to see off Napoleon and General Masséna in the new war with the French (an invasion seemed increasingly likely in the spring of 1803):⁵⁰

So shall England, escaped from her 'safe politicians,'
Such an army array of her quacks and physicians,
Such lotions and potions, pills, lancets, and leeches,
That Massena shall tremble our coasts when he reaches,
And the consul himself p – his breeches.⁵¹

Canning's ideologically like-minded satirical colleague James Gillray joined in the campaign against the anti-Pittites in a similar fashion, portraying 'the Doctor' as the most dangerous kind of empiric. As Nicholas Mason has written, 'the Canning circle produced a series of poems and prints accusing "Doctor Addington" of bleeding the country dry. Taking the metaphor a step further, Gillray frequently depicted Addington with clyster in hand, preparing to perform an enema on John Bull or some other figure of the state.'⁵² Figure 15 shows another of Gillray's variants on the theme, 'Doctor Sangrado curing John Bull of repletion' (1803), which shows Addington bleeding an ailing John Bull, who is surrounded by renegade Tories urging him to have 'Courage'.

If the mock-advertisement had great ideological resonance during the 1790s, it was also a significant weapon in the next great period of political turmoil in English life amid the near-famine and social unrest of the post-Napoleonic period, most notably, of course, in the work of William Hone and George Cruikshank. There is little need for extended discussion of Hone and Cruikshank's remarkable series of advertising-related parodies here, given that these have been so brilliantly discussed in Marcus Wood's *Radical Satire and Print Culture*.⁵³ However, it is worth tarrying over *A Slap at Slop* (1821), a newspaper parody that attacked Doctor John Stoddart's reactionary *New Times*, which had been established in



Figure 15. James Gillray, 'Doctor Sangrado curing John Bull of repletion' (1803).

1818 as a rival to *The Times* (Stoddart had worked for the latter before a fall-out in 1817), and which peddled a vindictive if entertaining ultra-Toryism until 1828. Just as most of the newspapers of the day carried advertisements on their front pages, so does Hone's parodic paper (figure 16).

In the fourth column, Cruikshank, the paid draughtsman for Robert Warren, adapts his original 'Cat and the Boot' design for Warren's blacking to accompany Hone's scathing attack on a Tory aspirant to the judiciary, the fortuitously named Charles Warren. 'WARREN'S BLACK-RAT BLACKING' (figure 17) shows the hapless Warren as a rat perched on a piece of Cheshire cheese looking at a boot and seeing reflected back a vision of himself as a judge. Here Cruikshank parodies his own advertising cut while Hone replicates the typographic devices of Warren's copy (the use of bold type, capitalisation and italics).

John Stoddart's nickname is borrowed from the incompetent physician in *Tristram Shandy*, and the nomenclature again makes the common satirical link between incompetent or disagreeable politician and charlatan. Doctor Stoddart, like Doctor Addington before him, is a dangerous quack. Indeed, William Hone gleefully co-opted George Canning's jibes of 1803 and 1804 in his own

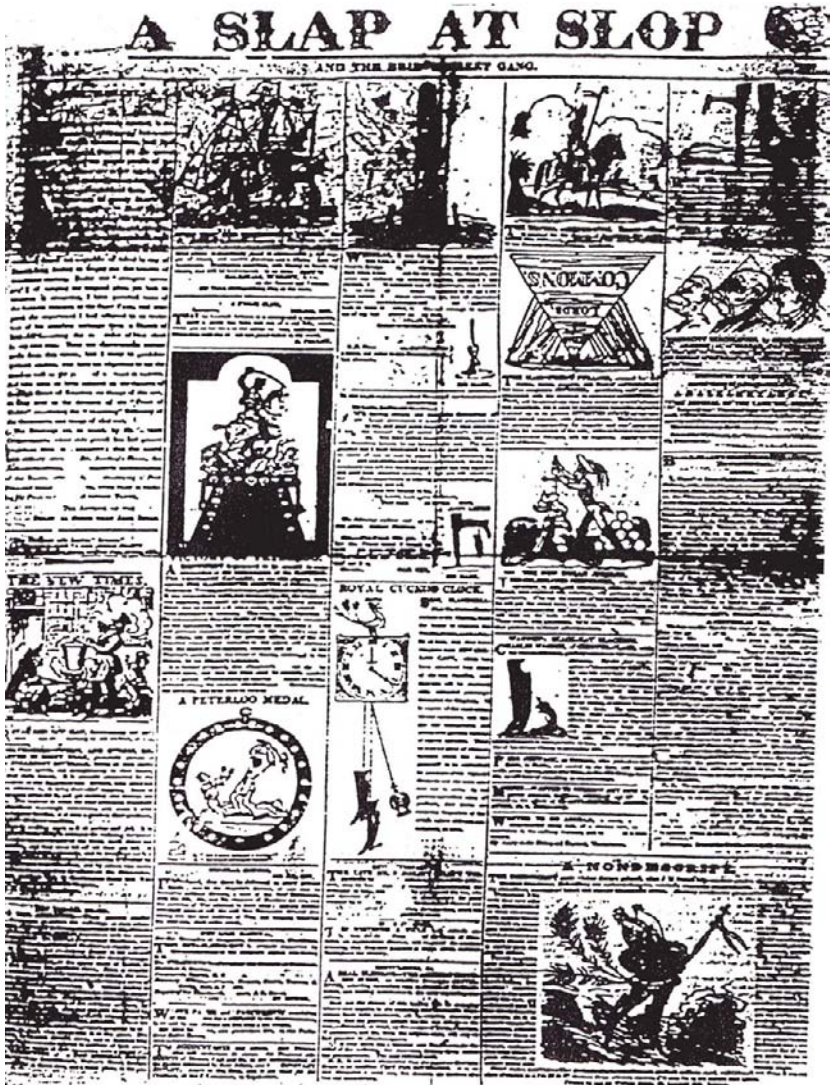


Figure 16. William Hone and George Cruikshank, from *A Slap at Slop* (1821).

attacks on Addington, who by the late Regency had become, as Lord Sidmouth, the widely despised Home Secretary in Lord Liverpool's administration. *The Political House that Jack Built* (1819) lampoons Liverpool's most senior colleagues, Castlereagh, Sidmouth and Canning, as an ill-assorted bunch brought together

WARREN'S BLACK-RAT BLACKING.

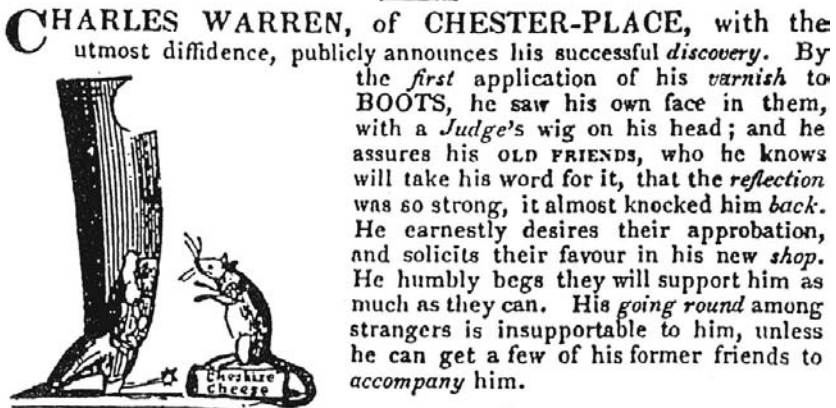


Figure 17. William Hone and George Cruikshank, 'WARREN'S BLACK-RAT BLACKING', parodic advertisement from *A Slap at Slop* (1821).

by expediency and ambition, Canning having fought a duel with the first and bitterly satirised the second:

This is the Doctor, of *Circular* fame,
 A Driv'ler, a Bigot, a Knave without shame:
 And *that's* DERRY DOWN TRIANGLE by name,
 From the Land of mis-rule, and half-hanging, and flame:
 And *that* is THE SPOUTER OF FROTH BY THE HOUR,
 The worthless colleagues of their infamous power;
 Who dubb'd *him* 'The Doctor' whom he now calls 'brother',
 And, to get at his Place, took a shot at the other.⁵⁴

As Hone's work demonstrates, the comparison between advertiser and ideological opponent was as useful to post-Napoleonic political satirists as it was for those of the 1790s. Thus Thomas Moore is able to lampoon two Tory targets, the Poet Laureate and the editor of *The New Times*, by comparing them with the pox doctor and indefatigable self-publicist Eady in his 'The Three Doctors' (1826):

Though many great Doctors there be,
 There are three that all Doctors o'ertop,
 Doctor *Eady*, that famous M. D.,
 Doctor S-th-y, and dear Doctor Slop.
 The purger – the proser – the bard –
 All quacks in a different style;

Doctor S-th-y writes books by the yard,
 Doctor Eady writes puffs by the mile!
 Doctor Slop, in no merit outdone
 By his scribbling or physicking brother,
 Can dose us with stuff like the one,
 Ay, and *doze* us with stuff like the other.⁵⁵

To besmirch your enemy, call him a hack, a puffer, and, in the lowest circle of Hell, an advertising quack.

III

Politically engaged mock-advertisements are by no means the only form of advertising-related satire circulating in the artisan or popular culture of the Romantic period. Broadsheet balladeers were also often preoccupied with advertising. Though there are sheets that address the promotion of the most ubiquitously advertised products of the day such as blacking and lottery tickets, the most common satirical target in advertising-related popular balladry was the empiric. A significant number lampoon the extravagances of quack advertising and individual quacks from James Graham (1745–94) of the Temple of Health and the Celestial Bed through to Doctors Eady and Morison, active during the 1820s and 1830s. Others merge a preoccupation with quackery with politics, notably in the 1790s, in the manner of ‘Signor Pittachio’, and in the early 1830s. In the latter period, radical satirists produced a series of broadsheets with titles such as ‘The Wish; or Cholera Morbus in England’, ‘Sir Cholera Morbus’ and ‘Cholera Humbug!!’, which linked agitation for reform with the contemporary alarms over cholera. ‘Cholera Humbug!! The Arrival and Departure of Cholera Morbus’ (c. 1831) dismisses the health scares over cholera as diversionary tactics intended to draw the people’s attention away from reform and the passing of the Reform Bill through parliament, as well as allowing advertising quacks to make huge sums peddling worthless cures and protections (‘Some people say it was a puff,/ Was done to raise the Doctor’s stuff’). The real plagues threatening England are unemployment and want, the consequences of economic mismanagement and unrepresentative politics:

It is my opinion as a man,
 That trade has long been at a stand,

There's thousands starving through the land,
And that is the Cholera Morbus.⁵⁶

Moving the metaphor on, the balladeer discusses the threats to the passing of the Bill ('It was reported that Reform,/ Had caught the Cholera Morbus'). However, and as in the *Republican's* contemporaneous 'Russell's Purge', the leaders of the Whig pro-Reform interest will purge the body politic:

Doctors Grey and Brougham, men of wealth,
And Russell purged them well himself,
The Bill is now in perfect health,
It has gone now, Cholera Morbus.⁵⁷

Some broadsheets examine advertising itself rather than advertisers *per se*, part of a satirical sub-genre that deals with what one might call the machinery of late Georgian advertising: brand names, bill-stickers, patents and royal warrants, copywriters and purveyors of jingle copy. Some of this material contains perceptive cultural criticism. For example, one undated anonymous ballad, 'The Wonderful Metropolis', which probably dates from the 1830s, deals with what *Chambers' Edinburgh Journal* was to call 'Shopkeeper's Greek' in its 1851 article on that subject.⁵⁸

O such a town, such a classical metropolis,
Tradesmen common English scorn to write or speak;
Bond Street's a forum – Cornhill is an Acropolis,
For every thing's in Latin, now, but what's in Greek.
Here is a Pantehnicon, and there is an Emporium.
Your shoes are 'Antigropolos', your boots are 'Pannus corium';
'Fumi-porte chimney pots', 'Eureka' shirts to cover throats,
Idrotobolic hats, and patent Aquascutum over coats.⁵⁹

The balladeer possesses an acute awareness of the neoclassicism of contemporary tradesmen and advertisers in London's 'classical metropolis', and of the contemporary tendency for brand names to be drawn from the ancient languages (there is no comic exaggeration here: all of the goods named are real products). The balladeer anticipates *Chambers's*: 'We must walk through Holborn and the Strand with a Greek dictionary in hand';⁶⁰ plain 'common English' has been abandoned in a pretentious piece of cultural manoeuvring, and the balladeer reminds advertisers that, in the final analysis, they are still tradesmen, whatever their attempts to dignify their status.

In similar territory is James Payne's 'Patents all the Rage', a 1798 burletta comic song which exploits the current vogue for patents:

In every clime and at every time some fashions have had sway,
 And curious strange and simple things by turns have had their day,
 No wonder then in this great Town in such a polished age, Sir,
 When art and genius are combined that patents are the rage, Sir.
 No wonder then in this great Town in such a polished age, Sir,
 When art and genius are combined that patents are the rage, Sir.⁶¹

Payne portrays a world obsessed with consumerism and slavishly preoccupied with brand names:

We have Patent fleecy hosiery will open every pore,
 And such ills as Gout and Rheumatism soon kick out of Door,
 We've also Pills to cure or kill, Perfumes to please your Noses,
 With Lozenges and currant drops, and Warren's Milk of Roses.
 No wonder then in this great Town in such a polished age, Sir,
 When art and genius are combined that patents are the rage, Sir.
 In Paternoster Row, we have a Patent Book of knowledge,
 What pity 'tis not infused among our Blades at College,
 Then by Patent they could preach or pray, and
 wisdom ne'er lacking,
 Would shine like Boots and Shoes well blacked by Baily's
 Patent Blacking.
 No wonder then in this great Town in such a polished age, Sir,
 When art and genius are combined that patents are the rage, Sir.⁶²

Horace Smith's 'Diamond Cut Diamond. A Recent Occurrence' engages with the marketing strategies of a city jewellers, presumably the famous Rundell and Bridge of Ludgate Hill, who deploy the full advertising armoury of the contemporary tradesman: jingle rhymes, sandwiches, advertising vans and so on:

A firm there is, of civic fame,
 At all events, of notoriety,
 (Excuse my mentioning its name),
 Which crams the public to satiety,
 With rhyming puffs by shopmen bards,
 And huge conspicuous placards,
 Slung on the backs of men and boys,
 And hobble-de-hoys,
 Plying all day their devious courses;
 Or stuck on the tall vans that flare
 Through every crowded thoroughfare,
 To cozen asses and to frighten horses.
 This firm's emporium or bazaar,

Near Aldgate pump, is known afar
 By catchpenny devices manifold,
 By panes of glass worth many guineas,
 And all that may attract the ninnies
 Who think they're buying cheap, and find they're sold.⁶³

Firms such as Rundell and Bridge relied upon the efforts of the poster men, and an anonymous 1830s ballad, 'The Bill Sticker', offers a comic take upon this aspect of the advertising scene:

I'm Sammy Slap, the bill-sticker, and you must all agree, Sirs,
 I sticks to bus'ness like a trump and bus'ness sticks to me, sirs;
 The low folks call me Plasterer, and they deserves a banging,
 Becos, genteelly speaking, vhy my trade is Paper-hanging.
 With my paste; paste! paste!
 All the world is puffing, so I paste! paste! paste!
 Round Nelson's Statty, Charing-cross, when
 anything's the go, sirs,
 You'll always find me at my post, a sticking up the posters . . .⁶⁴

The manner and style of the ballad (the cockney's transposed 'w', the phonetic spellings, the aspirations to gentility) are common in late Georgian comic representations of the metropolitan working classes. Pitts, the publisher of 'The Bill Sticker', also utilised these devices in several successful 'educated dustman' sheets⁶⁵ and they also inform some of Dickens's artisan and cockney characters, Sam Weller most notably. Weller is originally, it might be remembered, the 'boots'⁶⁶ at the White Hart Inn, where they prefer Day and Martin's to Warren's; Dickens, of course, was fascinated by the epiphenomena of advertising, especially in some of his earlier works:⁶⁷ *Sketches by Boz* (1836), *The Mudfog Papers* (1837–8),⁶⁸ *Master Humphrey's Clock* (1840–1)⁶⁹ and *The Old Curiosity Shop* (1840–1).⁷⁰ The novelist portrays his own bill-sticker with pretensions in his mock-heroic essay 'Bill-Sticking',⁷¹ published in *Household Words* in March 1851, in which he describes an encounter with a bill-sticker. This is no ordinary poster man, but no less a figure than 'The King of the Bill-Stickers':

'I am the King of the Bill-Stickers'.

'Good gracious!' said I.

The monarch informed me, with a smile, that he had never been crowned or installed with any public ceremonies, but, that he was peaceably acknowledged as King of the Bill-Stickers in right of being the oldest and most respected member of 'the old school of bill-sticking'. He likewise led me to believe that there was a Lord Mayor of the Bill-Stickers,

whose genius was chiefly exercised within the limits of the city. He made some allusion, also, to an inferior potentate, called ‘Turkey-legs’; but, I did not understand that this gentleman was invested with much power. I rather inferred that he derived his title from some peculiarity of gait, and that it was of an honorary character.⁷²

Dickens buys the King a drink and engages him in conversation, his discourse prompting the author to pay tribute to his friend and fellow connoisseur of late Georgian advertising, Thomas Hood:

‘And here you repose and think?’

‘And think’, said he, ‘of posters – walls – and hoardings’.

We were both silent, contemplating the vastness of the subject. I remembered a surprising fancy of dear THOMAS HOOD’S, and wondered whether this monarch ever sighed to repair to the great wall of China, and stick bills all over it.⁷³

The monarch offers an interesting account of the development of English bill-sticking:

His Majesty, taking a scroll from his pocket, proceeded, with great distinctness, to pour out the following flood of information: – ‘The bills being at that time mostly proclamations and declarations, and which were only a demy size, the manner of posting the bills (as they did not use brushes) was by means of a piece of wood which they called a ‘dabber’. Thus things continued till such time as the State Lottery was passed, and then the printers began to print larger bills, and then men were employed instead of women, as the State Lottery Commissioners then began to send men all over England to post bills, and would keep them out for six or eight months at a time . . . The largest bills printed at that time were a two-sheet double crown; and when they commenced printing four-sheet bills, two bill-stickers would work together. They had no settled wages per week, but had a fixed price for their work, and the London bill-stickers, during a lottery week, have been known to earn, each, eight or nine pounds a week, till the day of drawing; likewise the men who carried boards in the street used to have one pound per week, and the bill-stickers at that time would not allow any one to willfully cover or destroy their bills, as they had a society amongst themselves, and very frequently dined together at some public-house where they used to go of an evening to have their work delivered out untoe ’em.’⁷⁴

Ten years previously, Dickens had portrayed another key functionary in contemporary puffery in *The Old Curiosity Shop*’s Mr Slum, the purveyor of jingle puffs for ‘the perfumer, the blacking makers, . . . the hatters, the old lottery office keepers’.⁷⁵ Mr Slum,⁷⁶ the purveyor of jingle puffs for Warren’s and any other

commercial enterprise which might want his work, is but one of a number of late Georgian satirical representations of copywriters. Though there are exceptions such as the engaging and ingenious Stamper Jingle in Mark Lemon's *The P. L.: or 30 Strand* (1836),⁷⁷ Poet Laureate to Warren's Blacking and a resourceful precursor of Wodehouse's Jeeves, most of this body of work is antipathetic, condemning the explicitly commercial literary motives of the copywriter. Writing advertising puffs becomes the mark of a debased hack poetaster in works such as W. H. Ireland's *Scribbleomania: or the Printer's Devil's Polichronicon* (1815) or an easy insult to throw at poetical rivals in satires such as *The Press, or Literary Chit-Chat: A Satire* (1822).⁷⁸ Such satire implies that the principal signifier of the hack or literary drudge is to write puffs, an act of meretricious literary debasement. Though Doctor Johnson declared that 'No man but a blockhead ever wrote, except for money,' the copywriter, composing for Warren's Blacking or Rowland's Macassar, is often seen as beyond the literary pale. The most sustained example of such satire, its *mise en scène* heavily indebted to John Philips's early eighteenth-century Grub Street satire 'The Splendid Shilling' (1701), is George Daniel's mock eclogue 'Crambo', part of his 1814 *Virgil in London*. The poem describes the fall of its eponymous Grub Street anti-hero, who is an unsuccessful hack: failed playwright, occasional satirist and purveyor of advertising copy. 'Two prowling bailiffs' eventually find their prey dead drunk in a Grub Street gutter. They ransack his pockets in search of money, but find only hackwork and, suggestively, advertising puffs, for Thomas Bish and Lady Branscomb (widow of Bish's *quondam* partner Sir James):

Now, with a piece of cord, both long and hard,
 The wary bailiffs bound the sleeping bard;
 His pockets next they rummag'd, but the duns
 Found nought but scraps of epigrams and puns,
 Flat, fulsome, panegyrics, stiff in stays,
 Remnants of farce, and fragments of new plays;
 An ode to riches, an address to dawn,
 With duplicates of sundry things in pawn;
 Proposals for a volume in the press,
 Letters to friends complaining of distress,
 Beseeking they would all with open hands come;
 And lott'ry puffs for Bish and Lady Branscomb.

Much more they found of literary trash,
But not one single halfpenny in cash.⁷⁹

The scene is familiar from eighteenth-century literary satire; the hack author with his pockets stuffed with still-born 'literary trash' and begging letters. But it is significant that Daniel delays the revelation of Crambo's advertising activities until late in the passage; the culminating piece of evidence to complete the picture of the author's debasement is his status as a writer of advertising copy. The symbol of Crambo's abjection to the commercial is the writing of lottery puffs.⁸⁰

IV

Moving from the world of anonymous newspaper squibs, broadsheet ballads and occasional satire nearer to what one might call the poetic mainstream, here advertising-related satire in the Romantic period can usefully be divided into Horatian and Juvenalian tempers, from Robert Montgomery's irascible attacks on 'despicable quackery' in *The Age Reviewed* (1828) to Thomas Hood's joshing treatment of contemporary commercial culture in 'Cockle v. Cackle' (1839):

Those who much read advertisements and bills,
Must have seen puffs of Cockle's Pills,
Call'd Anti-bilious –
Which some Physicians sneer at, supercilious,
But which we are assured, if timely taken,
May save your liver and bacon;
Whether or not they really give one ease,
I, who have never tried,
Will not decide;
But no two things in union go like these –
Viz. – Quacks and Pills – save Ducks and Pease.⁸¹

Hood adopts a wry and jocular tone towards a cultural form that he himself labelled a 'branch of literature' in works such as 'Cockle v. Cackle' and his mock elegy on the abolition of the State Lottery, the ode 'To Thomas Bish, Esq.' (1827):⁸²

My Bish, since fickle Fortune's dead,
Where throbs thy speculating head
That hatch'd such matchless stories
Of gaining, like Napoleon, all

Success on every capital,
 And thirty thousand glories?
 Dost thou now sit when evening comes,
 Wrapt in its cold and wintry glooms,
 And dream o'er faded pleasures?
 See numbers rise and numbers fall,
 Hear Lottery's last funereal call
 O'er all her vanish'd treasures?
 Thy head, distract 'twixt weal and woe,
 Feels the last Lottery like a blow
 From malice – aimed at thee;
 No prizes pass in decent rank,
 Nothing is left thee but a blank,
 And worthy Mrs B.⁸³

Sometimes Hood's treatment of advertising is pure whimsy, as in the jest recalled by Dickens in 'Bill-Sticking' about the bill-sticker longing to plaster the Great Wall of China with posters. On other occasions his work has a certain critical perspicuity, the comic equivalent of his 1825 *London Magazine* article, 'The Art of Advertizing made Easy', as in the disguised advertisement in 'The Spring Meeting', an entertainment written for the comic actors Charles Mathews and Frederick Yates:

On Thursday last, as a poor labouring man was at work on the top of a ladder at Holborn bards, he was, by a sudden gust of wind, blown to the door of No. 20, Hatton Gardens, where you can purchase the celebrated Macassar Oil – poo, poo! It's a puff; I hate puffs . . . Portugal; ah, this is something interesting, no doubt; we state, on the very best authority, that notwithstanding the appearance of affairs in Portugal, that Don Miguel declares it to be his fixed determination, in opposition to the advice of his faithful followers, to use no other than Warren's blacking; to be had at No. – oh nonsense! why that's a puff!⁸⁴

As Sara Lodge has written, Hood 'structures the comic anti-climax to fall where an apparently disinterested story fuses into commercial manipulation, so that the listener is literally led up a narrative path which appears to point to a human crisis but actually directs the reader to a concrete London address. Advertisement has invaded the columns of journalism to the point where it is humorously indistinct from other kinds of written material.'⁸⁵

Thomas Hood's 'To Thomas Bish, Esq.' is an example of the key generic form within contemporary advertising-related verse, the mock-heroic. As the most sustained exercise in the form,

W. F. Deacon's *Warreniana*, demonstrates, contemporary burlesque often saluted the contemporary advertiser, exploiting the contrast between ostensibly 'low' subject matter and stylistic and formal devices that are aesthetically 'high', as in Deacon's salute to Robert Warren in the Laureate's favoured hexameters:

Late eve as I sate in my room that looks o'er the church of Saint Clement,
(Nota Bene; I had but of late arrived in town upon business),
I ordered my boots for a walk, my boots that polished and pointed,
Bright on their surface display the beauty of Warren's best blacking.⁸⁶

To Deacon, Warren is 'the Coryphaeus of modern manufacturers' and the 'munificent Mecænas of the fine arts'; works such as his exploit the mock-heroic contrast between elevated register and the fact that what is being described is rather more everyday. This begs the question of what lies behind the idiom of such writing: what is its authors' attitude to their material? If Deacon, as a representative example, is not laughing at or belittling Robert Warren, then why is there such a contrast between the quotidian and the classical in his writing? It seems to me that the answer lies in the fact that his work offers learned wit rather than lampoon. It is important to remember here that the sophisticated tonal games of mock-heroic do not always imply contempt for its own subject. Mock-heroic is not always satirical; as Richard Terry has written, in an important book on the subject, much eighteenth-century mock-heroic lived a life 'unaccompanied by satire'.⁸⁷ There is a constant strand within the genre of affectionate burlesque that exploits the comic potential of the contrast between an elevated register and humdrum subject matter while simultaneously admiring, and arguably elevating, that subject matter.⁸⁸

The most common burlesque advertising-related form is the Horatian mock ode in the manner of Hood. 'An Ode to Mr James Atkinson, Prince of Perfumers and Importer of Russian Bears' Grease' (1827) by 'Alfred Crowquill' (the pseudonym of C. R. Forrester) is typical of this manner and is worth quoting in full as a representative example of the sub-genre:

'Larding the lean earth as he puffs along'.

1.

Hail! Man of Grease!
Whose study and whose trade is
To compound washes for the ladies;

May thy fame increase!
And every lady,
In age or hey-day,
Smile on and patronize thee,
And show they prize thee
With a zeal,
Ardent as patriot's feel –
Or such as each loyal friend of liberty bears Greece!

2.

O! wonderful Magician!
That giv'st to wrinkled age a plump and rosy youth;
In truth,
Thou art a most profound physician!
Ladies are grateful, and will laud thee,
And reward thee;
For many know,
To thy superior skill they owe,
(*Tis true!)
Their winning graces and their hairs too!
How many a plump old duchess, erst quite grey,
Exhibits now dark raven locks on levee-day;
Her praise (unbounded tho' it be) can never err,
For thou (who liv'st for others) dyed for her.

3.

Sweet Man of Essences!
Whom Fashion leads;
That night and morn,
Unwearied, labour'st to adorn
Those natural excrescences,
Men's heads;
E'en to the Northern Pole, whose minions roam,
To catch fat bears to grease our polls at home!
Ah! I could tell
Of many a whisker'd blade,
Who struts in polish'd steel,
And rattles spurs on pavement in Pall Mall,
How much he owes thine aid,
For all the hair his lip and chin reveal!
And thou may'st tell it too without a vaunt,
And meet their angry glances steady –
Thee, their loud blust'ring cannot daunt,
For thou hast bearded them already.

4.

Bright Luminary!
 That shine'st thro' fogs of envy quite transparent!
 A loadstar, breaking thro' the clouds,
 To those
 (Or friends or foes)
 Who, like some poor lorn bark bereft of sails and shrouds,
 Which o'er the foaming billow rolls,
 Ride on life's tempestuous seas beneath bare polls!
 And lastly, aye, and this I call
 The kindest deed of all –
 Thou dost bestow
 (I know)
 On gay bald batchelors, young hairs-apparent!⁸⁹

Crowquill's burlesque exploits the comic differential between the elevated form (the Pindaric ode) and the *quotidian* content (the hairdresser and his wares), allied to the range of comic literary devices employed by the disciples of the brothers Smith and, especially, Thomas Hood: groan-inducing puns, the wrenched epigraph, the mock-heroic apostrophe and ingenious feminine rhymes.

Crowquill's mock ode, published in his *Absurdities* (1827), is a late example of a Romantic period Horatian tradition that stretches as far back as the 1780s in a little-known but entertaining poem, *The Daily Advertiser, in Metre* (1781) by 'Thomas Sternhold'.⁹⁰ An extended example of the art of advertising parody, this poem engages with the columns of its formal model, the long-lived London print the *Daily Advertiser*, where death notices and society announcements share columns with brand-name advertisements:

LONDON.

Last Night arriv'd a Mail from Flanders,
 Which brought – The famous Med'cine for the Glanders.
 Perish'd thro' Want, a most ingenious Writer –
 Warren's fam'd Paste makes dirty hands look whiter –
 Arriv'd at Bath, Miss Prue and Lady Dangle –
 A shocking story. – To be sold, a Mangle. –
 A new Discovery, the Milk of Roses –
 A Wash to kill the Maggots in your Noses –
 A Son of famous Colonel Katterfelto –
 Removes the Vapours instantly, if smelt to –
 To-morrow Ev'ning, Pray'rs begins at Five –
 Thelypthora – Now to be seen alive,
 The double-headed Heifer – Double-fee,

'Tis thought, will strengthen the Minority –
 Monsieur Vestris will dance a Saraband –
 Money advanc'd, secur'd by freehold Land –
 Marriage – a Gentleman who scorns base Views –
 Inquire for Serjeant Trap-all, near the Meuse.⁹¹

Sternhold's poem offers a representative survey of the most common advertisements in contemporary newspapers: shipping notices,⁹² auctioneers' announcements,⁹³ booksellers' lists, brand-name cosmetics (soap, cleansing lotions and the like). In this riot of competing advertising voices, marriage announcements carry as much weight as puffs for the latest fashionable dancers or conjurors. The products puffed in the early 1780s are little different from those one finds in paid columns fifty years later: advertisements for a supposedly hair-restoring bear's grease, for ceramics (Wedgwood's Queen's Ware), and cures for the venereal disease (Leake's Pills and Kennedy's Lisbon Diet Drink):

Queen's Ware, whole Services, Mugs, Jugs –
 Tiffin's fam'd Liquid for destroying Bugs –
 The most invet'rate Corns remov'd with ease –
 The blessed Med'cine – curious Issue Pease –
 Leake's famous Pills – The Lisbon Diet-Drink –
 The Water-Closets that will never stink –
 The precious Drops that cure Convulsion Fits –
 The harmless Powder for destroying Nits –
 Essence of Pearl-Anchovies and Cavieare –
 Bears'-Grease, which quickly clothes bald pates with Hair . . .⁹⁴

v

Though Sternhold's *Daily Advertiser* contains gentle social satire in its implicit censure of society's misplaced values, where puffs and powders seem to preoccupy the fashionable world rather more than bibles, its tone does not possess the Juvenalian bite evident in much late Georgian book-length satire in heroic couplets. The most antipathetic treatments of advertising are to be found in classical satire which, from George Crabbe's *The Newspaper* (1785) to Robert Montgomery's *The Puffiad* and *The Age Reviewed* (both 1828), not infrequently engaged with the culture of advertising, its high literary idealism disdainful of the commercial motives of advertisers, their lies, quackery and misuse of the English language. Particular wrath is reserved for the quack doctor and for

those publishers who engage in sharp puffing practices: recycling advertisements as reviews, inflating numbers of editions, employing hireling critics, including eulogies from friends and colleagues unacknowledged as such, and so on. Certainly Robert Montgomery's attitude is that of acidulous Juvenalianism. His two satires speak to a conviction, expressed in *The Puffiad*, that:

'tis PUFFERY every where;
Puff me – puff you – thus puffing on we go,
Until the last Puff puff us all below!⁹⁵

'Literature', according to Montgomery, 'is now degraded' to little more than trade, with the likes of Henry Colburn indistinguishable from the likes of Robert Warren. While *The Puffiad* is focused upon the advertising of books, *The Age Reviewed*, which shares its conviction that advertising 'and the puffing race [is] the curse of learning, and the land's disgrace'⁹⁶ is concerned with advertising in general. Montgomery views the taste for 'Kalydor, Blacking, Champagne, and other bottled wonders'⁹⁷ engendered by systematic advertising as a sign of moral decay and human gullibility, seeing the success of 'quack' advertisers such as the blacking manufacturer Henry Hunt and the empiric Doctor Eady as being symbolic of the 'Babylonian' state of contemporary London: 'Hunt turns shoe-black to his dear-lov'd land/ And poisonous Eady dirt the lazy hand.'⁹⁸ The 'lazy hand' here is one that grasps a handbill for Eady's supposed cures for syphilis: 'Dr (so he calls himself) Eady, with sundry other despicable quacks, pollute the streets by hiring minions to thrust into the stranger's hands their obscene mementos.'⁹⁹ The election of Thomas Bish's son to parliament, as MP for Leominster, is similar testimony to the corrupting, staining influence of puffery:

Or letter'd G –, elected by the sheep,
Or B –, in lottery puffs so skill'd and deep!
When such a herd pollutes St Stephen's fane,
What patriot mourns not for his country's stain?
Oh! might one hiss the motley forum fill,
And drive each dunce to his deserted till.¹⁰⁰

Montgomery portrays a world so cankered by moral decay that the figure most representative of the spirit of the age is the advertising quack:

No art is quackless now; – from College skill,
To Lambert's Balm, and Abernethy's pill:

What lives are ravag'd by the baleful craft,
 Of canker'd powders, and blood-pois'ning draught!
 Who knows what hapless victims yearly fall,
 By lancing lubbers, and cathartic ball; –
 Hack'd, swill'd, and purg'd, till physic stifle breath, –
 Though such mistakes ne'er hap till after death!¹⁰¹

Montgomery's work, which summons the venom of *The Dunciad*, without, it must be admitted, much of its wit, is part of a late Georgian Juvenalian tradition that stretches back into the 1780s and the decidedly greater post-Popeanism of George Crabbe and William Cowper. Written over forty years before Montgomery's condemnation of the corruptions of advertising, *The Newspaper*, George Crabbe's 1785 attack on contemporary journalism as partisan, corrupting and fickle, is complemented by a trawl through the advertising columns, which, for him, are 'dirty avenues to fame'. For Crabbe, empirics, publishers and perfumers are the worst offenders, with, of course, the former predominating in the paid columns:

lo! the advertising tribe succeed,
 Pay to be read, yet find but few will read;
 And chief th' illustrious race, whose drops and pills
 Have patent powers to vanquish human ills:
 These, with their cures, a constant aid remain,
 To bless the pale composer's fertile brain;
 Fertile it is, but still the noblest soil
 Requires some pause, some intervals from toil;
 And they at least a certain ease obtain
 From Katterfelto's skill, and Graham's glowing strain.¹⁰²

Crabbe admits a sneaking sympathy for the entertaining rodomontade of the conjuror and medical practitioner Gustavus Katterfelto (whose slogan was 'Wonders, Wonders, Most Wonderful Wonders') and James Graham of the Temple of Health (proprietor of the Elixir of Life and, most notoriously, the Celestial Bed, and the author of the splendidly named 'How to Live for Many Weeks or Months or Years Without Eating Anything Whatsoever'). He goes on to focus upon the beauty products of the perfumers, who are 'quacks' just as much as the empirics, using sprightly advertising parody of the copy used to endorse their products:

a larger space
 Is fill'd by puffs and all the puffing race.
 Physic had once alone the lofty style,

The well-known boast, that ceased to raise a smile:
 Now all the province of that tribe invade,
 And we abound in quacks of every trade.
 The simple barber, once an honest name,
 Cervantes founded, Fielding raised his fame:
 Barber no more – a gay perfumer comes,
 On whose soft cheek his own cosmetic blooms;
 Here he appears, each simple mind to move,
 And advertises beauty, grace and love.
 – ‘Come, faded belles, who would your youth renew,
 And learn the wonders of Olympian dew;
 Restore the roses that begin to faint,
 Nor think celestial washes vulgar paint;
 Your former features, airs, and arts assume,
 Circassian virtues, with Circassian bloom.
 Come, batter’d beaux, whose locks are turn’d to grey,
 And crop Discretion’s lying badge away;
 Read where they vend these smart engaging things,
 These flaxen frontlets with elastic springs;
 No female eye the fair deception sees,
 Not Nature’s self so natural as these.’¹⁰³

It is noticeable that Crabbe focuses upon the associationist techniques of advertising: the ‘honest name’ of the ‘simple barber’ has been replaced by that of a ‘gay perfumer’. He goes on to reinforce this point: ‘barbers’ boys’ are now ‘friseurs’ (with the concomitant implication of foreignness and effeminacy):

Such are their arts, but not confined to them,
 The Muse impartial must her sons condemn:
 For they, degenerate! join the venal throng,
 And puff a lazy Pegasus along:
 More guilty these, by Nature less design’d
 For little arts that suit the vulgar kind.
 That barbers’ boys, who would to trade advance,
 Wish us to call them, smart Friseurs from France ...¹⁰⁴

Crabbe draws an idealist distinction between the marketing of ephemeral products such as hair oils and that used to sell books. While the advertising ‘arts’ of brand proprietors can be dismissed with a ‘smile’, the ‘venal throng’ of ‘degenerate’ poets who use puffery to promote their work are morally culpable and deserving of ‘contempt’:

These are the arts by which a thousand live,
 Where Truth may smile, and Justice may forgive: –
 But when, amidst this rabble rout, we find

A puffing poet to his honour blind:
 Who silyly drops quotations all about
 Packet or Post, and points their merit out;
 Who advertises what reviewers say,
 With sham editions every second day;
 Who dares not trust his praises out of sight,
 But hurries into fame with all his might;
 Although the verse some transient praise obtains,
 Contempt is all the anxious poet gains.¹⁰⁵

Though he identifies, and condemns, the sharp practices of contemporary book puffery, Crabbe is not blind to the ironies of his own position. Few authors wishing to reach an audience can launch their work without publicity, and Crabbe explicitly acknowledges that he himself must use advertising and that his attack on newspapers and advertising must be marketed in the paid columns of the daily press. Paradoxically, perhaps paid publicity in the public prints might enable his satire to achieve its moral purpose of reforming newspapers and advertising:

I too must aid, and pay to see my name
 Hung in these dirty avenues to fame;
 Nor pay in vain, if aught the Muse has seen,
 And sung, could make these avenues more clean . . .¹⁰⁶

George Crabbe's *The Newspaper* was, indeed, puffed in the newspapers, being first announced in the *Public Advertiser* for 15 March 1785. Three months later an even greater poet was to make his own contribution to late eighteenth-century advertising-related satire. In *The Task*, published in June 1785, Cowper explores very similar territory to Crabbe, utilising advertising parody that features a number of the same entrepreneurs and consumer goods as *The Newspaper* (Katterfelto, the Olympian Dew and so on). In Book IV, the poet sits down to read his 'folio of four pages'. Having read the news items, the 'map of busy life', Cowper turns to the paid columns:

The rest appears a wilderness of strange
 But gay confusion; roses for the cheeks,
 And lilies for the brow of faded age,
 Teeth for the toothless, ringlets for the bald,
 Heav'n, earth, and ocean, plunder'd of their sweets,
 Nectareous essences, Olympian dews,
 Sermons, and city feasts, and fav'rite airs,
 Ætherial journeys, submarine exploits,

And Katterfelto, with his hair on end,
At his own wonders, wond'ring for his bread.¹⁰⁷

Demonstrating the centrality of quack advertising in the period, Cowper's list of well-advertised products culminates with the Prussian conjuror *cum* quack Gustavus Katterfelto, by turns 'Mr', 'Colonel', and 'Doctor' Katterfelto. After serving in the Prussian army, Katterfelto (d. 1799)¹⁰⁸ came to London, and in 1781 appeared as a conjuror at Cox's Museum. Famous overnight, in the following year he set up on his own at 22 Piccadilly,¹⁰⁹ with an exhibition that featured both magic and displays of the wonders of electricity (such as the feat alluded to by Cowper of making the hair on his head – and that of his cat, Old Scratch – stand on end). He also began a lucrative sideline as a medical practitioner, marketing a cure for the influenza (which may have been an opportunistic response to the 1782 London epidemic, which took place at the height of his fame). The Piccadilly exhibition¹¹⁰ was well advertised in the newspapers and via handbills,¹¹¹ and Cowper's reference to Katterfelto's 'wonders' and his punning 'wond'ring for his bread' echoes the quack's advertising copy which is almost invariably headed with the slogan 'Wonders, Wonders, Most Wonderful Wonders'. Interestingly, both Crabbe and Cowper adopt something of a joshing tone towards the ingenious Katterfelto, reserving their satirical fire for weightier targets. While it serves the ideological purposes of Robert Merry, in 'Signor Pittachio', and George Canning, in 'Ambubaiarum Collegia, Pharmacopolæ', to identify Katterfelto as the worst kind of charlatan, thereby indicating the corruption and venality of their political opponents, the Juvenalianism of Crabbe and Cowper is targeted elsewhere; against the corruptions of publishers in *The Newspaper* and in the decidedly sharper satire of Book II of *The Task* which takes to task the promotional activities of the Reverend Dr John Trusler, the 'Reverend Advertiser'. Trusler, both quack and hack author, is subject to forceful *ad hominem* criticism. His main fault is his use of the public prints to advertise his potted sermons; the devout Calvinist Cowper believed that there was something blasphemous about Trusler's clerical cribs, and that clergymen had no business using advertising for sordid gain (the Argument labels Truswell 'The Reverend Advertiser of engraved sermons'):

But hark – the doctor's voice! – fast wedg'd between
Two empirics he stands, and with swoln cheeks

Inspires the news, his trumpet. Keener far
 Than all inventive is his bold harangue,
 While through the public organ of report
 He hails the clergy; and, defying shame,
 Announces to the world his own and theirs!
 He teaches those to read, whom schools dismissed
 And colleges, untaught; sells accent, tone,
 And emphasis in score, and gives to pray'r
 Th' *adagio* and *andante* it demands.¹¹²

The poet Crabbe returned to the subject of advertising in Letter 7 of *The Borough* (1810), in a powerful and sustained attack on empirics, and the 'Present state of advertising quacks'¹¹³ (as a country physician as well as a poet, this was, of course, a subject close to Crabbe's heart, and his attack contains some of his fiercest social satire). He begins by dissociating 'The Worth and Excellence of the True Physician' from the charlatan, though he faults otherwise respectable physicians who write medical treatises as self-promoting individuals who seek 'a way to fame', flattery and social advancement rather than the more mundane – and less remunerative – approbation of their patients:

young physicians write,
 To set their merit in the fairest light;
 With them a treatise is a bait that draws
 Approving voices – 'tis to gain applause,
 And to exalt them in the public view,
 More than a life of worthy toil could do.¹¹⁴

However, his main focus is on the 'unlearned', unqualified advertising quack and his promotional methods. Whereas previous generations of flamboyant, itinerant medicine-peddlers had been little more than showmen and buffoons, the present generation use 'craft and skill': 'with monstrous promise they delude the mind'. Instead of barking their potions at fairgrounds and places of public amusement, the monstrous promises of the contemporary empiric take the form of advertisements placed in the newspapers:

patents must be bought,
 Venders and puffers for the poison sought;
 And then in many a paper through the year,
 Must cures and cases, oaths and proofs appear;
 Men snatch'd from graves, as they were dropping in,

Their lungs cough'd up, their bones pierced through their skin;
 Their liver all one scirrhus, and the frame
 Poison'd with evils which they dare not name;
 Men who spent all upon physicians' fees,
 Who never slept, nor had a moment's ease,
 Are now as roaches sound, and all as brisk as bees.
 If the sick gudgeons to the bait attend,
 And come in shoals, the angler gains his end;
 But should the advertising cash be spent,
 Ere yet the town has due attention lent,
 Then bursts the bubble, and the hungry cheat
 Pines for the bread he ill deserves to eat ... ¹¹⁵

Like Cowper before him, Crabbe uses brisk comic summary of the advertising columns, echoing the copy of quack advertisements, with their miraculous cures, demonstrations and testimonies. The quacks' is a 'nefarious trade', and Crabbe shows an adept knowledge of their trade and the importance of advertisement within it. Empirics use handbills full of shameless lies, empty promises and specious testimonials:

Void of all honour, avaricious, rash,
 The daring tribe compound their boasted trash –
 Tincture or syrup, lotion, drop or pill;
 All tempt the sick to trust the lying bill;
 And twenty names of cobblers turn'd to squires,
 Aid the bold language of these blushless liars. ¹¹⁶

In a section on 'How Men of understanding are prevailed upon to have Recourse to Empirics, and to permit their Names to be advertised' Crabbe goes on to condemn those who allow their names to be used in testimonials within advertisements. Such people are at best dupes, at worst are themselves morally tainted:

Compassion sometimes sets the fatal sign,
 The man was poor, and humbly begg'd a line;
 Else how should noble names and titles back
 The spreading praise of some adventurous quack?
 But he the moment watches, and entreats
 Your honour's name, – your honour joins the cheats;
 You judged the med'cine harmless, and you lent
 What help you could, and with the best intent;
 But can it please you, thus to league with all
 Whom he can beg or bribe to swell the scrawl?

Would you these wrappers with your name adorn,
Which hold the poison for the yet unborn?¹¹⁷

Apart from condemning the use of abortifacients, Crabbe also attacks the advertising of cures for venereal disease as being ethically reprehensible in its studiedly neutral moral tone.¹¹⁸ In copy such as that of Dr Eady for his syphilitic cures, sexual laxity is winked away as merely youthful indiscretion. Indeed, in the final analysis, the availability of a supposed ready cure actually served to encourage vice. Without the fear of syphilis, the youth is free to play the dissolute:

Nor these the only evils – there are those
Who for the troubled mind prepare repose;
They write: the young are tenderly address'd,
Much danger hinted, much concern express'd;
They dwell on freedoms lads are prone to take,
Which makes the doctor tremble for their sake;
Still if the youthful patient will but trust
In one so kind, so pitiful, and just;
If he will take the tonic all the time,
And hold but moderate intercourse with crime;
The sage will gravely give his honest word,
That strength and spirits shall be both restored;
In plainer English – if you mean to sin,
Fly to the drops, and instantly begin.¹¹⁹

Crabbe concludes with a 'History of an advertising Empiric', in which he attacks the range of medical abuses current during the period: buying in qualifications, setting oneself up, unlicensed, as a medical practitioner, inventing useless – or worse than useless – proprietary medicines, and using the dark arts of puffery to market them. One Neddy, a semiliterate dunce when at school, has elevated himself to fortune by turning empiric:

The fellow barely read, but chanced to look
Among the fragments of a tatter'd book;
Where, after many efforts made to spell
One puzzling word, he found it *oxymel*;
A potent thing, 'twas said to cure the ills
Of ailing lungs – the *oxymel of squills* . . .¹²⁰

Armed only with such fragments of learning, Ned launches himself as a doctor and seller of proprietary medicine, and his brazen manner inspires confidence in his patients ('Though he could

neither reason, write, nor spell,/ They yet had hope his trash would make them well’):

Now see him Doctor! yes, the idle fool,
The butt, the robber of the lads at school;
Who then knew nothing, nothing since acquired,
Became a doctor, honour’d and admired . . . ¹²¹

Aware of the need to advertise and the importance of publicity for his product, Ned hires an ‘artful knave’ to write puffs for the Oxymel:

There was a fellow near, an artful knave,
Who knew the plan, and much assistance gave;
He wrote the puffs, and every talent plied
To make it sell: it sold, and then he died. ¹²²

Left with all of the profits, Ned builds a ‘palace’ and becomes rich beyond the dreams of avarice, despite the fact that his medicine is toxic, dragging people to their early deaths by the score: ‘Hence sums enormous by those cheats are made/ And deaths unnumber’d by their dreadful trade.’¹²³ Crabbe concludes in outright polemic:

What then our hopes? – perhaps there may by law
Be method found, these pests to curb and awe;
Yet in this land of freedom, law is slack
With any being to commence attack;
Then let us trust to science – there are those
Who can their falsehoods and their frauds disclose,
All their vile trash detect, and their low tricks expose:
Perhaps their numbers may in time confound
Their arts – as scorpions give themselves the wound:
For when these curers dwell in every place,
While of the cured we not a man can trace,
Strong truth may then the public mind persuade,
And spoil the fruits of this nefarious trade. ¹²⁴

Crabbe, like so many of the antipathetic satirists of the Romantic period, argues that advertising is complicit in ‘falsehoods’ and ‘frauds’: ‘With monstrous promise they delude the mind.’¹²⁵ Shysters and charlatans use the baleful ‘arts’ of puffery to gull the public. *The Borough* offers a dark vision of contemporary advertising, representative of a Juvenalian conviction that quackery and advertising are inextricably linked.

CHAPTER 3

'We keeps a poet': Shoe blacking and the commercial aesthetic

What though the gath'ring mire thy feet besmear,
The voice of industry is always near.

John Gay, *Trivia* (1716)

BLACKING. An article prepared in various ways for the blacking of boots and shoes. Each manufacturer has his own recipe, in which the principal ingredients are oil, vinegar, and ivory-black, or some other sort of blacking matter. In former days shoe-blacks stood in our streets to perform the required operation on pedestrians, but in these days of improved pavements, and greater cleanliness, the brilliancy of the shoe that has received its morning polish at home, is scarcely impaired through the day. Blacking is either liquid or in the form of a paste, and some of the establishments for its manufacture, especially in London, are on the most extensive scale, and are known by their elaborate system of advertising all over the world.

Cyclopædia of Useful Arts, Mechanical and Chemical, Manufactures, Mining, and Engineering (1854)

In *The Tin Trumpet* (1836), Horace Smith's whimsical commonplace book which was published under the pseudonym 'Jefferson Saunders', the entries for the letter 'D' begin thus:

DAY AND MARTIN – falsifiers of prophecy. Thirty years ago, our wiseacres predicted, that when all could read and write, we should find none to black our shoes. The day of evil has arrived; everybody *can* read and write; our shoes are not only better blacked than ever, but they are polished by comparatively polished people; our blacking-makers acquire fortunes, and build palaces, thus giving encouragement to other arts than the black one; and it is even reported, that a London firm keeps a regular bard upon the establishment, to write poetical puffs.¹

Here Smith's parodic dictionary turns its lexicographic attention to the blacking company Day and Martin of High Holborn, one of the most notable and highly profitable producers of industrially manufactured and widely advertised shoe polish in this period. Smith's 'wiseacres', those who warned that a deleterious side-effect of universal education would be that nobody would wish to perform the humble trade of a shoe-black, have been thwarted by the modern tendency for people to polish their own footwear at home rather than to seek the services of a pavement black; hence the punning insistence that shoes are now 'polished by comparatively polished people'. Day and Martin's were hugely successful, with its co-owner Charles Day accumulating a fortune of some £450,000 and building a huge estate (Smith's 'palace') in Surrey. And Smith's reference to the 'London firm [which] keeps a regular bard upon the establishment, to write poetical puffs' is to another, perhaps even more significant, purveyor of blacking products, the most notable user of contemporary jingle copy, a company whose importance in the development of modern advertising is unquestioned, the firm of Robert Warren, which was based at 30 Strand. Smith's avuncular joshing is but part of a significant body of comic writing which was prompted by the blacking² industry during the Romantic period. This is examined in detail below after a contextualising discussion which restores the social and economic nuances associated with the adornment of the shoe in the late Georgian age and addresses the advertising and manufacturing of blacking in the period.

I

Horace Smith's veiled reference to the shoe-black in *The Tin Trumpet* is by no means the first allusion to the art of blacking in English literary satire. Immediately after his apostrophe to the muse, John Gay's mock-heroic *Trivia: or, The Art of Walking the Streets of London* (1716) begins its peripatetic survey of the metropolis by describing one of the most familiar sights of the eighteenth-century street, that of the shoe-black, and chronicling one of its most recurring commercial sounds, his cry: 'When the black youth at chosen stands rejoice,/ And *clean your shoes* resounds from ev'ry voice'.³ Until the turn of the nineteenth century, shoe-blacks were common in English streets. Andrew W. Tuer, writing

in the 1880s, describes the shoe-blacks of eighteenth-century London, with their ‘stock-in-trade . . . of liquid blacking, an old wig for removing dust or wet, a knife for use on very muddy days, and brushes’:

Towards the end of the last century, Finsbury Square – then an open field – was a favourite place for shoeblacks, who intercepted the city merchants and their clerks in their daily walks to and from their residences in the villages of Islington and Hoxton. At that time tight breeches and shoes were worn; and the shoeblack was careful not to smear the buckles or soil the fine white stockings of his patrons. In a print of this period the cry is ‘Japan your shoes, your honour?’⁴

However, Tuer describes the trade of the shoe-black as being ‘obsolete’ by 1820⁵ as a consequence of domestic polishing, a fashion which he attributes to the rise of the mass-distributed and astutely marketed paste blackings⁶ of Day and Martin, and of Robert Warren:

Cake blacking, introduced by that famous, but, as regards the last mentioned, somewhat antagonistic trio, Day, Martin, and Warren, ‘the most poetical of blacking makers and most transparent of poets’, which was quickly taken into general use, snuffed out the shoeblack; and from about 1820 until the time of the first Exhibition in 1851, when the shoeblack brigade in connection with ragged schools was started, London may have said to have blacked its own boots.⁷

Another reason for the demise of the shoe-black was the simple fact of late Georgian road improvement, especially in the metropolis. According to Sir A. E. Richardson’s *Georgian England: A Survey of Social Life, Trades, Industries and Art from 1700 to 1820* (1931), the wretched state of the London roads for much of the eighteenth century explained the success of the shoe-blacks: ‘owing to the foulness of the gutters and the uneven pavements, boot-blacks did a thriving trade, using either “Fucus” or the more famous “Spanish Blue King”, until at the end of the century “Day and Martin’s” was in general use’.⁸ Similarly, Charles Tomlinson’s *Cyclopædia of Useful Arts* (1854) notes that: ‘In former days shoe-blacks stood in our streets to perform the required operation on pedestrians, but in these days of improved pavements, and greater cleanliness, the brilliancy of the shoe that has received its morning polish at home, is scarcely impaired through the day.’⁹ Richardson’s dating, it should be pointed out, is slightly awry; the ‘shoe that has received its morning polish at home’ first began to soak in

Day and Martin's polishes in the early nineteenth century. Charles Day (1783 or 1784–1836)¹⁰ began production of his blacking recipe in 1801, three years before the establishment of its great rival, Robert Warren's Matchless Blacking, in 1804.¹¹ Over the next thirty years, shoe polish was to acquire a cultural and social resonance not seen before or since.

II

The Tin Trumpet's insistence on the social resonance of shoe polish, however whimsically phrased, is an interpretive manoeuvre that rewards imitation, for the lustrous and well-polished late Georgian boot was laden with cultural significance as well as with blacking. However mundane the product might initially seem, I would argue that blacking has considerable mercantile and fashionable significance in the Romantic period, during which it manifests a cultural resonance evident in the entire span of English society, from the aristocrat to the artisan. And blacking and its advertising prompted a remarkable number of literary responses, certainly in the satirical writings and graphic art discussed below, but also in other aspects of the print culture of the period. The capitalistic spirit of the age, for instance, is echoed in a number of contemporary prose treatises on the composition of blacking which raise the tantalising prospect of reaping the fabulous rewards then being enjoyed by the likes of Charles Day and Robert Warren. The get-rich-quick promises that tempt the purchasers of many modern business manuals have their nineteenth-century antecedents in a volume such as *Every Man His Own Blacking and Boot-Top Liquid Manufacturer. A Most Valuable Collection of Upwards of Thirty Genuine Receipts for Liquid Blackings, etc* (1814). Blacking puffs such as those for Robert Warren often stress the figure of the proprietor as a guarantor of the highest quality product, but this book goes further in encouraging aspiration, which here lies in assuming the role of the manufacturer rather than in simply buying his product. You too, this book suggests, can aspire to be a 'Manufacturer'. Provided, of course, that you are fortunate enough to be a 'Man', for women are, it seems, excluded from the ranks of would-be Warrens. A clear and gendered divide emerges if one compares *Every Man His Own Blacking . . . Manufacturer* with the contemporaneous *The Female Instructor; or, Young Woman's*

Companion (c. 1815). The virtue of thrift which is one of the female domestic qualities eulogised in this manual underpins the book's own blacking recipe:

Good Liquid Blacking for Boots and Shoes.

Mix a quarter of a pound of ivory black with a table-spoonful of sweet oil; dissolve one pennyworth of copperas, and three table-spoonfuls of treacle, in a quart of vinegar, then add two pennyworth of vitriol; and mix the whole well together: it forms a good liquid blacking for boots or shoes.¹²

This is obviously a less commercially driven recipe than those found in the 1814 treatise, but it is no less socially suggestive. Economy here is domestic rather than entrepreneurial. Whereas the male stirrer of the blacking pot in *Every Man his own Blacking . . . Manufacturer* is encouraged to mix his potions for commercial gain, in *The Female Instructor* women are offered the blacking recipe as part of their successful – and morally laudable – programme of household management.¹³

Blacking also has a certain resonance in the realms of high fashion, given that there was a degree of fascination with blacking among the *haut ton*. The dandies, George Brummel most notably, were connoisseurs of the various manifestations of the product. As William Combe writes in 1815:

others, proud to be profuse,
Buy costly Blacking for their Shoes,
And give what ten poor folks would dine,
To make their daily Buskins shine.¹⁴

Several of the most noted dandies are supposed to have devoted much energy to researching the topic of blacking and inventing their own recipes, like alchemists searching for the very elixir of sartorial life. No less a figure than George IV, when Prince Regent, is alleged to have found the subject so compelling that he formulated his own royal blacking mixture; Thomas Wright writes in the late nineteenth century:

Blacking, it may be remembered, engaged the attention, at one period of our history, of the very highest in the realm. The Prince Regent in person devoted his noble mind to this absorbing study. Brummel and other historical dandies were vastly curious on this point. Much as a man of taste collected works of art, 'bucks' who pretended to refinement accumulated 'blacking' in studios set apart for the researches to which their mornings were dedicated.¹⁵

Even allowing for Wright's jocular overstatement, it is clear that there was a preoccupation with blacking among men of fashion. James Gillray's 1801 print 'A Pair of Polished Gentlemen' shows the heads of Sir Lumley Skeffington and the Hon. Montague Matthews (a particularly enthusiastic exponent of blacking experimentation, it seems) peering out from enormous boots which completely envelop their bodies. Wright's description of this satire is worth quoting at length:

This print in some degree embalms the oddity [of the preoccupation with blacking]. 'A Bottle of Royal Blacking' is broken and disregarded; a cake of Holdsworth's is by its side; two huge tomes on chemistry, a flask of 'pine-apple,' and a vial of 'spirit of salt,' indicate the experiments of Matthews. A bottle of 'The Prince's Recipe', a vial labelled 'Mr Broomhill's Recipe,' a pair of brushes, a pestle and mortar, an 'Essay on Blacking' (a ponderous work), and a pat, evidently of his own mixing, attest the activity of 'Skeffy' in pursuit of this science.¹⁶

Gillray's squib implies that the gentlemen's whole being is defined by affectation and personal vanity. This is a common enough point in the satire of the age, of course; however, it also suggests – in that the fops' very bodies are enclosed by blacking – that contemporary masculinity is almost completely enveloped and shaped by consumer culture. Here advertising is intimately linked to the somatic, as it was so often in the Romantic period from the human sandwich parading though Oxford Street to the Brummellian dandy in the clubs of St James. The body is closely connected to consumer culture, and dandyish vanity extends from a man's head, with hair generously covered by bear's grease, to his toes, enclosed in shoes polished to lustrous excellence by the finest blacking. There is more than a need to be admired at work here; in striving for a particularly mannered and avant-garde fashionable look, gentlemen appealed to their age's modernity, positioning themselves thus with the aid of commodity culture. If possessions and clothes played an important role in fashioning the identities of the gentleman, then so did consumer goods. Baudelaire, with reference to Beau Brummell, famously declared that dandyism was 'the cult of oneself', a sartorial equivalent of Romanticism, and well-advertised products played a part in forging this identity. Advertising even offers the possibility of a kind of self-fashioning: some of the most heavily advertised products of the day, shoe polish, hair oils, perfumes and haircutting, deal with

the grooming of the body, especially of its extremities. Advertising offers the possibility of personal reinvention and renewal.

The cultural significance of blacking, it might be noted, is not limited to bourgeois aspirations or the sartorial experimentations of the *haut ton*. At the other end of the social scale from Skeffington and Matthews, the product has, on occasions, socio-political resonance among the radical artisan classes, most notably in the business ventures of Henry Hunt,¹⁷ hero of Peterloo and later manufacturer of ‘Hunt’s Matchless Blacking’, but also in the figures of J. Dean and W. Taylor, the Midlands proprietors of the ‘Leicester Union Blacking’, union martyrs who established a blacking company whose products were marketed through an appeal to class solidarity.¹⁸ The 10 May 1834 number of the *Pioneer; or, Grand National Consolidated Trades’ Union Magazine* contains a letter from one Thomas Hartopp concerning Taylor and Dean, two Leicester blacking factory workers who ‘had been thrown out of work for being member[s] of the Trades’ Union’. Blacklisted from the blacking factory, they had set up their own company. In a later passage that sees him sounding decidedly like a barker, Hartopp declares that ‘I think it nothing but right that the real friends to union should know that the parties have begun to manufacture blacking of very superior quality cheaper than any yet offered to the public; and we hope the friends composing the Consolidated Trades’ Union will give it a trial.’ The 24 May number of the *Pioneer* contains a follow-up letter by Dean and Taylor themselves, addressed from the sign of the Trades Union, Broad Street, Leicester and thanking the journal for publishing ‘that letter of brother Hartopp’s with respect to our blacking’. They go on: ‘we beg to trouble you on the present occasion, to state the prices for the article in question; we allow 4d. in the shilling, and the pots we sell for 3d. are as large as those sold of the London blacking at 6d. . . . and it has been proved that it is equal in quality to it . . . We are confident that, if our brothers in Union will give it a trial, it would give them satisfaction.’ The letter is, of course, a thinly disguised puff for the Leicester Union Blacking; here, as in the radical advertising discussed in chapter 1 above, commercial marketing appeals to ideological fellow-feeling in its exploitation of union brotherhood. Like Henry Hunt before them, Dean and Taylor see no contradiction between radical politics and the entrepreneurial spirit, and, indeed, explicitly

focus their advertising upon class solidarity. And their case demonstrates that, from the dandy to the trade unionist, blacking is marinated, so to speak, in cultural significance in the late Georgian period.

III

In his *Package and Print: The Development of Container and Label Design* (1967), Alec Davis offers a useful description of the packaging of blacking in the nineteenth century: 'Some blacking was liquid, some paste; some sold in bladders, some in glass jars . . . some in pots . . . some in tins.'¹⁹ Robert Warren's own copy declares that his blacking was 'sold in every Town in the Kingdom. LIQUID, in Bottles 6d. 10d. and 18d. each. Also PASTE BLACKING, in Pots, 6d. 12d. and 18d. each'. Products bearing such labels were common in the period; as Warren states, his blacking was sold 'in every Town in the Kingdom'. Such large-scale commercial manufacture of nationally distributed blacking was a highly lucrative business: large fortunes²⁰ were to be made in the trade, rewards made possible by nationwide systems of distribution and extensive marketing campaigns on behalf of the brand which permeated public consciousness at an unprecedented level. This is not to say that there were no earlier brands; as Richardson's reference to the 'Fucus' and the 'Spanish Blue King' demonstrates, there were branded blackings in the eighteenth century. However, Day and Martin are significant in that they were able to commence the manufacture of blacking on an industrial scale, and that they invested very heavily in nationwide advertising campaigns. That said, it was the rival, slightly younger, company of Robert Warren, who began manufacture in 1804 (first at 30 Strand, and later at Regent Works, Westminster),²¹ which became the most notable advertiser of blacking, both in terms of large-scale advertising campaigns and in the witty and resourceful nature of those campaigns.

The success of such companies as Day and Martin and Warren was heavily dependent upon astute advertising campaigns. The rudimentary advertising medium used by the eighteenth-century blacks – the cry – is replaced by a much more sophisticated array of commercial puffery: newspaper columns, both text-only and display, handbills, affiches and wall-painting, advertising carts. One

gets a sense of how common newspaper blacking copy was in the early nineteenth century in Canto XVI of Byron's *Don Juan*, where Juan picks up a London paper:

he took up an old newspaper;
The paper was right easy to peruse;
He read an article the king attacking,
And a long eulogy of 'Patent Blacking'.²²

Indeed, Byron himself was accused of composing blacking puffs. In the 'Appendix' to *The Two Foscari* (1821), he writes:

Whilst I have been occupied in defending *Pope's* character, the lower orders of Grub-street appear to have been assailing *mine*. . . . One of the accusations in the nameless epistle alluded to is still more laughable: it states seriously that I 'received five hundred pounds for writing advertisements for Day and Martin's patent blacking!' This is the highest compliment to my literary powers which I ever received.²³

So omnipresent did blacking copy become in the first half of the nineteenth century that in its 1845 essay, 'Advertising considered as an Art', *Chambers' Edinburgh Journal* cites a blacking company as the supreme example of successful self-promotion: 'No one can deny that the names of those very respectable blacking-makers of High Holborn, Messrs Day and Martin, are quite as well known to the public at large as Scott of Abbotsford, and Wellington of Waterloo. Such are among the glories of advertising, when that art is vigorously carried out!'²⁴ Whatever the success of Day and Martin in promoting its name, the firm had several pertinacious rivals: Turner, Child, even Hunt, but most notably the prolific and highly ingenious advertiser Warren. It is Warren's pioneering campaigns that most famously used the eulogistic poetic copy mentioned by Byron. Indeed, several historians of advertising have argued that Warren's ran the most visible and innovative advertising campaigns of the early nineteenth century. Frank Presbrey, for instance, in his 1929 study *The History and Development of Advertising*, labels Warren's newspaper copy 'a milestone in English advertising'²⁵ for its use of humorous poetry and illustration. Warren's ran a series of groundbreaking campaigns in favour of its product, extolling it in a nationwide series of newspaper advertisements, puffing it in handbills, saluting it in advertisements painted on the side of metropolitan buildings and praising it in letters two feet high daubed on fences at the roadside

in the country. As the poet Hood notes in his February 1825 *London Magazine* article 'The Art of Advertizing made Easy', Warren's 'name [was] whitewashed . . . upon the walls of the metropolis and the Park-palings of the country'.²⁶ Sandwich-men carried Warren's placards and advertising vehicles trawled the streets hailing the quality of his 'brilliant jet'. For Hood, Warren is among the 'best advertisement writers' and he praises the 'variety, brilliancy and country circulation'²⁷ of his puffs. By the 1830s and 1840s, Warren's blacking had achieved continental success; in 1846 *Blackwood's* noted that the French were currently manifesting an 'Anglomania', a disorder characterised in part by a vogue for heavily advertised English brand-name products: 'The public next lauded Warren's Blacking – *Cirage National de Warren* . . . and they spoke favourably of other English inventions – as of Rogers's teeth, Rowland's Macassar, and Co.'²⁸ By the 1850s, the *Cyclopædia of Useful Arts* could declare that blacking establishments such as Warren's were 'known by their elaborate system of advertising all over the world'.

Warren's advertising campaigns are particularly notable in that the company was one of the pioneers of the systematic use of jingle copy. E. S. Turner writes in *The Shocking History of Advertising!* (1952) that 'Robert Warren . . . is generally supposed to have marketed the first nationally advertised product, Warren's Shoe Blacking, which was launched on a sea of poetry.'²⁹ Turner's claim that Warren's blacking was the 'first nationally advertised product' is highly debatable (a number of eighteenth-century candidates from Daffy's Elixir to Packwood's Razor Strops might be cited as such with more accuracy). However, his stress upon the importance of poetry to Warren's campaigns is undeniable. As Mrs Warren is supposed to have succinctly put it, in a splendidly ungrammatical and Dickensian phrase, 'We keeps a poet'.³⁰ Though there are occasional examples of Warren's using prose-only copy, the company's puffs generally used comic narrative verse, and also, where a journal permitted display advertisements, featured cuts. Writing in the *Westminster Review* in 1824, John Hamilton Reynolds commented upon the unorthodox company which the muse had recently been keeping: poetry

was glad to perch wherever she was able, and in her bewildered state, as a scared pigeon flies down a lawyer's chimney, or a lark drops into a Strand watch-box, she dashed into Warren's blacking manufactory, as a sanctuary,

and dipping her wing in an eighteen-penny bottle, took up the cause of boots and shoes. Thus lowered in her own and other's estimation, she sat awhile in a solitude of brilliant jet.³¹

The verse puffs, with their striking cuts, which inspired Reynolds's wry comment were very well known in the period. Figure 18, for example, shows Warren's jocular 'Queen' advertisement. The poet responsible for the doggerel verse in this puff is unknown, but the illustration is by no less a figure than George Cruikshank. Cruikshank, of course, was responsible for the famous cut for 'The Cat and the Boot' (figure above), which is discussed above (in chapter 1) as perhaps the single most famous advertising image of the Romantic period. Cruikshank also provided the cut for Warren's 'Juliet' advertisement (figure 19), where Shakespeare becomes grist to the blacking mill.

Over twenty years later, Warren's returned to Shakespeare in an early 1830s puff:

SHAKSPERIANA – 'AS YOU LIKE IT'
THE LOVER.

'The Lover,' says Shakspeare, 'comes penning a sonnet',
But had our bard lived in these luminous times,
The lover would not have resorted to *rhymes*,
But *dress*, fit for kings, with effulgence upon it,
To win lady's love, and attraction command,
By Warren's jet *Blacking*, at 30, the Strand.

Warren's copy also invoked more modern poetic models, from the work of N. T. H. Bayly through to that of Byron and Scott. Its 'As You Like It' puff, for instance, is contemporaneous with a 'Sonnet, by a Parisian Lady, on her *entrée* in London. *Translated from the French, and inscribed by Mr Warren*'. This imitates the mannered, generally female-authored, verse familiar from the literary annuals:

I've seen the dew-drop fall from high,
I've seen its influence on the flower;
I've pondered o'er its brilliancy,
And love all its resplendent power;
And oft I've seen Golconda's gem
Glitter upon the diadem;
But ne'er I saw that beauteous bloom
That on my bright shoes here is set,
Nor thought I they could e'er assume
Such a refulgent glossy Jet!

For WARREN'S Blacking there displays
 Beauty on which I ne'er had thought to gaze.
 Then WARREN, take the praise of one
 Whose best of wishes thou hast won.

POMP.



QUEEN.

*Ask for WARREN'S BLACKING, made at
 30, STRAND—all others are inferior.*

Tho' my dignity's great, and I shine on a throne,
 Yet, to-night, I'll relax for a whim of my own:
 They tell me that pomp is a *comfortless* thing,
 Save sweetened by joys only friendship can bring,
 So no longer around me shall grandeur appear,
 And your Queen will preside over mirth and good cheer;
 But no courtier, remember, my presence endures,
 Save at 30, the STRAND, WARREN'S Jet he procures.

Figure 18. 'Queen'. Advertisement for Warren's Blacking (n.d.). Illustration by George Cruikshank.



JULIET.—*Romeo and Juliet*

Ask for **WARREN'S BLACKING**, made at
30, **STRAND**—all others are inferior.

—^a Oh, gentle Romeo,
If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully!
When love unites too faithful hearts,
But Death the band can sever,
And woman's troth, and honour's vow,
Truth consecrates for ever,
For honour will in every case,
The public praise command:
Thus for his **Blacking Fame** has crown'd
R. WARREN, 30, STRAND.

Figure 19. 'Juliet'. Advertisement for Warren's Blacking (n.d., but common in the 1810s). Illustration by George Cruikshank.

As well as using literary associationism, Warren also invoked decidedly less elevated cultural models, demonstrating a willingness to borrow from popular culture. Warren's copy embraces both 'high' and 'low' art, imitating or invoking models from a wide



MOTHER GOOSE.

*Ask for WARREN'S BLACKING, made at
30, STRAND—all others are inferior.*

From Mother Goose a lesson take,
Nor think the warning vain,
Ne'er thro' thy life's endeavours be
Too eager after gain.
WARREN has found a golden egg,
And won't his friends forget,
Then call at 30, in the STRAND,
And try his brilliant Jet,

Figure 20. 'Mother Goose' (c. 1810). Advertisement for Warren's Blacking.
Illustration by George Cruikshank.

span of cultural production. Figure 20, for example, shows the illustration, again by Cruikshank, to the Warren advert 'Mother Goose', where the cultural magpie feathers his nest from nursery rhyme. This puff has fascinating antecedents. Figure 21 shows Cruikshank's design, drawn when he was fourteen years old, for the

MOTHER GOOSE.



Figure 21. 'Mother Goose' (1807). Illustration by George Cruikshank.

1807 chapbook *Mother Goose*, which was intended to cash in on the huge success of the 1806 Covent Garden pantomime *Harlequin and Mother Goose, or, The Golden Egg*. Cruikshank later adapted his own image for a lottery handbill (figure 22) and then extracted further mileage from its use in the Warren's display puff. While this certainly testifies to Cruikshank's commercial acumen in recycling material, there is also something highly appropriate about the nature of the link here demonstrated between the lottery and blacking, which encapsulates the imitative cultural appropriations of two of the most well-advertised products of the late Georgian period.



MOTHER GOOSE.

Though 'twixt my hooked nose and chin
 I scarce can get my dinner in ;
 Though deaf, half-blind, decrepid; bald,
 And simple *Mother Goosetam* call'd ;
 Yet wit and worth refin'd, if poor,
 Get but half the notice I procure.
 And why ?—I'm rich. My *Goose*, to me,
 Is worth a rich *State Lottery*.

Figure 22. Lottery advertisement (1810s). Illustration by George Cruikshank.

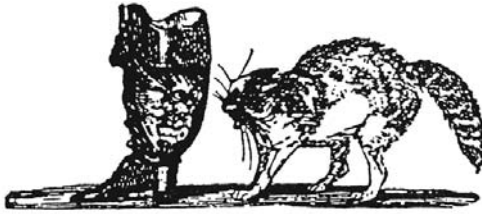
The 'country circulation' of Warren's promotional efforts mentioned by Hood involved, of course, campaigns in widely circulated nationals such as the *Observer* and *The Times* and countless insertions in regional weeklies and dailies. However, his company

demonstrated remarkable catholicity in the placement of its puffs, given that Warren was one of the few national brand proprietors willing to advertise in unstamped radical broadsheets. In the pursuit of revenue – to both parties it might be said – the pleadings of entrepreneurial capitalism here coexist with radicalism red in tooth and claw. Warren’s all-embracing campaigns transcend class borders, seeking the sixpences of the working classes as well as those of the bourgeoisie. For example, Warren’s made a number of insertions in the *Cosmopolite*, arguably the most uncompromising of the unstamped (it declared, for instance, in November 1832 that ‘THE FINALE OF REFORM MUST BE SETTLED BY PHYSICAL FORCE’).³² The 25 August 1832 number of the newspaper contains Warren’s ‘A New Shaver, or Second Experiment’. This advertisement is headed by the ‘Cat and the Boot’ cut and the jingle amphibrachs tell the story of a monkey who tries to imitate his master by shaving in the mirroring surface of a boot. Failing in this attempt, he takes up the cat, who is, as ever, attending to her reflection, and shaves the feline by the light of the boot. The triumphant primate then takes the cat through to his owner’s parlour:

The *Monkey* in triumph the Parlour now sought,
And *Cat* and bright *Boot* to a company brought,
Who saw what this barber had then been about,
And hail’d his essay with a rapturous shout
Of mirthful surprise: the strange incident backing
The merit of WARREN’S unparalleled *Blacking*.³³

Eventually Cruikshank’s ‘Cat and the Boot’ image became a second trademark (after the signature) for Warren’s company, a logo used somewhat indiscriminately above verse copy that did not deal with the subject of felines and footwear. Figure 23 shows an early 1820s puff for Warren’s, ‘30, Strand. Ned Capstan: or, A Land-Cruise Postponed’. The jingle offers a sub-Coleridgean piece of grotesquerie which tells the story of an encounter between a mortal man and the evil one; Satan being arrayed, of course, in boots polished by Warren’s blacking.

Verse copy such as this led Abraham Hayward, in his February 1843 *Edinburgh Review* article on ‘The Advertising System’, to describe Warren’s copy as the epitome of commercial jingle. However, as noted in chapter 1 above, Hayward declared that the



30, STRAND.

NED CAPSTAN; OR, A LAND-CRUISE POSTPONED.

To CAPSTAN a *Sybil* had kindly pressag'd
 That shortly his friend DAVY JONES, or the DEVIL
 Would take him in tow!—NED a seat had engag'd
 For LONDON—On roof of the *Coach* then, the evil
 Predicted, approach'd;—for, in active pursuit
 The Devil appear'd—in a high polish'd BOOT! —

NED CAPSTAN exclaim'd, while the vision seem'd beckning
 "The HAG, d—n her cunning! is right in her reckn'ing!"
 Both BOOTS now he eyed, by the Trav'ler display'd,
 In WARREN'S fine *Jet* of resplendence array'd—
 His image in each, and his journey each stage in't,
 Oppos'd by the DEVIL, he thought, and an AGENT!

He wisely sheer'd off, giving up, then, his trip,—
 And pleas'd at escape, sped his way to his ship,—
 The story got wind of NED CAPSTAN'S adventure,—
 The *Mate* on a frolic inclin'd then to enter:
 Two *Boots*, polish'd high with the luminous *Jet*,
 Were now in the cabin conspicuously set —
 "Here, Capstan;"—he came, nor his fears could restrain.
 For DEVIL and AGENT appear'd once again!—
 They hung o'er a-screen, the bright *Boots*, and behind
 The *Mate* stood unseen—"Have you made up your mind?"
 A voice from the *Jet* seem'd to ask,—"TO BE D**N'D?"—

"My MASTER," said NED - "If it is to be cramm'd
 In gullet of old DAVY JONES then, or YOU—
 To make up my mind,—I'LL BE D**N'D IF I DO!

The *Mate* laugh'd aloud,—o'er the ship ran the rumour!
 That CAPSTAN the *Devil* had won to good humour!—
 And storm or foul wind when the vessel attacking,
 NED'S interest is ask'd with his friends in the *Blacking!*

This *Essy* Shining and Brilliant *BLACKING*, Prepared by

Robert Warren

30, STRAND, London; and sold in every Town in the Kingdom.
 LIQUID, in Bottles 6d. 10d. 12d. and 18d. each. Also PASTE
 BLACKING, in Pots 6d. 12d. 18d. each. A Shilling Pot of Paste
 is equal to Four 1s, Bottles of Liquid.

. Ask for WARREN'S *Blacking*.

Figure 23. '30, Strand. Ned Capstan: or, A Land-Cruise Postponed'. Advertisement for Warren's *Blacking* (early 1820s). Illustration by George Cruikshank.

vogue for verse copy had evaporated by the early 1840s, in the ‘unpoetic age’ of *The Pickwick Papers*, which ‘prefer[red] prose to poetry’.³⁴ Hayward was right to register the copywriter’s increasing tendency, post-*Pickwick*, to use prose. Indeed, the decline of verse copy is exemplified by Dickens himself, who two years before the *Edinburgh* article had created a decidedly down-at-heel purveyor of jingle puffs in the figure of *The Old Curiosity Shop*’s Mr Slum.³⁵ Slum clutches an all-purpose poetical acrostic (‘the name at this moment is Warren, but the idea’s a convertible one’): ‘it’s the delight of my life to have dabbled in poetry, . . . Ask the perfumers, ask the blacking-makers, ask the hatters, ask the old lottery-office-keepers – ask any man among ’em what my poetry has done for him, and mark my words, he blesses the name of Slum.’³⁶ Dickens was, particularly in the first years of his career, an attentive observer of advertisements and the advertising business. And the author had, of course, first-hand experience of the blacking trade in particular, having toiled as a young man in the blacking factory at 30 Hungerford Stairs, Strand which produced polishes in the name of Jonathan Warren. In his autobiographical fragment, Dickens writes:

This speculation was a rivalry of ‘Warren’s Blacking, 30, Strand’ – at that time very famous. One Jonathan Warren (the famous one was Robert), living at 30, Hungerford Stairs, or Market, Strand (for I forget which it was called then), claimed to have been the original inventor or proprietor of the blacking recipe, and to have been deposed and ill-used by his renowned relation. At last he put himself in the way of selling his recipe, and his name, and his 30, Hungerford Stairs, Strand (30, Strand, very large, and the intermediate direction very small), for an annuity; and he set forth by his agents that a little capital would make a great business of it.

The man of some property was found in George Lamert, the cousin and brother-in-law of James [Dickens’s cousin by the marriage of his aunt]. He bought this right and title, and went into the blacking business and the blacking premises. – In an evil hour for me, as I often bitterly thought.³⁷

Dickens’s experiences as a boy at Jonathan Warren’s blacking factory were by his own account unpleasant and humiliating, and certainly he rarely referred to them after he had established himself as a successful author. However, as a young man on the literary make, it is possible that he himself took the advertising

shilling from Robert Warren. In an 1833 reference provided for his nephew to John Payne Collier of *The Morning Chronicle*, Dickens's uncle John Barrow wrote that 'at one time [Dickens] had assisted Warren the blacking man in the conduct of his extensive business, among other things had written puff verse for him'.³⁸ Though Dickens's biographer Peter Akroyd claims that 'This is most unlikely, [though] the expedient lie might well have been told to Barrow by Dickens himself',³⁹ John Drew has argued that Warren's 'The Turtle Dove', published in the *True Sun* for 13 March 1832, was by Dickens and, indeed, was his 'first publication of any sort'.⁴⁰ Perhaps there is something of self-mockery in Dickens's comic sport with Mr Slum and his blacking puffs.

Though Robert Warren's advertising copy happily indulges in literary imitation, the form of imitation used by Jonathan Warren's blacking company was less agreeable to his company. Robert's customers are exhorted to request his products by name ('Ask for WARREN'S Blacking') and are cautioned about unprincipled imitators and their inferior products. In a rare prose-only advertisement, 'IMPOSTURE UNMASKED', Warren offers this caution:

The progress of MERIT, although frequently assailed, is not impeded by Envy and Detraction . . . The test of experience is the guarantee of favour, and has established WARREN'S BLACKING in general estimation; of which there exists not a stronger proof than the tacit acknowledgement of a host of servile imitators, who . . . obtrude on the unwary a spurious preparation as the genuine article, to the great disappointment of the unguarded purchaser . . . It becomes therefore, an indispensable duty to CAUTION THE PUBLIC against the manœuvres of UNPRINCIPLED VENDERS, who having no character to lose, and stimulated by avarice in their nefarious pursuits, aim at the acquisition of money through any medium than that of honour! The original matchless BLACKING bears on each bottle a short direction, with the signature of ROBERT WARREN.

Chief, perhaps, among the 'host of servile imitators' (itself an echo of Horace, it might be added), is the business at 30 Hungerford Stairs, Strand, which might be said to have based its appeal upon imitation, given that it traded, *de facto*, upon the Warren name made famous by Robert, he of 30 Strand. But even here matters of originality and imitation are blurred in claim and counterclaim, given that Jonathan Warren 'claimed to have been the original inventor or proprietor of the blacking recipe'. In the end, Robert Warren's financial strength saw off the upstart company, as Forster relates:

The whole enterprise, however, had the usual end of such things. The younger cousin tired of the concern; and a Mr Wood, the proprietor who took James's share and became George's partner, sold it ultimately to Robert Warren. It continued to be his at the time Dickens and I last spoke of it together, and he had made an excellent bargain of it.⁴¹

If Robert Warren's blacking recipe was copied by 'UNPRINCIPLED VENDERS', then his company's literary manner also had its imitators. The enduring power of the 'Cat and the Boot' image is evident from a noteworthy piece of semiliterate fustian for the north-eastern firm of Donnison's, which dates from the late 1830s. This advertisement (Fig. 24) announces that Donnison's 'newly invented India Rubber Oil Blacking' is available 'in every Town and Village in the Kingdom' (or at least those within five miles from its proprietor's base in Hylton). The cut replaces Warren's cat with an irate cockerel which is inspired to pugnacity by his reflection in a boot laden with Donnison's.

Sub-Warrenesque jingle also features in an 1831 advertisement for Child's Superlative Blacking and Superlative Polish, which mixes jocosity, oleaginousness and doggerel in equal measure:

IMMENSE SAVING, WITH UNEQUALLED ADVANTAGES!

Let them shine now, who never shone before,
And those who never shone, now shine the more!

To the Lame and the Lazy! to the Industrious! to workers by the Piece; and, in short, to all desirous of completing their work with unusual Ease, Expedition, and Excellence;

CHILD'S SUPERLATIVE BLACKING

and also his SUPERLATIVE POLISH, for Harness, Landau and Chaise Heads, are most earnestly recommended. This improved Blacking, and Harness Polish, besides possessing every advantage usual in the best compositions made for such purposes, affords an unequalled lustre, with an immense saving of both time and labour, and you will find (or at all events it is respectfully presumed so),

That, if you'll oblige Mr CHILD, by consenting to *try* it,
You'll be obliging YOURSELVES, by *continuing* to buy it.

While Child's blacking may well have been superlative, it is evident that the same cannot be said of his advertising copy. However, his epigonic puff testifies to the pervasive influence of Warren's copy, and, indeed, to the striking nature of blacking copy in the late Georgian period.



N O T I C E .

Donnison's Blacking's the finest that ever was made,
 It's virtues are lasting and never will fade ;
 Donnison's the only surperlative blacking
 To make your Boots shine, and prevent them from
 cracking.

THIS newly invented India Rubber
 OIL BLACKING, which renders the Leather elastic
 and Waterproof, is manufactured solely by ROBERT
 DONNISON, at his manufactory, Hylton, and may be had
 of any dealer in every Town and Village in the King-
 dom.

Liquid, in Bottles, 6d and 1s each ; Paste, in Packets,
 1d, Pots, 3d and 6d each.

AGENTS.

Sunderland: *Spraggon & Co ; Hudson, Druggist ;
 Clark, Grocer ; Mrs. Wright, Grocer.* South Shields:
Robert Cooper & Co, Grocers ; Mr. Walsh, Grocer.

Figure 24. Advertisement for Donnison's, 'the only surperlative [*sic*] blacking' (1839).

The significant number of satirical and parodic writings and graphic satires that attend to blacking and its marketing testify to the

near-ubiquity of blacking advertisements in the Romantic period. Poetic satires and parodies, graphic satires, broadsheets, burletta dramas; each genre offers its own comic engagements with blacking. However, such sable burlesque, like so much else in the literature of the period, has antecedents in early eighteenth-century writing and needs to be contextualised accordingly. For perhaps the earliest instance of blacking-related comic writing, the episode of Cloacina in Book II of John Gay's *Trivia* (1716), predates the days of industrial manufacture of the product by some decades. In a 'digressive' foray into travesty, Gay traces the lineage of the shoe-black:

Here let the Muse, fatigu'd amid the throng,
Adorn her precepts with digressive song;
Of shirtless youths the secret rise to trace,
And show the parent of the sable race.⁴²

Gay develops an exalted matrilineage for the humble black in the story of Cloacina, goddess of the sewer. Cloacina, like 'great Jove' before her, assumes human form – that of a cinder-wench – to woo an earthly beloved, a street-cleaner: 'A mortal scavenger she saw, she lov'd/ The muddy spots that dry'd upon his face.'⁴³ Cloacina gives birth, in due course, to a street-child and, after watching his youthful travails, supplicates the Olympians to give him a useful trade ('some beneficial art/ Practis'd in streets'). The Gods allow her petition and Gay's sprightly burlesque sees the immortals providing the boy with the stocks-in-trade of the shoe-black:

the Gods her suit allow'd,
And made him useful to the walking croud,
To cleanse the miry feet, and o'er the shoe
With nimble skill the glossy black renew.
Each Power contributes to relieve the poor;
With the strong bristles of the mighty boar
Diana forms his brush; the God of day
A tripod gives, amid the crowded way
To raise the dirty foot, and ease his toil;
Kind *Neptune* fills his vase with fetid oil
Prest from th' enormous whale; The God of fire,
From whose dominions smoaky clouds aspire,
Among these gen'rous presents joins his part,
And aids with soot the new japanning art:

Pleas'd she receives the gifts; she downward glides,
Lights in *Fleet-ditch*, and shoots beneath the tides.⁴⁴

Cloacina presents her bounty to her child and, before disappearing back into the gutter (her entry therein creating the boy's first customers), leaves him with an exhortation. Here Gay exploits the paradoxical fact that blacking cleans rather than tarnishes, taming the ravages produced by the cloacal streets of London:

weep no more, my son;
Go thrive. At some frequented corner stand,
This brush I give thee, grasp it in thy hand,
Temper the foot within this vase of oil,
And let the little tripod aid thy toil;
On this methinks I see the walking crew
At thy request support the miry shoe,
The foot grows black that was with dirt imbrown'd,
And in thy pocket gingling halfpence sound.
The Goddess plunges swift beneath the flood,
And dashes all around her show'rs of mud:
The youth strait chose his post; the labour ply'd
Where branching streets from *Charing-cross* divide;
His treble voice resounds along the *Meuse*,
And White-hall echoes – *Clean your Honour's shoes*.⁴⁵

John Gay might be said to be 'the parent of the sable race' of blacking-related satirists. Though his focus is upon the shoe-black's cry rather than the boasts of the blacking manufacturer, Gay's mock-heroic contrast between elevated tone and the quotidian, humdrum activity of boot polishing anticipates the manner of such blacking burlesque as Deacon's *Warreniana*, published over a century later.

Deacon's work is but one of a series of comic works to engage with the subject of blacking, for, as well as influencing a generation of poetastic copywriters, Warren's jingle drolleries quickly inspired contemporary humorists. From the 1810s through the 1840s, parodists and satirists used blacking and its marketing as the basis for their own wit, their efforts spanning poetry, graphic art, and the drama. In the latter cultural form, the most notable effort is *The P. L.: or 30 Strand!* (1836), a romantic farce with music, by the dramatist and later founding editor of *Punch*, Mark Lemon. The play was first performed on 25 April 1836,⁴⁶ at the highly appropriate venue of

the New Strand Theatre. A few doors away from Warren's premises, burletta theatre audiences enjoyed⁴⁷ the story of the Poet Laureate of blacking puffery who rejoiced in the well-chosen name of Stamper Jingle. Jingle, 'now P.L. to the immortal Warren, Emperor of Japan!',⁴⁸ is first seen in his garret, his furnishings, as the stage directions demonstrate, mostly consisting of blacking bottles:

SCENE II.

– A miserable Garret, broken Chair R. H. of table, common Table C. on which is placed a Candle in a blacking Bottle, over which a red herring is suspended from a wooden gallows, inserted in a blacking bottle, another blacking Bottle, with blacking and paint brush, R. H. Pen, Ink, and Paper.⁴⁹

Lemon portrays the impecunious and opportunistic Jingle ('discovered in a ragged dressing gown, occasionally catching ideas [and] turning the herring') attempting to woo the muse of blacking and eventually embracing her:

JINGLE

A man who oft' had heard the jest
That real black diamonds were the best,
Once thought he'd found those gems of light,
So wondrous, rich, and grand;
But seized a pair of boots made bright,
With Warren's blacking, 30, Strand!

Bravo! five shillings' worth, by all that's brilliant! – oh, lucky, lucky day, when I was installed Poet Laureate to Warren's blacking establishment.⁵⁰

Jingle's mind, like his attic, is almost entirely furnished by blacking, and when he attempts to work in poetical genres other than verse copy in homage to Warren, his mind continually wanders back to the blacking manufactory. Thus, when Jingle tries to charm the shrewish Mrs Snarling, he finds himself unable to avoid jingle:

JINGLE

Venus and yourself were formed in the same mould –
[Takes her hand – aside.] I'll give her a touch of poetry.
What can equal Sylvia's eye,
Nought of earth, or wave, or sky –
Not a gem the mine doth own,
Not a star that ever shone –
Nought creation boasts so grand,

As Warren's Blacking, 30 Strand.
Oh – ! confound the shop!⁵¹

Lemon's breezy farce lacks the acerbity of contemporary satire such as George Daniel's 'Crambo',⁵² which condemns the writer of advertisements as the worst kind of debased and money-grubbing hack. Lemon's copywriter is at worst a wily trickster. Indeed, in the final analysis Jingle is a resourceful and decidedly engaging character. His manipulations bring the plot to its romantic denouement in clearing the obstacles in the path of the marriage between the play's young lovers, and his enterprising nature is rewarded by the prospect of an inheritance.

Though it is the most sustained, *The P. L.* is not the only contemporary burletta to engage with Warren's blacking. As late as the 1840s, that indefatigable pantomimist and extravaganzist J. R. Planché produced *The Drama at Home; or, An Evening with Puff*. This extravaganza, a Shakespearean travesty first performed at the Theatre Royal, Haymarket, on 8 April 1844, light-heartedly bemoans the fact that classical drama currently languishes in neglect as a consequence of the contemporary appetite for musical comedy and other forms of popular drama. Shakespeare's characters, like his plays, have become redundant and Mr Puff (Sheridan's vendor of complimentary reviews at a price) attempts to find them alternative employment in the advertising trade. Othello, played by the actor Ennis (his face blacked up, presumably with Warren's blacking) becomes a sandwich-man⁵³ for Robert Warren, thereby facilitating the inevitable jests about the blackness of his face in relation to Warren's brilliant jet. In the modern age, according to Planché, the exemplary contemporary representation of the black man is Jim Crow of the minstrel shows rather than Othello. Here Puff, Drama and Ariel lament the Moor's fate:

PUFF.

I have employment found for one or two.

Dra.

Where's poor Othello?

Puff.

Posted close at hand,

Boardman to Warren, No. 30, Strand.

(music – Othello enters with Warren's blacking boards on his back)

Air – Puff – 'The Coal Black Rose'.

Poor Othello, done quite brown,

Driven off the boards by Fortune's frown,
 Between a pair is glad to get
 And prove he's not as black as 'Warren's brilliant jet'.
 Jim Crows and fiddlers' bows
 Have quite put out of joint his poor black nose.⁵⁴

Paradoxically, Planché's wry lament about the decay of high culture is itself cast in the form of a pantomime. For him, the *rodontade* used to advertise blacking is more representative of the literary spirit of the age than Shakespearian drama. And the public visibility of the product is dependent upon puffery; as Ariel remarks to Puff, 'Ah, there, no doubt, you'd influence enough;/ The blacking trade owes much, indeed, to Puff.'⁵⁵

The ignoble racial punning evident in Planché's work is not the only example of drollery that trades on the supposed resemblance between the black face and the blacking bottle. Indeed, Warren had availed himself of this particular avenue of amusement in such stuff as this:

'Friend' said Aminadab to Obadiah,
 'Why such amazement do thy features show?'
 'To see Aminadab, thy Boots on fire,
 And thou stand harmless in the burning glow!'
 'Ah! Friend, dost thou so of discernment lack –
 Art thou so far to common knowledge barren,
 Not to perceive 'tis but the radiant black
 That's manufactured by Friend Robert Warren?'⁵⁶

The same concept, though in a less than good-natured fashion, is also found in a contemporary broadsheet, 'Mrs Jane Crow'. Mrs Crow has crossed the Atlantic in search of the errant Mr Jim (the same Jim Crow whose minstrelsy, according to Planché, has driven Othello from the boards), and the ballad describes her misadventures in London (being threatened with exhibition in the zoo as a baboon and the like). The white 'debils' of London reach for the same blacking-related metaphor as Planché:

Me be berry much a vexed,
 And tears in my eyes startin
 Ven anoder debil say,
 'Dere's a *bottle of Day and Martin*'.⁵⁷

'Mrs Jane Crow', lacklustre example though it might be, is but one of a significant number of Romantic period poetic squibs and

satires which mine the subject of blacking for a variety of comic effects. For example, in his 'Parody of a Celebrated Letter' (1812), Thomas Moore envisages the deeply unpopular Prince Regent wistfully quoting blacking jingle:

When such are my merits, – (you know I hate cracking) –
I hope, like the Vender of Best Patent Blacking,
'To meet with the gen'rous and kind approbation,
Of a candid, enlighten'd, and liberal nation'.⁵⁸

In Robert Montgomery's *The Puffiad* (1828), which is mostly devoted to a long, Popean satire on the publishing business, we find 'The Japan-Blacking Man. A Parody':

Not far from Charing Cross, 'tis said,
One Warren, in the Blacking trade,
Makes it on so good a plan,
That he is called the Blacking-man;
The real Japan, Jet Blacking-man,
The brilliant, dazzling Blacking-man!
No one has yet, or ever can,
Surpass this far-fam'd Blacking-man.
At No. 30 in the Strand,
The shop's well known, and close at hand,
It is the place for the real Japan,
Made by the Jet-Black Blacking-man,
The famous well-known Blacking-man,
The not-to-be-equalled Blacking-man, –
No one has yet, or ever can,
Outshine the brilliant Blacking-man.⁵⁹

This is a rather poor attempt at non-specific jingle parody. Much better is Horace Smith's 'Laus Atramenti, or the Praise of Blacking. A New Song', published in the *New Monthly Magazine* in October 1824, which describes Oxford and Cambridge undergraduates giving up their classical education and devoting themselves to the sale of blacking:

Our Sires were such pedagogue blockheads of yore,
That they sent us to college instruction to seek,
Where we bother'd our brains with pedantical lore,
Law, logic, and algebra, Latin and Greek;
But now, wiser grown, leaving learning alone,
And resolving to shine by a light of our own,
Our cares we transfer from the head to the foot,

Leave the brain to be muddied, and polish the boot.
On the banks of the Isis, ye classical fools!
Who with Lycophron's crabbedness puzzle your ear,
And ye who learn logarithmetical rules
At Cambridge, from tables of Baron Napier,
Renounce Aristotle, and take to the bottle,
That wears 'Patent Blacking', inscribed on its throttle;
For Napier and Greek are by few understood,
While all can decide when your blacking is good.⁶⁰

Classical values and scholarship are of little use in contemporary mercantile society. Smith concludes by offering a vision of prosperous merchants engaged in 'blacking wars' and resolves to join the mercenary throng of boot polishers:

Day and Martin now laugh as they ride in their coach,
Till they're black in the face as their customers' boots;
Warren swears that his blacking's beyond all approach,
Which Turner's advertisement plumply refutes;
They hector and huff, print, publish, and puff,
And write in the papers ridiculous stuff,
While Hunt, who was blacken'd by all, and run down,
Takes a thriving revenge as he blackens the town.
Their labels belibel each other – each wall
With the feuds of these rivals in blacking is white;
But the high polished town seems to patronise all,
And the parties get rich in each other's despite;
For my own part I think, I shall mix up my ink,
In a bottle with lamp-black and beer to the brink,
And set up at once for a shiner of shoes,
Since I never shall shine by the aid of the Muse.⁶¹

Smith avails himself of the useful pun on 'blacking' in the sense of denigrating another's reputation. Blacking in this sense is one of the key rhetorical strategies of satire and *Blackwood's* is alert to this fact in the fourth of its *Noctes Ambrosianæ* series (published in July 1822), where Odoherly (i.e., William Maginn) encounters Byron:

ODOHERTY.

Style – as to style, that is all fudge. I myself have written in all kind of styles, from Burke to Jeremy Bentham. But I assure your Lordship the mob charge you with these Memoirs.

BYRON.

Why, really some people believe me capable of any kind of stuff. You remember I was accused of writing puffs for Day and Martin.

ODOHERTY.

A calumny, I *know*, my dear Byron, for I am myself author of them. By the way, have you heard the epigram on your disclaimer?

BYRON.

No – tell it me – I hope it is good.

ODOHERTY.

You shall judge.

ON READING THE APPENDIX TO LORD BYRON'S TRAGEDY
OF THE TWO FOSCARI.

Is Byron surprised that his enemies say
He makes puffing verses for Martin and Day?
Why, what other task could his Lordship take part in
More fit than the service of Day, and of Martin?
So shining, so dark – all his writing displays
A type of this liquid of Martin and Day's –
Gouvernantes – Kings – laurel-crown'd Poets attacking –
Oh! he's master complete of the science of Blacking!⁶²

Maginn's squib is not unperceptive; *Don Juan* and *The Vision of Judgment* are examples of the dark but powerfully satirical 'science of blacking'.

In 'Laus Atramenti', quoted above, Horace Smith makes passing reference to the blacking manufacturer Hunt: 'While Hunt, who was blacken'd by all, and run down,/ Takes a thriving revenge as he blackens the town'. The Hunt to whom Smith is referring is no everyday man of business, however, but no less a figure than Henry 'Orator' Hunt, the radical hero of Peterloo. Sentenced to prison in 1820 for his activities at St Peter's Fields, Hunt emerged two years later to reinvent himself as a manufacturer: of ink, of medicinal drinks, and, most notably, of blacking. 'Blackened by all' for his politics, Hunt begins to 'blacken the town' with his boot polish. By 1826, Hunt was boasting of his product's wide circulation:

Hunt's MATCHLESS BLACKING – the cheapest and best in the kingdom – sold in bottles, neatly labelled, at 4d. 6d. and 1s. each, same size as are offered by other houses at 6d. 1s. and 1s. 6d. each. The price speaks for itself, but the best proof of the superiority of 'Hunt's Matchless' is that is selling in upwards of 4,000 shops in the metropolis alone.

Hunt obviously saw little incompatibility between entrepreneurial capitalism and radical extra-parliamentary agitation and continued

his political activities after his release from prison. During the 1820s and 1830s, Hunt's oratorical powers were deployed in the service of his blacking as well as the cause of systematic parliamentary reform. Indeed, he was not averse to including overt eulogies of his products in his speeches and journalism, brazenly interrupting radical polemics with brand endorsements. In terms of more orthodox advertising techniques, it was not uncommon for Hunt to trade on his reputation among radicals and target the incendiary unstamped press for his advertisements, or for his agents to exploit his reputation among the people. For example, the ultra-Radical *Poor Man's Guardian* for 16 November 1833 contains an announcement by one of Hunt's agents, which offers his blackings and his 'never-fading ink': 'J. Chappell, Hotwells Road, Bristol, informs his friends and the public that he has commenced selling HUNT'S MATCHLESS BLACKING; liquid at 8d. and 4d. per Bottle; Paste, at 4d. and 2d. per Pot. Also, Hunt's never-fading writing INK, at 8d. and 4d. per bottle'.

Henry Hunt wasted few opportunities to endorse his products. Even in the seemingly unlikely setting of the thirteenth number of *An Address from H. Hunt, Esq., M.P., to the Radical Reformers of England, Ireland, and Scotland* (9 January 1832), radical polemic is mixed with unsubtle brand promotion. After condemning the King's Speech and the inadequacy of the Whig administration and dwelling on the hapless state of the Lancashire poor, Hunt rounds off his address with an extended puff for the medicinal qualities of his coffee substitute, the Roasted Corn, which he claims will ward off 'the infection of the cholera morbus':

I can honestly recommend my best prepared Roasted Corn, as the most wholesome beverage, that can be substituted for tea and coffee, which are at all times exciting, and frequently very irritating to the stomach and bowels. The Roasted Corn is allowed by medical men, who have analyzed it, to be perfectly wholesome and very nutritious, and it will prove a cheap and valuable beverage for the working classes . . .

...
The best means to avoid the infection of that dreadful scourge the cholera morbus, is by temperance, and to keep the stomach and bowels in a healthy state. The best Roasted Corn mixed half and half with coffee is a great improvement to it, and renders it perfectly wholesome. Many of my old agents in the country have written to me to send them a supply. I take this opportunity of informing them that I am preparing

a quantity, and that their orders will be forwarded with all due care and dispatch.⁶³

Hunt's willingness to exploit his radical constituency for commercial gain and his willingness to lace radical polemic with thinly disguised brand endorsement is best demonstrated in an episode from 1830. After he had finally been elected to parliament, as the member for Preston, Hunt led a triumphal procession into London, at the back of which was his blacking cart, drawn by four horses, festooned with promotional bills for 'Hunt's Matchless Blacking' and followed by a marching band. Arriving at his London home, Hunt addressed a large gathering of radicals in a speech in which he endorses both his own brand of incendiary politics and his blacking. The story is told in the 15 January 1831 number of *A Penny Paper for the People*, which describes Hunt's travelling convoy thus:

Horsemen to clear the way.

Two Trumpeters . . .

Banner. – 'Hunt and Reform. The Majority of 338. Thanks to the People of Preston'.

Banner. – 'Behold the man whom the people delighteth to honour'.

Mr Hunt and Mr Mitchell in a barouchette, drawn by four grey horses, the post-boys in pink satin jackets.

Banners. – 'The triumph of Political Integrity'. 'Henry Hunt, the man of the People'.

Three barouches, with Mr Hunt's friends.

Mr Hunt's Blacking caravan, drawn by four greys, with a band.⁶⁴

After the procession had trooped along to Hunt's London home in Stamford Street, the Orator entered his house, only to re-emerge at a window to harangue the enthusiastic crowd. He attacked the King and the Duke of Wellington, and declared that he would spend his time in parliament repealing laws made 'to take from the pockets of the industrious poor'.⁶⁵ The speech then turns to blacking, in joshing terms but in a manner calculated to remind the audience of the existence of Hunt's Matchless. Hunt recalls that one of the papers owned by William Clement of the *Observer* had joked that:

There was at least one good that would result from his election for Preston – what did they think that was? – it was this, that as he was now a member of Parliament, there would, it was to be hoped, be no more chalking of the walls – that was in one of Mr Clement's Papers; in the true spirit of trade, he wished him (Mr Hunt) to advertise no more by means

of the walls, but, instead of paying him (Mr C.) £30 a year for advertisements, to pay him £60. 'Ah! Billy Clement, you are a trader, and you want me to pay a larger sum for advertisements than I do, and leave off chalking the walls'. They talked, he confirmed, of chalking the walls – why Warren chalked twice as much as he did.⁶⁶

Hunt then strikes one of his not uncommon pugilistic poses, threatening those parliamentary opponents who made sneering reference to his blacking activities (while simultaneously claiming that such remarks were actually free publicity): 'There was Mr Alexander Baring the stock-jobber, had gratuitously advertised his blacking in the House of Commons; but if he attempted to introduce that topic when they were face to face, he would make him as sick as ever a dog was of eating scalding broth (laughter).'⁶⁷

Two years after Hunt's London triumph, the manufacturer made his most remarkable fusion of blacking publicity with oppositionalist politics. After losing his Preston seat, Hunt threw caution to the wind in his advertising, producing a blacking-bottle label that uncompromisingly proselytised for the key demands of the radical working classes. An advertisement in the *Poor Man's Guardian* for 16 February 1833 shows Hunt announcing that, henceforth, his blacking-pot labels would be marked with the motto '*Equal Laws, Equal Rights, Annual Parliaments, Universal Suffrage and the Ballot*'. Hunt's label, which occupies a decidedly different social sphere from the Prince of Wales's experiments with blacking or Robert Warren's jocular bourgeois domestic narratives, celebrates the aims of the unrepresented in brand packaging. Advertising is an art that cultivates aspiration and the desire for possession, but in the packaging of Hunt's blacking pot that desire is refocused into a metaphor for the working classes' aspiration to take possession of their political rights.

Horace Smith's mention of Hunt in his capacity as a blacking merchant is not the only satirical reference to the reformer's commercial activities in the period, for these activities provided grist to the mill for graphic satirists, broadside balladeers and the yellow press. A doggerel broadsheet satire of the period, 'Liston's Drolleries – Something New Starts Every Day' (c. 1830), portrays Hunt in his new role of wall-chalker:

Orator Hunt, whom all have heard of
 Making speeches – now instead of
 That employ each day is walking,

And on the wall his name is chalking;
 Of politics now 'tis no use talking,
 So he writes up 'Try Hunt's Matchless Blacking';
 And lest he should get in oblivion's dumb pit
 He keeps a man to sound his tin trumpet,
 Oh dear, oh dear, with truth I say,⁶⁸
 Something new starts every day.

Here Hunt has moved from political orator to money-grubber, his new priorities exemplified by the depiction of him indulging in the crudest form of commercial activity, wall-chalking. The Tory satirist George Daniel also exploited Hunt's entrepreneurial activities in 'The Conversazione', his attack glancing at both of Hunt's most notable products: 'Hunt's patent roasted – (rogue in grain! / Whose Blacking makes our leather soon shine)'.⁶⁹ Caricaturists also made sport with Hunt's mercantile activities. Whereas, in the period immediately after Peterloo, Hunt is generally identified in graphic satire by a white hat, after his transmogrification into the successful blacking manufacturer he is frequently portrayed clutching a pot of blacking. The blacking pot, for the caricaturist, becomes a satirical logo denoting Hunt, and the 'Orator' obtains another nickname, 'Matchless', a label literally derived from his branding. 'Blacking Merchant', for example, an anonymous cartoon that dates from around 1826, shows Hunt with a tray of pots draped around his neck. He holds out a blacking pot marked 'Hunt Matchless Blacking' [*sic*] and proffers a handbill that declares 'The cheapest and best, Sold here and at Broad Wall Blackfriars, London. Sold & Blacking exchanged for rags'. While the 'Blacking Merchant's' artist's tone is amused rather than acerbic, William Heath's 'Matchless Eloquence [*sic*] Thrown Away or 267 against little Joey – and his *Shining Friend*' (1831) treats Hunt rather more roughly. The Orator had proposed an amnesty for framebreakers in the House of Commons, but was annihilated in the vote ('267 against'), being supported only by the veteran Radical MP Joseph Hume ('little Joey'). Heath portrays 'Matchless' pouring a huge tide of blacking over the House.⁷⁰ The blacking pot held by the 'Shining Friend' is marked 'Matchless Blacking!! None is genuine without the Signature of the maker Henry Hunt Esqre M- P-'. The sable tide is marked 'A humble Address to his M – –y Praying that he would grant a general

Pardon & Amnesty to the Rioters'. In response to Hunt's oratory, a host of shouted 'Noes' arise from every side of the House, with the one 'Aye' emanating from the hapless Hume. Implicitly, Hunt's blacking resembles his oratory; Heath makes the lavatic outpouring of matchless blacking a metaphor for the cloacal tide of his pernicious radical discourse.

The gleeful use of Hunt's blacking pot found in Heath's politically conservative caricature is also evident in radical satire, most notably in an anonymous broadside published by J. Quick in either 1831 or 1832, 'The Managers [*sic*] Last Kick, or, The Destruction [*sic*] of the Boroughmongers' (figure 25). This attacks Hunt, who had demonstrated a willingness to compromise with the Tories on the coverage of the Reform Bill in order to ensure its passing, as a turncoat to the radical cause. The woodcut shows the heroic figures of Lords Grey, Russell and Brougham. Grey is mounted on a charger and bears a banner with the slogan 'The whole Bill and nothing but the Bill'. His cohorts are forcing the enemies of the bill into a Slough of Despond, where, alongside Wellington and Peel, the supposed apostate Hunt is shown stuck head-first in a bottle of his blacking, with only his top-boots visible. The blacking jar is marked 'Matchless in Impudence and BLACKING!!!!', and, testifying to the depth of the caricaturist's contempt for Hunt, bears a picture of a black rat.⁷¹ The broadside's poetic satire also attacks the 'Blacking maker':

Now there's Hunt that Matchless Man,
In truth he had been lacking,
And so to wash him white,
They smother'd him in Blacking,
Tories they plainly see
Their deeds they will not thrive, sir;
For their Champion Henry Hunt,
Has nearly been buried alive, sir.⁷²

This multi-media satire also contains a prose dialogue, a 'Dialogue between John Bull and his friend, concerning the Row at the King's Theatre with the manager and the Upstart overgrown Performers', which brackets the 'Blacking Maker' with 'Nosey' and 'Lemon Peel', and notes 'That the Blacking man should turn his coat is no wonder.' Hunt's supposed apostasy is also roughly treated in another ultra-Radical broadsheet, this time by the

The Managers LAST KICK, OR, THE DISTRUCTION OF THE BOROUGHMONGERS.

Printed and Sold by J. QUICK, Bowling Green Lane, Clerkenwell, where Hawkers and Shopkeepers may be Supplied.—PRICE ONE PENNY



Figure 25. Woodcut from ‘The Managers Last Kick, or, The Destruction of the Boroughmongers’. Anonymous broadside published by J. Quick (1831 or 1832).

indefatigable incendiary John Morgan, ‘The Present Times, or A Row about the Boroughmongers’:

They tell me the old turn-coat, at the Rotunda clacking,
Some reformer took him by the heel, and smothered
him with blacking,
If so, his loss will not be missed, for him we will never grunt,
For little good we may expect, from such as Harry Hunt.⁷³

Here the ‘true’ Radical takes his revenge on Hunt, and, as in ‘The Managers Last Kick’, it is the satirical *leit motif* of blacking which

serves his purpose. Morgan was probably responsible for another satirical broadside of the early 1830s, 'The New Parliament: or, The House turned Upside-down!', which laments the fact that the reformed House is not a true and representative forum ('Britannia ne'er will brave the storm/ Unless she has a REAL REFORM'). The new members are but a 'scurvy crew', with the supposedly popular representation but a mixture of the freakish (the former prize-fighter John Gully) and the self-serving (Cobbett and Hunt) whose affiliation to the people is mere lip-service, designed purely to further their own careers. Hunt's entrepreneurial activities are a principal focus for the attack:

Hunt the radical's turned out,
They say he's mad or thereabout,
He roves about the streets forlorn,
To sell his blacking and roasted corn!⁷⁴

To this satirist, Hunt is little more than a money-grubbing brand peddler, devoted to the service of profit rather than that of the people. Here, as in 'The Present Times', Hunt is an exhibitionist, self-promoting figure, and one who mouths reform purely for his own personal aggrandisement.

Hunt and his blacking also featured in a spat between 'Matchless' and that entertainingly scurrilous journal *Figaro in London*. The issue for 7 December 1833 sees *Figaro* declare open season on Hunt, in a number in which he is systematically baited and where almost all of the journal's satirical squibs involve jibes against his blacking activities. The source of its bile lies in Hunt's recent libel case against the *True Sun*. During the case, Hunt had called *Figaro* a 'contemptible publication'. The Orator, who had sued for £5,000, was awarded minimal damages of a farthing, leading *Figaro* to comment gleefully that Hunt 'unfortunately seems to have valued [his character] at *four millions eight hundred thousand times* more than it was worth'. In 'The Hunted Rat', the journal skewers Hunt's willingness to trade in personal abuse and character assassination: 'Hunt the Blacking-man, the gentleman who in politics is always in the *rear*, while in business is always in the *van*; the individual who deals out *blacking* for boots, and *blacking* for characters with equal readiness'.⁷⁵ The number is peppered with such satirical vitriol:

Riddle

'Why is Hunt's impudence like his blacking?' *Answer*. 'Because 'tis Matchless'.⁷⁶

Epigram

(More salve for Hunt)

Blacken his character! indeed*That* to deny I will make bold;

For no one ('tis by all agreed)

Would seek to gild refined gold,

So no one yet also ever yet

Was known to try and *blacken* jet.⁷⁷

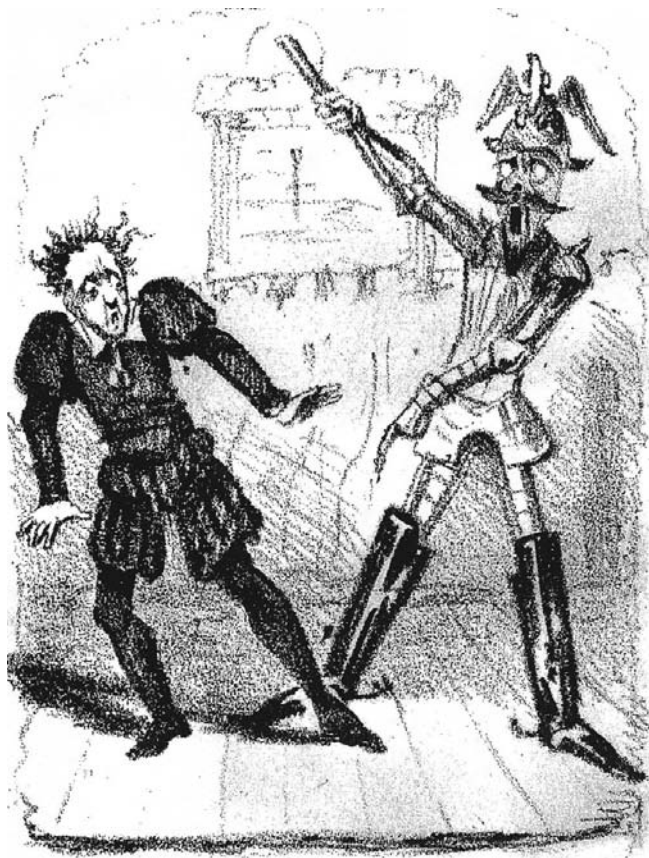
To *Figaro*, Hunt's character is as black as his most notable product. This decidedly tempting, if somewhat obvious, pun was employed by several other wits with an antipathy to Hunt. In *The Age Reviewed* (1828), the Tory satirist Robert Montgomery lambastes Hunt in his usual splenetic manner:

Obscure in print, but splendid on our shoes,
 Unmatched in Billingsgate, for black abuse, –
 Grossness in port, and baseness in his eye,
 I see the Punch of hustings dangle by, –
 The farmer's Alfred, – brazen-visaged Hunt,
 Whom Baron Leatherbrains can scarce confront;
 Embalm'd in dunghills, – figur'd on the wall, –
 In universal fame, Hunt beats them all!⁷⁸

Montgomery sees the success of Hunt and Doctor Eady as symbolic of all that is wrong with the current 'Babylonian' state of London: 'Hunt turns shoe-black to his dear-lov'd land/ And poisonous Eady dirt the lazy hand.'⁷⁹ The comparison to Eady is not casual; to Montgomery, Hunt's radical politics are pure quackery. Here at least the Ultra-Tory concurs with Hunt's opponents within oppositionalist politics; the Orator's character is as black as his 'Matchless', and his self-publicising political polemics are as much puffery as the advertising strategies used to endorse his products.

IV

The caricatures that deal with Henry Hunt and his matchless blacking are not the only examples of blacking-related graphic satire in the Romantic period. Figure 26 shows Robert Seymour's 'Scene from Hamlet', which was published in the eighth number of the *Looking Glass* (1 August 1830). It is telling that the ghost



SCENE FROM HAMLET,
 Ghost— Mark Me
 Hamlet— I will !!!
 Ghost sings— The Blacking most approved throught
 the land
 Is Robert Warrens 30 Strand .

Figure 26. Robert Seymour, 'Scene from Hamlet'. From *The Looking Glass*, no. 8 (1 August 1830).

uses a jingle, indicating, of course, the familiarity of Warren's metrical methods. This Shakespearean travesty exploits a dislocation between elevated *mise en scène* and the everyday rhetoric of promotional copy. However, amusing though this might be,

Seymour is actually trailing in the wake of Warren's copywriters, who consistently exploited the same differential in their work. Indeed, were it not for the crudity of the sketch, it is entirely imaginable that this illustration could have done service as a Warren puff, given that it echoes the comic use of Shakespearean rhetoric in the 'Shaksperiana' and 'Romeo and Juliet' advertisements discussed above.

Seymour's is but one example of Romantic period blacking-related burlesque, the most sustained and important example of which is William Frederick Deacon's *Warreniana; with Notes, Critical and Explanatory, by the Editor of a Quarterly Review* (1824). Deacon's book, published anonymously, purported to contain ringing endorsements of Robert Warren by many of the leading literary figures (Byron, Coleridge, Scott and Wordsworth among them) and journals (*Blackwood's*, *John Bull*, *The New Monthly Magazine*) of the day. The central conceit of this delightful and engaging book is that Warren has hired the most eminent writers of the day to write blacking puffs. Each author is instructed to produce his copy in his own characteristic style. This enables Deacon to offer nimble and acute parodies of a wide range of contemporary writing, from the captious prose of William Gifford and the febrile sermons of Edward Irving to the historiography of Charles Mills.⁸⁰ However, the majority of the parodies are poetic. Indeed, given the importance of jingle to Warren's puffs, it is highly appropriate that poetry features largely in these spoof advertisements. Thus, for example, 'Lord B.' endorses Robert Warren, in Deacon's brilliant parody of *Childe Harold*, 'The Childe's Pilgrimage'. Deacon's Childe is one Higgins of Limehouse, a merchant in a less than fashionable part of east London, who manifests some of the characteristics of the Byronic hero, tormented as he is by world-weariness, despair and a particularly unpleasant toothache. Higgins's journey is somewhat shorter than Harold's, a westward pilgrimage across London to the 'sacred shrine' that is Warren's blacking shop. The following passage depicts Higgins approaching 30 Strand. He gazes raptly at Warren's nameplate and sign-board (a pendant boot), his mind full of gloomy Romantic meditation. Deacon begins in the manner of Canto III of *Childe Harold* (1816), in poetry that would not have disgraced Byron if

taken at face value, an imitative manoeuvre which heightens the comic effect of the burlesque second stanza:

18.

Our life is one fierce fever – death the leech
Who lulls each throb; – the has been, and to be; –
The sole divine whose welcome aid can teach
The mysteries of a dread futurity. –
Come when he may, his advent will to me
Be spring and sunshine for my soul is dark,
And o'er the billows of life's shoreless sea,
A sea uncheered by hope's celestial ark,
Cradled in storms and winds floats lone my little bark.

19.

Thus mused the Childe, as thoughtful he drew near
The sacred shrine of Number Thirty, Strand,
And saw – bright glittering in the hemisphere –
Like stars on moony nights – a sacred band
Of words that formed the bard's cognomen – grand
Each letter shone beneath the eye of day,
And the proud sign boot, by spring breezes fanned,
Shot its brass reflections' o'er the way
As shoots the tropic morn o'er meads of Paraguay.⁸¹

'Scott', too, endorses Robert Warren, in Deacon's parody of *Marmion*, offering the manufacturer a 'meed/ Of laudatory rhymes':

Enough for me on summer day,
To pipe some simple oaten lay,
Of goblin page or border fray,
To rove in thought through Teviotdale,
Where Melrose wanes a ruin pale,
(The sight and sense with awe attacking,)
Or skim Loch Katrine's burnished flood,
Or wade through Grampian moor and mud,
In boots baptized with WARREN'S BLACKING.⁸²

An interesting coda to this parody lies in the fact that Warren himself offered an imitation of a Scottish martial ballad song in imitation of Burns's 'Scots Wha Hae' in 'Warren's Address to his Northern Friends', published in the 1820s:

Scots in native merit clad,
Scots to high refinement sped,
Welcome ye by fashions led,

Onward thus to victory,
 Now's the time, the Strand the place,
 Issuing thence the charm to grace
 All of SCOTIA's honoured race,
 Land of Love and Bravery.

In the face of such acts of cultural appropriation, it is sometimes hard to distinguish between parodic engagement with Warren's copy and the imitative and parodic nature of that copy. Deacon's burlesque, in effect, offers a parodic engagement with that which is itself deeply involved in the parodic.

As is evident in the Byron and Scott imitations, much of the comedy in *Warreniana* derives from the traditional burlesque mismatch between poetic style and subject matter. Deacon's book stands in the burlesque tradition that is generally supposed to have been initiated by Isaac Hawkins Browne the elder's *A Pipe of Tobacco: In Imitation of Six Several Authors* (1736), where a series of authors ostensibly write on the same subject, with the themes chosen generally humdrum in order to enhance the comic possibilities of the parody. This methodology is also evident in 'Old Cumberland Pedlar', Deacon's parody of *The Excursion*. Here Wordsworth's 'Wanderer', a rather metaphysically inclined former pedlar, is transformed into a kind of Lake District wall-chalker. Deacon's pedlar is a retired agent for Warren's blacking who still puffs his former employer in lapidary tribute:

It chanced one summer morn I passed the clefts
 Of Silver-How, and turning to the left,
 Fast by the blacksmith's shop, two doors beyond
 Old Stubb's, the tart-woman's, approached a glen
 Secluded as a coy nun from the world.
 Beauteous it was but lonesome, and while I
 Leaped up for joy to think that earth was good
 And lusty in her boyhood, I beheld
 Graven on the tawny rock these magic words,
 'BUY WARREN'S BLACKING' ...⁸³

Here we see devices that are common in *Warreniana*, notably comic anticlimax and, most importantly, incongruity between form and content. And Deacon's methodology also offers insightful commentary upon the nature of commercial copy-writing; his use of the mock-heroic is highly appropriate, given

that advertising is so often dependent upon the rhetorical elevation of the mundane.

Several of Deacon's parodies feature Warren himself as hero. 'The Dream', one of the finest contemporary parodies of Coleridge, contains a spoof 'Advertisement', in the manner of Coleridge's 'Of the Fragment of "Kubla Khan"' (1816), which details the supposed origins of that poem in a 'sleep (at least of the external senses)'. Instead of reading about Kubla Khan's 'palace', Deacon's Coleridge has been poring over a report of a boxing match, prompting him into composing a marvellously sustained poetical account of a pugilistic contest between Robert Warren and Satan, called to decide which of Warren's blacking and the waters of the Styx is the darker. Warren prevails. Throughout the poem, the structural parodic device of the comic misapplication of grotesquery is used to great effect:

Then trumpet, and timbrel, and deafening shout,
Like wind through a ruin rung lustily out,
High o'er the rocks that jut over the deep,
Where the souls of the damned to eternity weep;
Echo threw forward her answer of fear,
Dull as the dust that clanks over a bier,
Or death-watch that beats in a sick man's ear,
From the gulph where they howl to the lead-colored night,
The shadowless spectres leaped up with delight,
And 'Buy Warren's Blacking' they shouted aloud,
As the night-wind sighs through a coffinless shroud.⁸⁴

In a splendid piece of opportunistic advertising, Warren's used a truncated version of 'The Dream' in a handbill that dates from around 1830, 'Warreniana; A Tale, after the manner of the "Rejected Addresses"'. Deacon must have enjoyed the irony in the realisation of his conceit; here 'Coleridge' does indeed advertise Warren's blacking.

Robert Warren also appears as the principal character of Deacon's brilliant parody of James Hogg's 'Kilmenny', 'Warren in Fairy Land'. Here it is Warren (who has fallen drunkenly asleep on Hampstead Heath) rather than Kilmenny who is stolen by the fairies and the allegorical historical panorama shown to Hogg's heroine is replaced by a prophetic vision of the future global success of his blacking. The fairies (whose hall contains a fountain overflowing

with Warren's blacking) show him how his Strand premises will eventually become a place of pilgrimage:

He look'd, and aneath him lay merrie England;
 Men rushed frae a' quarters towards the Strand,
 For close whar as yet Saint Clement is seen,
 A temple superb, and refulgent of mien,
 Arrested the e'e wi' these words on its gate,
 'ERECTED IN HONOUR OF WARREN THE GREAT;'
 Then bowed at this modern saint Becket's shrine,
 Prince, peasant, and peer, as to something divine . . . ⁸⁵

From London to the Cape,⁸⁶ from Spitzbergen to Mecca, declare the fairies, Warren's blacking will rule the realm of fashion. Indeed, fashion and its commercialisation is a central preoccupation of *Warreniana*, a book much concerned with contemporary sartorial trends and consumer culture. However, Deacon finds the appurtenances of fashionable life engaging and entertainingly various and this is not some Johnsonian attack on empty and vulgar materialism. Even when he momentarily adopts the tone of anti-luxurious satire, as in his parody of C. H. Townshend, 'The Triumph of Warren', Deacon ironises it in his attendant celebration of the manufacturer Warren, who is portrayed as standing above an age given to the slavish adoption of each successive fashion and the consumption of products promoted by relentless 'puffs' and 'quackery'.⁸⁷ Deacon is no stern moralist. Neither does he share the sour tone evident in contemporary anti-consumerist Juvenalian satire such as Robert Montgomery's *The Age Reviewed*. Though he is not blind to its ironies, his work has an amused regard for mercantile culture and, most particularly, for the resourceful nature of the self-promotional strategies employed in advertising copy. And the supreme example of the art of advertising for Deacon is Robert Warren. Deacon's preoccupation with the likes of Day and Martin and Robert Warren reflects the quotidian spirit of the age, providing an alternative context of the commercial and the ephemeral to the literary, political and intellectual company assembled in Hazlitt's *The Spirit of the Age*. To the modern reader, Wordsworth is most representative of the spirit of the Romantic age. However, in *Warreniana*, he is supplanted by Robert Warren, another figure with his own undeniable form of creative, if capitalistic, genius. Warren is the epitome of, to use Neil McKendrick's term, the 'entrepreneurial imagination'.⁸⁸

Wordsworthian Romanticism offers a self-referentiality which unconsciously echoes advertising and is a literary form that claims individuality and uniqueness in a manner entirely familiar to advertising men. Where the Romantic poet, in Wordsworth's phrase, rejects a literary manner whose 'whole vocation / Were endless imitation',⁸⁹ Warren scorns 'a host of servile imitators'. The copywriter's exhortation to 'avoid all imitations' echoes the Romantic repudiation of neoclassical poetics. Both poet and advertiser, to quote Warren's most famous puff, offer 'An Improvement upon Mirrors'. Repudiating the imitative also invokes Romanticism's anxiety about the unsettling nature of, to borrow a phrase from Hogg, the 'poetic mirror', that is, parody. After all, part of parody's function is 'copy writing' in another sense of the term to that used in advertising. *Warreniana's* parody sees poets and advertisers engaging in remarkably similar rhetorical strategies. Perhaps Deacon's world is not so far-fetched as it initially appears.

CHAPTER 4

'Publicity to a lottery is certainly necessary': Thomas Bish and the culture of gambling

A world of words, tail foremost, where
Right – wrong – false – true – and foul – and fair
As in a lottery-wheel are shook.

P. B. Shelley, *Peter Bell the Third* (1819)

In evidence given to the Parliamentary Committee on the Laws relating to Lotteries on 7 April 1808, the lottery-office entrepreneur and indefatigable self-publicist Thomas Bish declared that 'Publicity to a Lottery is certainly necessary'.¹ This chapter addresses that publicity, focusing most particularly upon a fascinating but little-known moment in English social history: the final draw of the English State Lottery, which was held in October 1826. It also pays much attention to Bish himself, as the figure most associated with the lottery in the minds of the contemporary English public. The proprietor of lottery offices at Cornhill, Charing Cross and in several provincial cities, Bish became a figure of some fame and notoriety in the early part of the nineteenth century on account of his striking lottery puffs. Here I examine his promotional methods, contextualise them against the background of the increasing middle-class disapproval of lotteries which led to their eventual abolition, and discuss the satirical response to the abolition of the lottery, to Thomas Bish, and to the final draw – the 'Last, the downright Last'² as S. T. Coleridge called it, a body of work to which such important Romantic period figures as Charles Lamb and Thomas Hood made significant contributions.

I

The present age is not the first period in English history to manifest widespread enthusiasm for a national lottery. For several centuries, until their abolition in 1826, the English public

had delighted in lotteries, both state-run and private.³ Lotteries date at least as far back as the mid-sixteenth century, to the Elizabethan lottery of 1566⁴ which was chartered to raise funds for improvements to key English ports to ward off the threat of invasion. In the early decades of the seventeenth century, the Virginia company settled parts of the United States through lotteries and London's sanitation was improved in the 1620s through a viaduct funded by lottery. However, the most systematic and important lotteries in English history – before the establishment of the present National Lottery – were the state lotteries that began in the last decade of the seventeenth century. From the 1730s onwards, lotteries were held to fund large building projects such as the British Museum. When Wordsworth stands on Westminster Bridge in 1802, for example, he stands upon an edifice primarily funded from the proceeds of state lotteries drawn between 1736 and 1740. Between 1769 and 1826, 126 state lotteries were held to finance grand public works such as bridge and road building. Tickets were expensive, at £20 each,⁵ and prizes enormous, rising from £10,000 to £20,000 and eventually to the multiple prizes (three at least) of £30,000 which were available in the final draws held in the early nineteenth century. Few could afford full tickets and people generally bought 'shares', or fractions of tickets, down to a sixteenth. Even a sixteenth of £20 was a considerable sum in this period, of course, the high price being the result of the government's wish to prevent the poor from gambling. However, the indigent could and did bet on the lottery, either through forming syndicates to buy shares or by placing illegal side-bets or 'insurances' with 'morocco-men'⁶ (named after their leather wallets) on whether or not a particular number would be drawn. As *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* noted in 1849, 'Those who had not money to pay for tickets might insure a certain number for a small sum, and thus obtain a prize; and so lottery grew upon lottery, and the sphere was indefinitely extended.'⁷ And those who could not contain their gaming enthusiasm in periods between state lotteries sometimes participated in small, illegal lottery draws called 'little goes'.

State lottery tickets were sold in a number of different places: at booksellers, in special booths and, most notably, at dedicated 'lottery offices'. Agents made money by purchasing tickets at a

discount or reselling shares at a markup, demonstrating great ingenuity in marketing their wares. The draws were widely advertised in endless paid press columns, but also by the use of handbills, wall-posters, sandwich-men and roadside advertisement, and by public spectacle such as torch-lit processions. Lottery advertisements peppered the pages of London and regional newspapers, alongside the situations vacant, auction notices and the inevitable quack medicines. For example, in October 1792, the *Cambridge Chronicle and Journal* carried advertisements for no fewer than four London lottery offices: Richardson, Goodluck and Co. of Cornhill and Charing Cross, Hornsby and Co. of Cornhill, Thomas Wilkie of St. Paul's Churchyard, and Wright's of Charing Cross. Then, as now, acres of print were devoted to the lottery: manuals, astrological tip-sheets and dedicated journals (the *Lottery Magazine* most notably). There was also widespread newspaper coverage of major winners⁸ and of those less fortunately affected by the lottery, notably hapless suicides prompted to self-destruction by unwise speculation in tickets.⁹

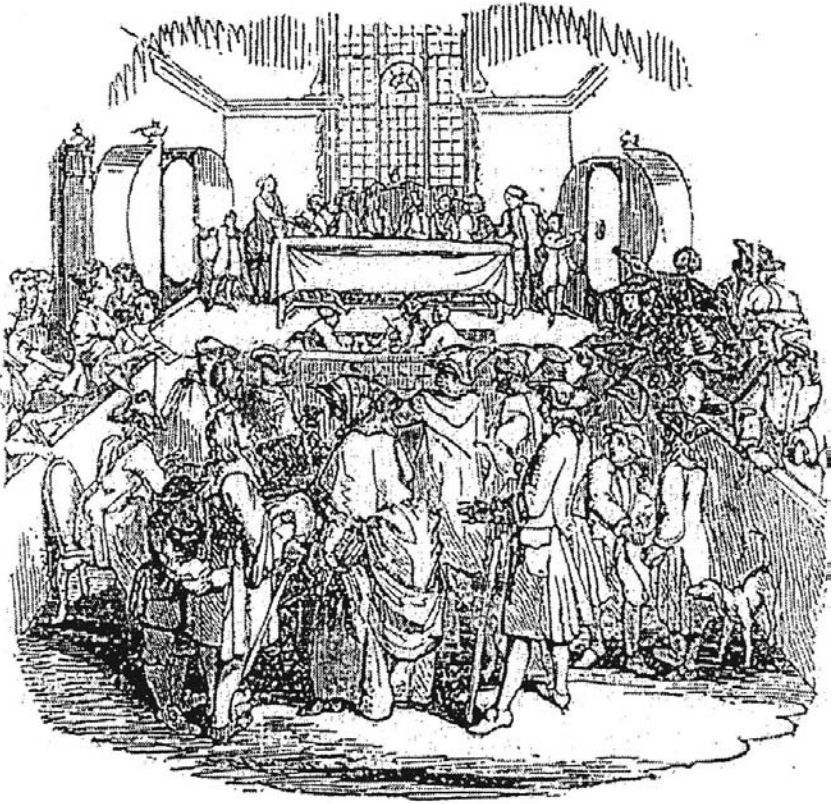
The draws themselves were carefully stage-managed. They were held in drawing ceremonies at Guildhall which could continue for some weeks. As in the Spanish state lottery, which is drawn to this day by choristers, children were used to conduct the draw. The school chosen was Christ's Hospital, an establishment notable in the literary history of the Romantic period as the *alma mater* of S. T. Coleridge, Leigh Hunt and Charles Lamb. Indeed, the latter author offers a valuable eyewitness account of the drawing in 'The Illustrious Defunct', his elegiac meditation on the demise of the lottery. Lamb describes a visit that he made as a child to the Guildhall, where he saw boys from his school drawing the winning tickets:

Never can the writer forget when, as a child, he was hoisted upon a servant's shoulder in Guildhall, and looked down upon the installed and solemn pomp of the then drawing Lottery. The two awful cabinets of iron, upon whose massy and mysterious portals, the royal initials were gorgeously emblazoned, as if after having deposited the unfulfilled prophecies within, the King himself had turned the lock and still retained the key in his pocket; – the blue-coat boy, with his naked arm, first converting the invisible wheel, and then diving into the dark recesses for a ticket; – the grave and reverend faces of the commissioners eyeing the announced number; – the scribes below calmly committing it

to their huge books; – the anxious countenances of the surrounding populace . . . constituted altogether a scene, which combined with the sudden wealth supposed to be lavished from those inscrutable wheels, was well calculated to impress the imagination of a boy with reverence and amazement.¹⁰

The modern reader might well find this ceremony a rather more appealing ritual than that of the present-day National Lottery draw, with its pop groups, frenzied audience participation and employment of D-list celebrities as masters of ceremony. In the *Every-Day Book* (1826–7), which contains the most valuable collection of lottery-related materials dating from this period,¹¹ Lamb's friend William Hone reproduces two cuts that illustrate the draws and these are reproduced as figures 27 and 28. Figure 27, by N. Parr, which is undated, shows a lottery draw from the mid-eighteenth century and figure 28 the lottery wheel used in the last draw.

Into the midst of this preoccupation with the lottery, a preoccupation which the *Annual Register* for 1775 labelled 'lottery mania', stepped Thomas Bish, proprietor of two of the most notable lottery offices, at 4 Cornhill and 9 Charing Cross. In the early part of the nineteenth century the tireless self-promotions of Bish, the most entrepreneurial of the office keepers, transformed him into the iconic figure of the contemporary lottery. He first became a licensed lottery-office keeper in 1790,¹² and was partner to the long-standing stockbroker and lottery agent Sir James Branscomb until 1798, when he became sole proprietor of the office at 4 Cornhill and established an office in Manchester.¹³ Bish publicised his premises as 'the luckiest offices in the kingdom', boasting in an advertisement that dates from the early 1820s that he had sold 'all the three thirty thousands' in one particular draw. However lucky his offices might have been, Bish's fame was primarily the consequence of his striking lottery puffs and he is a figure of some consequence in the history of late Georgian advertising. As John Ashton writes in *A History of English Lotteries* (1893), Bish is a publicist 'before whom our most celebrated advertising firms must "hide their diminished heads" and from whom they might take many useful lessons'.¹⁴ Bish was a highly resourceful advertiser whose newspaper puffs, handbills, placard-men, sandwich-men, advertising vehicles and wall-posters were well known in Romantic period London. He and his copywriters



Drawing Prizes.

Figure 27. N. Parr, 'Drawing Prizes' (n.d.).

poured forth a stream of advertisements in the first decades of the nineteenth century (indeed, the British Library has two entire volumes mounted with Bish puffs). The importance of Bish and his fellow lottery-office keepers to the development of contemporary advertising was recognised by Lamb, who writes in 'The Illustrious Defunct' that modern puffery is gravely threatened by the impending abolition of the lottery:

And who, too, shall maintain the art and mystery of puffing in all its pristine glory when the lottery professors shall have abandoned its

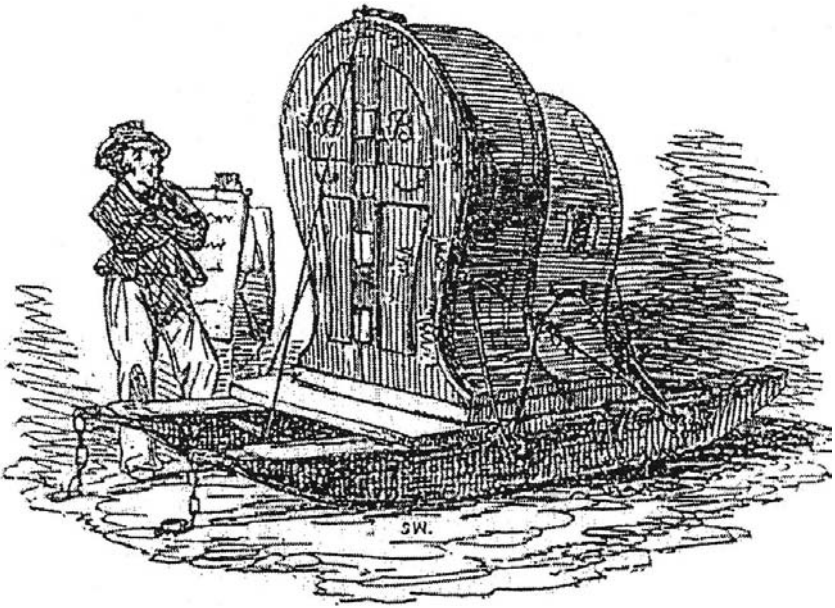


Figure 28. 'The Lottery Wheel, 1826', artist unknown.

cultivation? They were the first . . . who fully developed the resources of that ingenious art; who cajoled and decoyed the most suspicious and wary reader into a perusal of their advertisements by devices of endless variety and cunning . . . Ought not such talents to be encouraged?¹⁵

To get a sense of the 'endless variety' cultivated by the 'lottery professors', one might examine the publicity surrounding a single lottery draw, that of 14 February 1810.¹⁶ Figure 29 shows the state-produced window-bill. The woodcut, itself a striking visual image, with its sharp-beaked bird of prey and horns of plenty, was complemented by many ingenious commercial advertisements. The fact that the draw was to be held on St Valentine's Day prompted much opportunistic advertising along amorous lines. Figures 30 and 31, engravers' designs for lottery handbills, show Cupid presiding over the lottery. Presumably the artists did not intend to make the connection, but there is a tempting visual pun here, given that both cuts clearly link the god of love with the decidedly baser form of love, cupidity, encouraged by the lottery. Figure 32 shows an anonymous handbill, 'A Valentine', in which marginal

LOTTERY

STATE

RICH WHEEL

ONLY 5,000 Numbers, WITH £200,000 IN PRIZES. The Whole to be Drawn IN ONE DAY.

To be Drawn
FEBRUARY 14,
1810.

One Number will gain
£80,000.

Tickets & Shares
ARE SELLING
At all the Lottery
OFFICES.

NEW SCHEME.

	£.	£.
4	20,000	80,000
4	5,000	20,000
12	1,000	12,000
20	500	10,000
20	100	2,000
44	50	2,200
86	25	900
4,860	15	72,900
5,000 Prizes		209,000

Figure 29. Window Bill for the State Lottery, 14 February 1810.



Figure 30. Handbill for the State Lottery, 14 February 1810.

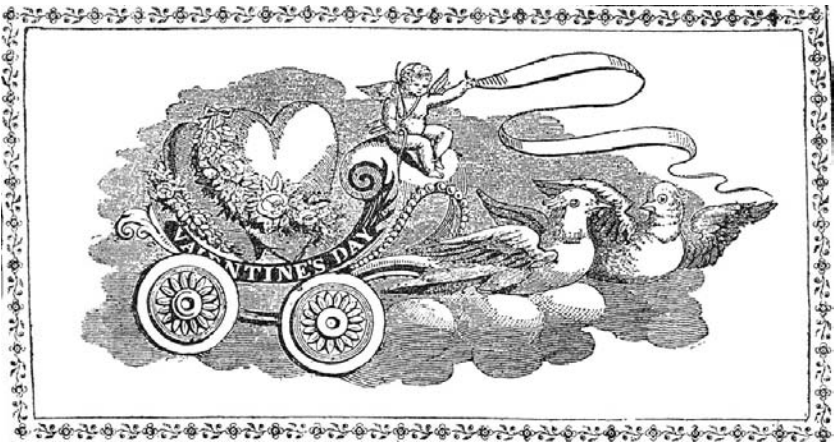


Figure 31. Handbill for the State Lottery, 14 February 1810.

cuts on each side illustrate the jingle verse. This parodic Valentine's card employs the erotic symbolism usual in such mis-sives, but inverts them in its endorsement of money over love. Inevitably, Bish made his own contribution to the Valentine's Day

A VALENTINE



No fresh Damask Rose, when
held to the Nose,

No Cowslip or Daffy-down-
dilly,

No Hyacinth's bloom, or Pink's
rich perfume,

Nor Jessamine sweet, nor the
Lily;

These Emblems of Love, *this*
Knot or *this* Dove;

This Pair, or *this* One with a
Letter,

This Torch and *these* Darts,
these two wounded Hearts,

Nor Cupid, nor Hymen's
round Fetter;

Not *all these* Devices can
match the great Prizes,

Nor can Bacchus or Venus so
brisk,

Afford such a boon
As next Valentine's Noon,

When the Prizes are gained
without risk.



Figure 32. 'A Valentine'. Handbill for the State Lottery, 14 February 1810.

Lottery rodomontade, with his jingle ‘Public Prizes. By a Prize-Master’ (to the tune of ‘Ye Scamps, ye Pads, ye Divers’):

The Theme I mean’s the Lottery, on Valentine they draw,
With Prizes full 5,000, a scheme to gain *éclat*;
Two Hundred Thousand Pounds in all; among them too you have
Twelve £1000’s, *Four* £5000’s and *Four* £20000’s – brave
With a tol, etc.

However, in this instance, Bish has to cede the palm to his rivals at Hazard and Co. of Royal Exchange Gate, 26 Cornhill and 324 Oxford Street, whose work on this occasion is superior to that of Bish. It includes these jocular measures:

The *Prize Bird* of VENUS, commissioned by LOVE,
The bounties of FORTUNE this Month to display,
Announces to all who her favours would prove,
That the Lottery draws on St. Valentine’s Day.
Young maidens for Lovers no more need despair,
Since FORTUNE and LOVE have together combin’d,
To bestow their best gifts on the youth and the Fair,
Who by HYMEN’s soft fetters would wish to be join’d.

Here love and money commingle¹⁷ rather than compete, and Hazard’s handbills are illustrated by a cut that illustrates this, figure 33, ‘All in One Day’.

Hazard also used the Valentine’s Day lottery to engage in literary associationism, in an imitation of Hamlet:

THE DOUBT.

To buy, or not to buy, that’s the question,
Whether ’tis nobler in the purse to suffer
The mournful emptiness of Fortune’s daughter,
Or to buy Tickets at a Lott’ry Office,
And by a Prize to end them. A Prize! Hard Cash!
And by possession of that cash to end
The heart-ache, and a thousand cruel shocks
That Poverty is heir to.¹⁸

Strong though the Hazard puffs are, it is decidedly rare for Bishian copy to be surpassed in ingenuity. Using both verse and prose, text-only and display copy, Bish’s puffs hymned the fortunes to be reaped from his tickets. Thus, for instance, in his ‘The Philosopher’s Stone’, Bish cajoles customers thus:



Figure 33. 'All in One Day'. Detail from lottery handbill for Hazard and Co. for the State Lottery of 14 February 1814.

THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE

----- That stone

Philosophers in vain so long have sought.

Says Milton, would not prove more valuable to its possessor than an absolute knowledge of *certain* numbers which be hidden in the Wheel of Fortune till fate declares to the enraptured ears of the adventurer, who has founded his hopes of success on them, their union with *certain* large sums of money, viz. Twenty, Ten, or Five thousand pounds; for there are many such sums yet in the wheel, yet to be determined, yet to be gained by hazarding a mere trifle.

The copywriter then launches into verse,¹⁹ comparing the footling price of a sixteenth of a ticket with the largesse to be won from it:

He, whose life's seas successfully would sail,
 Must often throw a sprat to catch a whale,
 Apply this proverb then; think, ere too late,
 What fortune, honour, and what wealth await
 The very trifling sum of one pound eight.

Bish used jingle copy consistently from the first decade of the nineteenth century, the opening stanza of his ‘How to be Happy’ illustrating his copy’s poetic manner well:

Let misers hug their worshipp’d hoards,
 And lock their chests with care;
 Whilst we enjoy what life affords,
 With spirits light as air.
 For our days shall haily gaily be,
 Prizes in store before us,
 We’ll spend our ev’nings merrily,
 And BISH we’ll toast in chorus.

Similarly, another undated puff, ‘The Lottery Alphabet’, also employs jocular light verse:

A stands for *All* who for Affluence wish,
 B means *Be* sure *Buy* a Ticket of BISH,
 C *Cash* in plenty by BISH you may gain;
 D *Don’t Delay* soon a Chance to obtain;
 E shows that *Every One*, if he is wise,
 F would *Find out* where to purchase a Prize
 G *Gives* the place; it is 4, in Cornhill . . .

The earliest Bishian jingle puff of which I am aware, ‘Freeholds and Fortunes. By Peter Pun’, which dates from 1808, was produced for the City Lottery, an extraordinary lottery specially licensed by Parliament to dispose of unlet but hugely expensive property in the City of London:²⁰

With Poverty who would be known,
 And live upon orts in a garret, sir;
 Who could get a good *house* of his own,
 And fatten on roast beef and claret, sir;
 In the *City Scheme* this you’ll obtain,
 At Bish’s where folks *pell-mell* come;
 By a ticket a *free*-hold you’ll gain,
 And it cannot be more *free* than *welcome*.
Rum ti iddity, etc.

Bish then tempts the purchaser with visions of the prize returned in the then modish Egyptianised style:

This House, when you once realize it,
 Upholders will look sharp as lynxes,
 For an order to *Egyptianize* it,
 With Catacomb fal-lals and sphynxes.



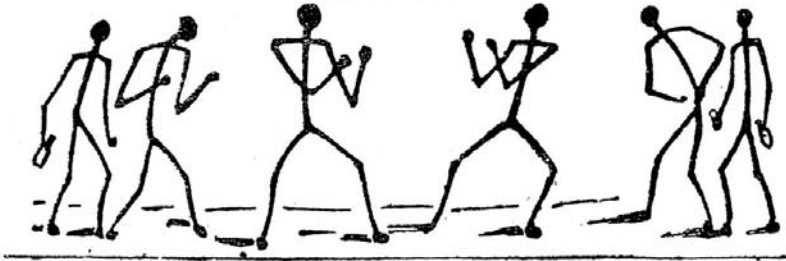
Figure 34. Handbill for Thomas Bish (1809).

rapprochement with Turkey and Persia and the reinforcement of economic links with the Levant were important parts of the British recovery from the recession, most evident in 1808, caused by the various Napoleonic trade blockades and sanctions. Bish's copywriter captures the political resonance of the moment, with Bonaparte harumphing from the outside:

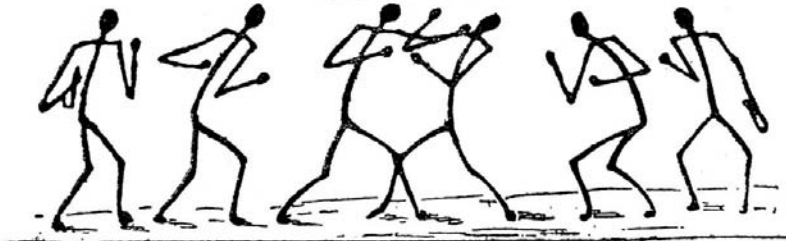
The Persian Ambassador's come to town
Heigho! says Boney;

SPORT FOR THE FANCY.

SET TO.



A FACER.



A FLOORER.



Having both had enough,
Of amusement so rough,
They agree to shake hands and be friends;

While the conqueror cries,
"Jack, a Lott'ry Prize,
"Will make for my *flbbing* amends."

Figure 35. 'Sport for the Fancy'. Handbill for Thomas Bish (1810s).

RAPTURE.

A Member rehearsing his Speech



SIR WILLIAM COURTEOUS.

Hear him! hear him! Order! Order!
All the Court is in disorder!
I echo, Sir, the *Public voice*—
What I hold here's the *People's choice*
A num'rous host stood forth of late,
And BISH was chosen candidate
The loans of Fortune to supply
From the rich New Year's Lottery,
In Sterling Money—(*Hear him, hear him!*)
The *Ayes* have got it. (*Chair him, chair him!*)

Lottery begins 21st This Month (Jan.)—2 of 20,000 Guineas, and
40 other Capitals—all Sterling Money (no Stock Prizes.)

Figure 36. 'Rapture'. Handbill for Thomas Bish (early 1820s).

He's a person of rank and renown,
Says in Persia they'll knock all French politics down,
With their *Parlez vous, Voulez vous*, gammon and spinach too;
Heigho! says Emperor Boney.

The poem engages in sprightly anti-Gallican nosethumbing, with the satire aimed *ad hominem* at Napoleon's sexual infidelity and supposed sterility:

To see the Ambassador all the folks run,
 Heigho! says Boney;
 'He has sixty-three children', says Boney, 'well done!
 What a devil of a fellow! while I haven't *one!*
 With my *Parlez vous, Voulez vous*, Josephine and others too;
 Heigho!' says Emperor Boney.

Buying Bishian lottery tickets becomes, by association, a matter of patriotic duty. Indeed, 'The Persian Ambassador' has clear generic affiliations; the patriotic, anti-French popular song, whether belted in the tavern, printed in a broadsheet or performed at the burletta theatre, was highly familiar to the contemporary British public. The poem goes on to detail the visit of the ambassador to various London landmarks: the Court of St James, the Opera, the playhouse, the East India Company and the Bank of England. These excursions will be followed, of course, by a trip to the lottery office of Thomas Bish:

In what place next will his Excellence hie?
 Heigho! says Boney;
 Perhaps, if he means his good fortune to try,
 To BISH's a lottery ticket to buy,
 With his *Parlez vous, Voulez vous*, good lucky Number too,
 Heigho! says Emperor Boney.

Equally opportunistic is the appropriation of the royal marriage controversy, with the 1820 trial of Queen Caroline being co-opted for a Bishian lottery-bill. The key prosecution witness Signor Majochi's often-repeated answer to Lord Brougham's interrogations, 'non mi ricordo' ('I don't recollect'), became famous throughout the land, with the phrase prompting a large number of radical satires, from the anonymous *Non Mi Ricordo Songbook* to Leigh Hunt's twin *Examiner* satires 'Memory or Want of Memory' and 'Non mi Ricordo' and William Hone's own *Non Mi Ricordo!* However, oppositionalist satirists were not the only writers to find the moment of utility. Bish's copywriters offered their own parodic version of the episode, 'Non Mi Ricordo', a handbill that dates from late 1820, and which clearly imitates the metre and catechetical manner of Hunt's 'Memory or Want of Memory':²²

NON MI RICORDO!

OR,

A few Questions on a new Subject.

QUESTION.

GOOD Signor, if your memory serves,
A question I would ask or two;
Then pray may I the favour beg,
That you will answer, if I do?

ANSWER.

Non mi ricordo, I can't say,
Whether my mem'ry serves or no;
But let me hear them first, I pray;
What I remember you shall know.

QUESTION.

Since Lotteries in this realm began,
And many good ones there have been,
Do you suppose the oldest man,
So good a Scheme as this has seen?

ANSWER.

Non mi ricordo, surely no;
Comparisons are idle tales,
For such a Lottery Scheme as this,
I must confess my memory fails.

QUESTION.

Now what peculiar features, pray,
Distinguish this from all the rest?
And why do all the people say
'Unquestionably this is best!'

ANSWER.

Non mi ricordo, 'tis in vain
For me its merits now to say;
To tell them all 'twould take, 'tis plain,
From now until the Drawing Day.

QUESTION.

Its merits I will gladly own,
But folks will questions ask, and pray
If your opinion is requir'd,
Just tell me, sir, what would you say?

ANSWER.

Non mi ricordo, read the Scheme,
One word will answer all your wish

'Tis BISH's plan, 'tis BISH's theme,
It must be good, 'tis plann'd by BISH.

Like Robert Warren, Bish had the good judgement to employ George Cruikshank to provide cuts for a number of his display advertisements. The most notable of these is his 'Fortune's Ladder' (Figure 37), a fine example of well-assimilated jingle and display. As the advertisement says, one must read from the bottom. The puff tells the story of a 'wight, by poverty oppress'd' who, through the good offices of Thomas Bish, is exalted to one 'possess'd of all that wealth can give'. As Marcus Wood has argued, this puff 'is clearly a source'²³ for Hone and Cruikshank's later collaboration *The Queen's Matrimonial Ladder* (1820), a text in which Bish's display copy influences radical satire. This is testament to Hone and Cruikshank's remarkable parodic ingenuity and, it has to be said, Cruikshank's eye for the commercial possibilities of recycling his material. However, if the *Matrimonial Ladder* sees Hone and Cruikshank mining Bishian copy, then one might also remember that this fecund interchange between radical satire and advertising also worked in the opposite direction, given that Bish's 'Non Mi Ricordo' is imitative of the work of the editor of the *Examiner*.²⁴ As so frequently in the Romantic period, advertising and satire are mutually intertwined.

II

Unfortunately for Thomas Bish, his business evaporated in the mid-1820s as a direct result of censorious propagandising against lotteries which eventually led to parliamentary legislation abolishing them which was passed in 1823, with the final draw, after a number of stays of execution, taking place on 18 October 1826. In the first part of the century, much middle-class opinion disapproved of lotteries and their attendant vices and, in particular, their supposedly malign effects on the common people who demonstrated a regrettable enthusiasm for lottery shares and little goes. *Blackwood's* noted that 'The pernicious effect of the lotteries, originally a state device, upon the morals and condition of the lower classes, as testified by the vast increase in crime, became at length so glaring, that these

Fortune's Ladder,

(TO BE READ FROM THE BOTTOM.)

The drift of this Ladder to well comprehend,
Take a Puddy's advice, and begin at the end.

<p>EVALUATION</p>	<p>(10.) Possess' of all that wealth can give, To spite his now begins to live; His carriage leaves, but yet can spare A fortune to his son and heir. <i>Finis.</i></p>
<p>CONCOCTATION</p>	<p>(9.) His friends, relations, anders, assist, To wish him joy, back to by desire; And those who count him still their Obsessions head into the floor. [dram. [Go to No 10.]</p>
<p>ALTERATION</p>	<p>(8.) And now, behold, how strange the scene, To what it formerly had been; No more he sees, and quite a brand, While wealth & glory crown his hand. [Go to No 9.]</p>
<p>QUALIFICATION</p>	<p>(7.) To BISH he goes, with Prizes to hand, Who pays the Money on demand, With many thanks for favours past, And hoping that his luck may last. [Go to No 8.]</p>
<p>INFORMATION</p>	<p>(6.) Not long he waits—the lucky touch Whence the Prize, produces the truth And in his breast "fond hopes arise, It is a Twenty Thousand Prize!" [Go to No 7.]</p>
<p>EXPECTATION</p>	<p>(5.) At home arriv'd, he tells his dear, And unusually expects to hear The glorious, heart-inspiring sound... "Thy draws a Twenty Thousand Pound!" [Go to No 6.]</p>
<p>ADMIRATION</p>	<p>(4.) And passing by, he saw the Scheme, Of several prizes the Scheme; Then went to BISH, a Ticket bought, To hope that Fortune he had sought. [Go to No 5.]</p>
<p>DETERMINATION</p>	<p>(3.) She answer'd thus:—"If you are wise, "To go to see at BISH's for a Prize." The thought inspir'd with hope the man, Who off to BISH's quickly ran. [Go to No 4.]</p>
<p>CONSULTATION</p>	<p>(2.) "My dearest wife, the times are hot, "And so to Cash it can't be hot; "In this sad plight, what shall we do? "Or, pray what plan can we pursue." [Go to No 3.]</p>
<p>DEPRECIATION</p>	<p>(1.) A night, by poverty oppress'd, By care and creditors distress'd, Thus to his dame in dudgeon said, "While dreams of horror fill'd his head." [Go to No 2.]</p>

BISH, CONTRACTOR FOR ANOTHER LOTTERY,

To be all drawn in Two Days, 2^d and 10th OCTOBER.—Two of £20,000.—Two of £10,000. Ac.—All Sterling Money.—All the 2,500 Tickets drawn the First Day are sure to be Prizes.—Two of £10,000 in the first Fifteen Minutes.—Only 7,500 Tickets.

Tickets and Shares are selling by BISH, Contractor. London,
AND BY HIS AGENTS IN THE COUNTRY.

Figure 37. 'Fortunes's Ladder', advertisement for Thomas Bish (1810s).
Illustration by George Cruikshank.

detestable engines of fraud were suppressed by act of parliament.²⁵ However, it must be acknowledged that moralistic disapproval of lotteries is as old as state lotteries themselves. As early as 1731, the *London Journal* deplored the fashion to go ‘madding after *lotteries*; business is neglected, and poverty, vice, and misery spread among the people’.²⁶ One of the first literary treatments of lotteries dates from this same period, Henry Fielding’s satirical drama *The Lottery: A Farce* (1732): ‘A lottery is a taxation/ Upon all the fools of creation.’²⁷ Grumblings against the lottery continued throughout the eighteenth century. In 1770, the *London Magazine* declared that the lottery was ‘the ruin of trade, the parent of poverty, and the destruction of morality’.²⁸ However, it was not until the early nineteenth century that abolitionists began to get the upper hand, led in large part by the same parliamentary ‘Saints’ who had agitated on other social issues. After the passing of the Bill to abolish the slave trade in early 1807, the evangelical reformer Henry Thornton is supposed to have replied to his friend William Wilberforce’s question of ‘Well, Henry, what shall we abolish next?’ with ‘The lottery, I think!’²⁹ A parliamentary committee was set up in the same year to investigate the lottery. It argued in its second report that ‘the Lottery is so radically vicious, that your Committee feel convinced that, under no system of regulations which can be devised, will it be possible for Parliament to adopt it as an efficient source of Revenue, and at the same time divest it of all the Evils and Calamities of which it has hitherto been so baneful a source’.³⁰ The report went on to maintain that as a consequence of the lottery ‘idleness, dissipation, and poverty, were increased, – the most sacred and confidential trusts were betrayed – domestic comfort was destroyed – madness was often created – suicide itself was produced – and crimes subjecting the perpetrators of them to death were committed’.³¹ Similarly, another House of Commons committee heard evidence in 1816 from a London magistrate who declared that it was ‘a scandal to the government thus to excite people to practise the vice of gaming, for the purpose of drawing a revenue from their ruin; it is an anomalous proceeding by law to declare gambling infamous, to hunt out petty gamblers in their recesses, and cast them into

prison, and by law also to set up the giant gambling of the State Lottery'.³² The jurist continued his testimony by registering the importance, and the malign brilliance, of lottery advertising, which he considered ethically irresponsible. The public was 'encourage[d] to resort to [the lottery] by the most captivating devices which ingenuity, uncontrolled by moral rectitude, can invent'.³³

Antipathetic opinion such as this prompted Bish to launch into print with a staunch defence of the Lottery which was published in the mid-1820s. He allows that the system had historically been 'fraught with some evil', in that 'Insurances were allowed upon the fate of numbers through protracted drawing; and, as these could be effected for very small sums, those who could ill afford loss, imbibed a spirit of gambling'.³⁴ However, Bish argues that the 1809 legislation to draw the lottery in a single day had nullified this danger and that the system as it was currently ordered was ethical, an optional contribution to the public revenue which also provided much-needed employment that would disappear post-abolition:

As it is presently conducted, the Lottery is voluntary Tax, contributed to only by those who can afford it, and collected without trouble or expense; one by which many branches of the revenue are considerably aided, and by means of which hundreds of persons find employment. The wisdom of those who, at this time, resign the income produced by it, and add to the number of unemployed, may . . . surely be questioned.³⁵

Having attacked those wrong-headed, if well-meaning, paternalists who argued that the Lottery had pernicious effects on the poor, Bish goes on to accuse the legislature of hypocrisy in a manner similarly sensitive to the issue of class. Though the modest bourgeois wager on the Lottery is to be abolished, gaming is still much in evidence among the upper classes:

To stake patrimonial estates at hazard or *écarté*, in the purlieu of St James's, is *merely amusement*, but to purchase a ticket in the Lottery, by which a man may gain an estate at a trifling risk, is – *immoral!* Nay, within a few hours of the time I write, were not many of our nobility and senators, some of whom, I dare say, voted against Lotteries, assembled betting thousands upon a *horse race*?³⁶

Unsurprisingly, given that Romantic period parody and satire are consistently and deeply engaged with contemporary

sociopolitical debate, early nineteenth-century satirical writing participates in arguments about the State Lottery (part of the wider satirical attention to gaming in general evident in such poems as Henry Luttrell's *Crockford-House: A Rhapsody* (1827)). Much of the gambling-related satirical writing that specifically engages with the Lottery is Juvenalian in tone, mirroring the abolitionist tract in its emphasis upon the ruinous consequences of lotteries. In 1817 Samuel Roberts produced an abolitionist tract, *The State Lottery*, which included a poetic satire, James Montgomery's 'Thoughts on Wheels', which strongly endorsed the antipathetic line found in the work's prose polemic: 'Then to the Lottery Wheels away,/ The *spirit of gambling* drags his prey'.³⁷ The pamphlet also employs graphic satire, featuring a frontispiece by, somewhat ironically, none other than George Cruikshank, whose business acumen led him to feel no qualms about illustrating abolitionist propaganda in the same period as he was taking Bish's shilling for illustrating lottery puffs. A weeping woman with a starving child laments that her ticket is a blank and a lottery-wall poster pastes a lottery puff over an advertisement for the Bible Society. In the background, the consequences of lottery mania is illustrated by the portrayal of a man hanging from a scaffold at Newgate. As so often in the Romantic period, socio-politically engaged satire goes hand in hand with more orthodox polemic; Roberts's pamphlet is published in the same year as a City of London petition was presented to parliament which called for the abolition of the Lottery.

Thomas Holcroft's *The School for Arrogance* (1791) also raises the spectre of Newgate as the darkest consequence of an obsession with the Lottery. The prologue to Holcroft's comedy, spoken by a news vendor with his tin trumpet and pile of newspapers, contains a sharp rebuke to the lottery-office keepers. The hawker's speech begins, in the manner of Cowper's *The Task*, with a verse summary of the contents of his papers, which feature financial news, parliamentary reports and quack advertisements:

Great news; here's money lent on bond, rare news!
 By honest, tenderhearted, Christian Jews!
 Here are promotions, dividends, rewards,
 A link of Bankrupts, and of new-made Lords.
 Here the debates at length are, for the week;
 And here the deaf and dumb are taught to speak.³⁸

Holcroft then turns his attention to lottery notices, his tone darkening into righteous anger in the Juvenalian mode. With heavy irony, the morality of the lottery-office keepers Hazard, Goodluck and Shergold is undermined, and the baneful consequences of the lottery upon the poor (suicide, execution) spelt out:

Here Hazard, Goodluck, Shergold, and a band
Of gen'rous gentleman, whose hearts expand
With honour, rectitude and public spirit,
Equal in high desert, with equal merit,
Divide their tickets into shares and quarters.
And here's a servant maid found hanging in her garters!
Here! here's the fifty thousand, sold at every shop!
And here's the *Newgate Calendar*, and drop.³⁹

William Combe's cautionary tale in hudibrastics, 'The Lottery Office' (1815), also warns of the dire consequences of the lottery for the poor:

Tyburn will tell that ruin flows
As rapidly from *Little Goes*;
And Lotteries too oft supply
Cargoes for *Bay of Botany*.⁴⁰

Thomas Bish himself received his share of satirical animadversions, denounced, for example, as 'crafty Bish' in Robert Montgomery's *The Age Reviewed* (1828): 'And crafty Bish made prize or blank abound.'⁴¹ He was also attacked in graphic satire, as in 'I promise to pay to Thos Plunder Puffwell Esqr', an anonymous parodic bank-note published in 1808, which implies that Bish's puffing is but an ornate form of larceny by associating him with those 'thieves, villains and robbers of the poor', the morocco-men. Bish's accomplished advertising campaigns are little more than licensed theft; here 'puffing' and 'plundering' are allied.

III

While the likes of William Combe and James Montgomery railed against the lottery in the Juvenalian manner, Charles Lamb and the circle around him, Thomas Hood and S. T. Coleridge most notably, adopted a more tolerant attitude towards the draws. Though one does not necessarily think of the latter in terms of comic poetry, during the first decade of his poetic career Coleridge

not infrequently worked in comic forms, principally in burlesque and idiomatic parody (most significantly in the ‘Sonnets attempted in the manner of Contemporary Writers’ (1797)), and, indeed, I want to argue that his ‘first professional publication’,⁴² ‘To Fortune’, printed in the *Morning Chronicle* on 7 November 1793, is an example of lottery-related burlesque. The poem was inspired, as its subtitle informs us, by Coleridge’s ‘buying a ticket in the Irish Lottery’:

To the editor of the *Morning Chronicle*

SIR, – The following poem you may perhaps deem admissible into your journal – if not, you will commit it *εἰς ἱερὸν μὲνος Ἡφαίστιο*.

– I am, with more respect and gratitude than I ordinarily feel for Editors of Papers, your obliged, &c., CANTAB. – S. T. C.

‘To Fortune’

On buying a ticket in the Irish Lottery

Composed during a walk to and from the Queen’s Head, Gray’s Inn Lane, Holborn, and Hornsby’s and Co., Cornhill.

Promptress of unnumber’d sighs,
 O snatch that circling bandage from thine eyes!
 O look, and smile! No common prayer
 Solicits, Fortune! thy propitious care!
 For, not a silken son of dress
 I clink the gilded chains of *politesse*,
 Nor ask thy boon what time I scheme
 Unholy Pleasure’s frail and feverish dream;
 Nor yet my view life’s *dazzle* blinds –
 Pomp! – Grandeur! – Power! – I give you to the winds!
 Let the little bosom cold
 Melt only at the sunbeam ray of gold –
 My pale cheeks glow – the big drops start –
 The rebel *Feeling* riots at my heart!
 As if in lonely durance pent,
 Thy poor mite mourns a brief imprisonment –
 That mite at Sorrow’s faintest sound
 Leaps from its scrip with an elastic bound!
 But oh! if ever song thine ear
 Might soothe, O haste with foster’ng hand to rear
 One Flower of Hope! At Love’s behest,
 Trembling, I plac’d it in my secret breast:
 And thrice I’ve viewed the vernal gleam
 Since oft mine eye, with joy’s electric beam,

Illum'd it – and its sadder hue
 Oft moisten'd with the Tear's ambrosial dew!
 Poor wither'd floweret! on its head
 Has dark Despair his silky mildew shed!
 But thou, O Fortune! canst relume
 Its deaden'd tints – and thou with hardier bloom
 May'st haply tinge its beauties pale,
 And yield the unsunn'd stranger to the western gale!⁴³

'To Fortune' was written in the midst of the pressing problems of debt that eventually led Coleridge to enlist in the King's Regiment, and the few critics to have considered the poem generally read it in biographical terms. Lawrence Hanson, for instance, argues that 'So easily and on so slight a foundation did his mind leap from despair to the highest flight of sanguinity that, as the poem "To Fortune" shows, Coleridge was quite capable of believing that the righteous nature of his requirements would influence the lottery drawing in his favour.'⁴⁴ Rosemary Ashton's biography argues that 'The poem expresses the writer's despair – "my pale cheeks glow" – and his last clutching at hope: "O Fortune . . . yield the unsunn'd stranger to the western gale."⁴⁵ However grim Coleridge's personal circumstances might have been at the time of the poem's composition, to my mind reading 'To Fortune' as a threnody is to value biography over tonal register and generic affiliation. This neglected poem is best understood in terms of parody and burlesque. Its closest formal association is with the mock ode. While the language of the poem eschews the heroic inversion and comic anticlimax evident in many eighteenth-century parodic odes, the wry and quizzical letter to the editor of the *Chronicle* and the explanation of the alleged circumstances of the poem's composition (a drink-fuelled walk between tavern and lottery office) invite us to read it as muted burlesque. The apostrophe to Fortune is a direct address to the ticket itself, a rhetorical invocation that would remind its readers of lottery publicity material: lottery tickets and bills often featured portraits of the personification of Fortune, her eyes bandaged, presiding over the lottery (see figure 30 above for an example). The ticket, splendidly, is a 'Flower of Hope', with the green lustre of its paper offering the 'vernal gleam' of – financial – regeneration. Student indigence, then as now no uncommon thing, is transformed into a mock-heroic narrative of optimism and despair as the ticket is 'moisten'd

with the Tear's ambrosial dew', only to wither, mildewed by 'dark Despair', though the poet clings at least and at last to the hope that the lottery draw itself might 'relume/Its deaden'd tints'.

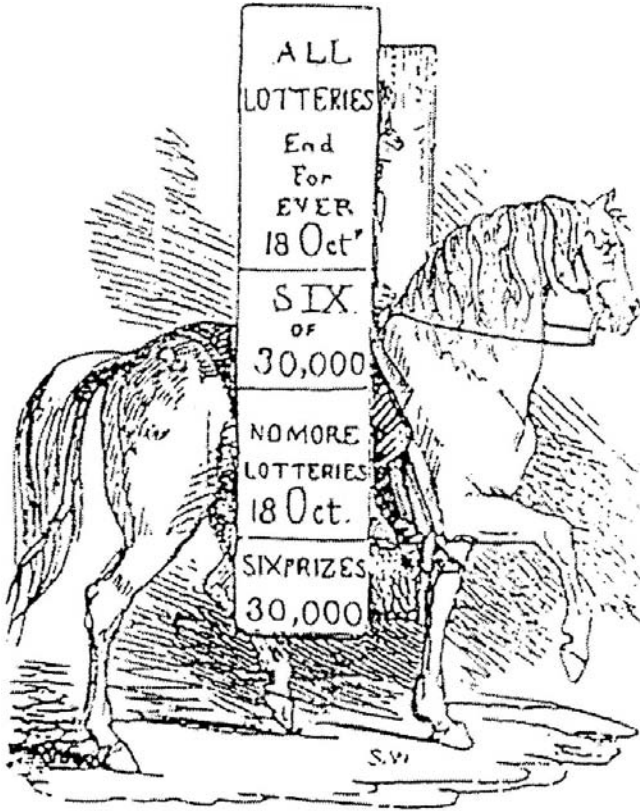
I would argue that this poem is prompted by the same self-parodic tendency that was evident throughout Coleridge's early poetic career, the tendency that led him to compose his sprightly burlesque 'The Nose'⁴⁶ as the comic counterpart to his apostrophe 'To the Muse' (both 1789) or begin his 'Monody on a Tea-Kettle'⁴⁷ by explicitly associating it with his recent 'Monody on the Death of Chatterton' (both poems date from 1790). The most famous example of this self-critical pattern is, of course, the 'Sonnets attempted in the manner of Contemporary Writers', but the Nehemiah Higginbottom sonnets are but the culmination of an anxiety about Coleridge's youthful poetic style manifesting itself in parody and its literary variants which can be traced much earlier in his poetic trajectory. 'To Fortune' gently sends up the stock phrases of a musing and pensive poetic sensibility in its ambrosial dews, vernal gleams and lonely durances. The poem, with its stale personifications ('rebel Feeling'), trite condemnation of luxury in the eighteenth-century manner ('not a silken son of dress'), and attitudinising invocations ('Pomp! Grandeur! Power! I give you to the winds') is a poem of some literary significance, a parodic composition made from the conventions of what Wordsworth later labelled 'poetic diction', a poetic skin which Coleridge and his great contemporary set out to shed in the composition of the *Lyrical Ballads*. This poem, with its swellings of the heart, tearful rhapsodising and piteous sighs, can usefully be read as sharing one of the objects of the Higginbottom sonnets: 'to excite a good-natured laugh at the spirit of *doleful egotism*, and at the recurrence of favorite phrases, with the double defect of being at once both trite, and licentious'.⁴⁸

Unfortunately for Coleridge, his punt on the lottery was unsuccessful⁴⁹ and we hear little more from the poet on the subject of lotteries⁵⁰ until his wry comments on the final draw. In October 1826, the month of the last lottery, Thomas Bish's frenetic wall-posting prompted Coleridge, in a letter to James Gillman, Jr, to declare that 'I do not undervalue *Wealth*, even if by descent or by Lottery [though] since Mr Bish mourns in large Capitals, red, blue, and black, in every corner over the Last, the downright *Last*, you have but small chance, I suspect, of a snug

£30,000 from this latter source'.⁵¹ For by this point in time the anti-lottery abolitionists, whether their views were articulated in parliamentary debate, antipathetic pamphlet or satire, eventually had their way. The remainder of this chapter will examine the publicity surrounding 'the downright Last' and also the various satirical treatments of the draw, in anonymous squibs such as the 'Epitaph in Memory of the State Lottery' (1825), in attributed poems such as Thomas Hood's 'To Thomas Bish, Esq'. (1827) and, most particularly, in Charles Lamb's little-known *New Monthly* essay 'The Illustrious Defunct' (January 1825).

The Lottery Act of 1823 ensured that the State Lottery would be abolished within a three-year period. As the final draw, held in October 1826, approached, the lottery-office keepers made frenetic attempts to publicise it. Figure 38, 'The Last', taken from the *Every-Day Book*, shows evidence of their efforts (as does the contemporaneous 'The last Stage of the last State Lottery' (reproduced as figure on p. 17). Hone writes that 'Incredible efforts were made in the summer of 1826 to keep the "last Lottery" on its legs. The price of tickets was arbitrarily raised, to induce a belief that they were in great demand' and the 'attention of the public of the metropolis was endeavoured to be quickened, by all sorts of stratagems'⁵² (most notably the extraordinary advertising procession described on pp. 17–18 above). As one might expect, Thomas Bish was particularly active in the promotion of the last lottery, printing endless handbills and plastering the metropolis with posters. Figure 39 shows part of a handbill for the 'last', replete with piscine punstery, in which a fishwife resolves to try her luck in the final draw. Similarly, Bish updated his handbill 'Run, Neighbours, Run!' (figure 40),⁵³ adapting the original text to refer to the imminence of abolition.

The ending of lotteries and the sudden redundancy of the promotional techniques used to advertise them also prompted several literary treatments of the subjects. To my mind, the finest and most important meditation upon the demise of the lottery is Charles Lamb's *New Monthly* essay 'The Illustrious Defunct'. In order to appreciate this essay fully, it is useful to examine Lamb's attitude to the lottery and, indeed, to gambling in general. 'The Illustrious Defunct' apart, Lamb's most sustained meditation on gambling occurs in his sprightly and important *Elia* essay 'Mrs Battle's Opinions on Whist'. Here Elia makes a distinction



“THE LAST.”

Figure 38. ‘The Last’, from Hone’s *Every-Day Book* (1826).

between ‘mere’ gambling and the gambling of the ‘imagination’. Gaily coloured cards make an aesthetic appeal to the imagination rather than to the rational mind. ‘Man is not a creature of pure reason,’ Elia declares to Mrs Battle, and playing cards bereft of their pictorial finery – ‘the gay triumph-assuring scarlets – the contrasting deadly-killing sables – the “hoary majesty of spades”’ – would deteriorate into simple money-grubbing: ‘All these might be dispensed with; and, with their naked names upon the drab paste-board, the game might go on very well. But the *beauty* of cards would be extinguished for ever. Stripped of all that is



What's the odds?—while I am floundering here the gold fish will be gone; and as I always was a dab at hooking the right Numbers, I must cast for a Share of the SIX £30,000 on the 18th JULY, for it is but "giving a Sprat to catch a Herring" as a body may say, and it is the last chance we shall have in England.

Figure 39. 'Last Lottery'. Lottery handbill for Thomas Bish (1826).

imaginative in them, they must degenerate into mere gambling.'⁵⁴ As Duncan Wu has written, Lamb 'harbours a deep apprehension that the materialist nightmare might turn out to be all there is – that card games might be no more than a form of gambling, and that the world, stripped of magic and beauty, might be only matter in motion'.⁵⁵ This is not to say that gambling for money does not form part of the imaginative landscape of Elian gaming. Sarah Battle insists that games of chance must be accompanied by stakes: 'No inducement could ever prevail upon her to play at any game,



Run, Neighbours, run, the LOTTERY'S expiring,
 When FORTUNE'S merry wheel, it will never turn more;
 She now supplies all Numbers, you're desiring,
 ALL PRIZES, NO BLANKS, and TWENTY THOUSANDS FOUR.

Haste, Neighbours, haste, the Chance will never come again,
 When, without pain, for little Cash—you'll all be rich;
 Prizes a plenty of—and such a certain source of gain,
 That young and old, and all the world, it must bewitch.
 Then run, neighbours, run, &c.

Figure 40. 'Run, Neighbours, Run!' Detail from handbill for Thomas Bish (1826).

where chance entered into the composition, *for nothing*.⁵⁶ Mrs Battle illustrates her point by reference to a lottery draw: 'Make a lottery of a hundred thousand tickets with but one fortunate number – and what possible principle of our nature, except stupid wonderment, could it gratify to gain that number as many times successively, without a prize?'⁵⁷ Finally, it is not too much of a leap of faith to read Lamb's articulation of Sarah Battle's defence of playing for money as a response to contemporary moral panics

about the unsavoury consequences of gambling: 'To those puny objectors against cards, as nurturing the bad passions, she would retort, that man is a gaming animal. He must be always trying to get the better in something or other.'⁵⁸ From this the essay launches into a fine defence of gaming as an imaginative activity:

cards are a temporary illusion; in truth a mere drama; for we do but play at being mightily concerned, where a few idle shillings are at stake, yet, during the illusion, we are as mightily concerned as those whose stake is crowns and kingdoms. They are a sort of dream-fighting; much ado; great battling, and little bloodshed; mighty means for disproportioned ends; quite as diverting, and a great deal more innoxious, than many of those more serious *games* of life, which men play, without esteeming themselves to be such.⁵⁹

Lamb's imaginatively charged attitude to gaming also underpins his attitude towards the lottery. It appears that the Lambs were enthusiastic and regular players of state lotteries and Charles writes to William Hazlitt on 10 November 1805 informing him of their winning a minor, but still a most welcome, prize: 'Our ticket was a £20.' Hazlitt himself, despite holding two tickets, has been unsuccessful: 'Alas!!', asks Lamb, 'are both yours blanks?'⁶⁰ I quote above Lamb's description of his encounter with the lottery as a schoolboy, and later in 'The Illustrious Defunct' he declares:

I have ever since continued to deposit my humble offerings at its shrine whenever the ministers of the Lottery went forth with type and trumpet to announce its periodical dispensations; and though nothing has been doled out to me from its undiscerning coffers but blanks, or those more vexatious tantalizers of the spirit, denominated small prizes, yet do I hold myself largely indebted to this most generous diffuser of universal happiness.⁶¹

In the same essay, Lamb explicitly dissociates himself from the abolitionist position of 'vituperation' against the lottery: 'Never have we joined in the senseless clamour which condemned the only tax whereto we became voluntary contributors, the only resource which gave the stimulus without the danger or infatuation of gambling.'⁶²

We also know of the intriguing fact that Lamb himself composed lottery puffs. Mary Lamb writes to Sarah Hazlitt on 7 November 1809 with two pieces of good news concerning her

brother: 'A man in the India House has resigned, by which Charles will get twenty pounds a year; and White has prevailed on him to write some more lottery-puffs. If that ends in smoke, the twenty pounds is a sure card, and has made us very joyful.'⁶³ Indeed, it is likely that it is to Lamb and his copy-editing efforts that the essayist's friend Thomas Hood refers in his February 1825 *London Magazine* article on 'The Art of Advertizing Made Easy': 'It is pretty well known, that a celebrated prose writer of the present day was induced by Bish to try his hand at those little corner delicacies of a News-paper, – the Lottery.'⁶⁴ The White referred to in Mary's letter is Charles's school friend James White (1775–1820). 'Jem' White is a notable figure in the history of English advertising as he was one of the first significant advertising agents. T. R. Nevett, in what remains the standard history of the subject, *Advertising in Britain* (1982), writes:

One of the most important figures on the advertising scene at the beginning of the nineteenth century came from the unlikely background of the counting-house at Christ's Hospital School. James White ... founded an agency in 1800 which has continued in business until the present day, though its name has changed several times over the years. Tradition has it that Jem White was called upon to place occasional advertisements for the school, and was thus drawn into the world of newspapers and advertising which had long centred upon the taverns and coffee-houses in and around Fleet Street. Before long, White found himself also handling the advertisements for other people, and for a time acted as agent while still retaining his post in the counting-house – a feat by no means impossible since his own house, from which he operated the agency, was next door to the school.⁶⁵

White was also an author and had made a minor name for himself in 1796 with the *Original Letters &c. of Sir John Falstaff*, a work in which, according to Claude A. Prance, 'he undoubtedly had some help from Lamb who, some think, wrote the Preface and possibly made some suggestions on the rest of the work'.⁶⁶ White made good use of his literary skills in his copywriting activities for, as Nevett notes, 'Jem White provides an early indication that agents were actually involved in the writing of advertisements, as distinct from just passing on to various papers copies of something written by the advertiser.'⁶⁷ We do not know of any examples of clearly attributable Elian puffery. Nevett nonetheless speculates, without, it has to be said, anything in the way of definite evidence,

that Lamb might have been responsible for this puff, which was placed by White's firm in *Bell's Weekly Messenger* in the winter of 1806:

A SEASONABLE HINT. – Christmas gifts of innumerable descriptions will now pervade this whole kingdom. It is submitted whether any present is capable of being attended with so much good to a dutiful son, an amiable daughter, an industrious apprentice, or a faithful servant, as that of a SHARE of a LOTTERY TICKET, in a scheme in which the smallest share may gain near two thousand pounds?⁶⁸

There are certainly lottery puffs of greater ingenuity than this and, if this is Lamb, one is grateful that most of the author's time was devoted to other literary activities.

Lamb's meditation on the lottery was published in the month before Hood's essay. As Duncan Wu writes, 'the Elian manner is typically elegiac',⁶⁹ and 'The Illustrious Defunct' begins by explicitly declaring itself as a funeral ode: 'we are composing an epi-cedum upon no less distinguished a personage than the Lottery, whose last breath, after many penultimate puffs, has been sobbed forth by sorrowing contractors, as if the world itself were about to be converted into a blank'.⁷⁰ Lamb begins his essay in burlesque fashion with a comparison between the demise of the lottery and the death of Napoleon:

Napoleon has now sent us back from the grave sufficient echoes of his living renown; the twilight of posthumous fame has lingered enough over the spot where the sun of his glory set, and his name must at length repose in the silence, if not in the darkness of night. In this busy and evanescent scene, other spirits of the age are rapidly snatched away, claiming our undivided sympathies and regrets, until in turn they yield to some newer and more absorbing grief. Another name is now added to the list of the mighty departed . . .⁷¹

However, soon after this mock elegy is replaced by something much subtler. The Elian yearning for lost prelapsarian states manifests itself beautifully in Lamb's description of the pleasures of the lottery: 'Let it be termed a delusion; a fool's paradise is better than the wise man's Tartarus: be it branded an Ignis fatuus, it was at least a benevolent one, which instead of beguiling its followers into swamps, caverns, and pitfalls, allured them on with all the blandishments of enchantment to a garden of Eden, an ever-blooming elysium of delight.'⁷² The abolition of the lottery

becomes another version of the fall of man, an expulsion from an elysium which will bloom no more. With the drawing of what Lamb calls 'the last of the Lotteries', man is returned to that materialist state, evoked in the Sarah Battle essay, of being 'Stripped of all that is imaginative': 'Life will now become a flat, prosaic routine of matter-of-fact, and sleep itself, erst so prolific of numerical configurations and mysterious stimulants to lottery adventure, will be disfurnished of its figures and stimulants.'⁷³ 'Flat', 'prosaic', 'matter-of-fact'; it is hard to imagine words more abhorrent to the Elian sensibility. 'Verily', he continues, 'the abolitionists have much to answer for!'

As in 'Mrs Battle's Opinions on Whist', it is the imaginative impact of gambling rather than its financial rewards that Lamb celebrates. The lottery, like De Quincey's opiate or Wordsworth's spot of time, fires the imagination into activity, being described by Lamb as 'the only alembic which in these plodding days sublimised our imaginations, and filled them with more delicious dreams than ever flitted athwart the sensorium of Alnaschar'.⁷⁴ For Lamb, as for Wordsworth, it is childhood experience that still retains the capacity to sublimate the imagination of the adult. After describing his youthful experience at the Guildhall, Lamb states that 'Reason and experience, ever at their old spiteful work of catching and destroying the bubbles which youth delighted to follow'⁷⁵ have not yet managed to dissipate the illusion fully. Despite these shades of the prison-house, the materialist threat to the imaginative experience felt as a child, a sense of the potency of that moment survives into adulthood. The lottery remains 'the most generous diffuser of universal happiness':

Ingrates that we are! are we to be thankful for no benefits that are not palpable to sense, to recognise no favours that are not of marketable value, to acknowledge no wealth unless it can be counted with the five fingers? If we admit the mind to be the sole depository of genuine joy, where is the bosom that has not been elevated into a temporary elysium by the magic of the Lottery? Which of us has not converted his ticket, or even his sixteenth share of one, into a nest-egg of Hope, upon which he has sate brooding in the secret roosting-places of his heart, and hatched it into a thousand fantastical apparitions?⁷⁶

Lamb goes on to argue that the joy of the lottery lies not in its monetary rewards but in what he calls its 'imaginary prizes', a

concept that simultaneously evokes the pleasurable contemplation of winning, the fact that one's ticket is likely to be a blank, and the lottery's value to the imagination:

The true mental epicure always purchased his ticket early, and postponed enquiry into its fate to the last possible moment, during the whole of which intervening period he had an imaginary twenty thousand locked up in his desk, – and was not this well worth all the money? Who would scruple to give twenty pounds interest for even the ideal enjoyment of as many thousands during two or three months? . . . we can no longer succeed in such splendid failures; all our chances of making such a miss have vanished with the last of the Lotteries.⁷⁷

In 1849, *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* rejoiced in the abolition of the lottery: 'It was not until 1826 that this abominable system was finally crushed. The image of the vans, placards, and handbills of Bish is fresh in our memory, and we pray devoutly that succeeding generations may never behold a similar spectacle.'⁷⁸ Such a prayer was offered in vain. Though Charles Lamb would doubtless have been bemused by the inanities of the modern drawing ceremony, perhaps the Elian spirit has made at least one small modern triumph in the return, once again, of 'lottery adventure'.

IV

'The Illustrious Defunct', brilliant though it is, is but one of a series of literary farewells to the lottery. Most of these, with Lamb, are indulgent in tone. A small number, however, are acerbic, such as the parodic epitaph for the lottery cited by Hone in the *Every-Day Book*:

EPITAPH
 In Memory of
 THE STATE LOTTERY,
 the last of a long line
 whose origin in England commenced
 in the year 1569,
 which, after a series of tedious complaints,
Expired
 on the
 18th day of October, 1826.
 During a period of 257 years, the family

flourished under the powerful protection
of the
British Parliament;
the Minister of the day continuing to
give them his support for the improvement
of the revenue.

As they increased, it was found that their
continuance corrupted the morals,
and encouraged a spirit
of Speculation and Gambling among the lower
classes of the people;
thousands of whom fell victims to their
insinuating and tempting allurements.

Many philanthropic individuals
in the Senate
at various times, for a series of years,
pointed out their baneful influence,
without effect,
His Majesty's Ministers
still affording them their countenance
and protection.

The British Parliament
being, at length, convinced of their
mischievous tendency
His Majesty GEORGE IV.
on the 9th July, 1823,
pronounced sentence of condemnation
on the whole race;
from which time they were almost
NEGLECTED BY THE BRITISH PUBLIC.

Very great efforts were made by the
Partisans and friends of the family to
excite
the public feeling in favour of the last
of the race, in vain:

It continued to linger out the few
remaining
moments of its existence without attention
or sympathy, and finally terminated

its career unregretted by any
 virtuous mind.⁷⁹

Though antipathetic, this is decent historical narrative, tracking the lottery's progress from Elizabethan days to the publicity surrounding the last. This mock-lapidary squib offers the standard articulation of the negative line, concentrating on the adverse consequences of the lottery on public ethics and, as ever, its encouragement of a 'spirit of Speculation and Gambling among the lower classes of the people'. This point is also made in one of the occasional poems on the subject, an anonymous ballad of 1826:

The lott'ry drew the humble
 Often aside from his labour,
 To build in the air,
 And, dwelling there,
 He beggar'd himself and neighbour.

If the scheme-makers tumble
 Down to their proper station,
 They must starve, or work,
 Turn thief, or Turk,
 Or hang, for the good of the nation.⁸⁰

The ballad also addresses the advertising methods (newspaper insertions, handbills, carts) used to promote the last lottery and, with the mock epitaphist, maintains that the last lottery was a commercial failure. Here lottery advertisers are artful charlatans who surpass even quack doctors in the scale and audacity of their publicity:

And just before October,
 The *grand* contractors, zealous,
 To *share* their *last* ills,
 With puffs and bills,
 Drove all the quack doctors jealous.

Their *bill* and *cue* carts slowly
 Paced Holborn and Long Acre
 Like a funeral
 Not mourn'd at all,
 The burying an Undertaker.

Clerks smiled, and whisper'd lowly;
 'This is the time, or never,

There must be a rise –
 Buy and be wise,
 Or your chance is gone for ever’.

Yet, of the shares and tickets,
 Spite of all arts to sell ’em,
 There were more unsold
 Than dare be told;
 Although, if I knew, I’d tell ’em.⁸¹

The acerbic humour evident in this ballad is exceptional among verse treatments of the final state lottery, for the majority of these poems are decidedly more indulgent in tone. ‘The Last of the Lotteries’ (1825), for example, while it shares the anthropomorphism of the ‘Epitaph in memory of the State Lottery’, does so to jocular effect, light-heartedly berating Frederick Robinson, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, for the demise of the lottery (‘O Fred’rick Robinson, thou man of death!’). The spoof epitaphist and the mock elegiast use the same conceit but reach very different conclusions. Using the elegiac stanza, ‘The Last of the Lotteries’ is a loose imitation of Gray’s great pastoral elegy:

The Chancellor had pass’d the stern decree
 The daily press rings out the doleful knell,
 Warning each adventurer, that he
 Must now of Lotteries take a last farewell.

Dismay and wonder now pervade Cornhill –
 The printers, too, are in a dismal rout,
 Swearing they ne’er shall print another bill,
 When those for whom they puffed are now puffed out.⁸²

The author then catalogues the woes of the redundant office keepers: Hazard, Richardson and Goodluck, Sivewright and so on. He begins, of course, with the most notable, the leviathanic Thomas Bish: ‘*Bish*, our Leviathan, is gone half mad,/ And looks as dismal as a blank drawn ticket.’ The poem ends with a vision of Cornhill without its lottery offices and laments the now extinct advertising paraphernalia of lottery publicity:

Haply next year, some friend shall say, and weep,
 As up Cornhill, he takes his lonely way –
 ‘Where are the harvests that I us’d to reap
 Beneath the sickle of each drawing day?’

Ah! where is *Siveuright*? where is *Eyton* now?
 Where are the placards which so lately told
 The clustering Congregation when and how
 The thirty thousands were all shar'd and sold?

Where dwelt activity, there reigneth gloom;
 My well-known friends have lost their public rank;
 The Lottery has passed into the tomb,
 And left the world a universal *blank*.⁸³

The direct echo of the final section of the 'Elegy Written in a Country Church-Yard' ('Haply some hoary-headed swain may say') modulates into a conclusion that echoes the ending of *The Dunciad* ('And Universal Darkness covers all'). A sense of absence permeates the streets of the metropolis and London is diminished by the passing of the lottery.

Perhaps the most notable of the poetic dirges on the demise of the lottery is Hood's burlesque 'To Thomas Bish, Esq.'. A fine example of the advertising-related mock ode, Hood's poem offers a jocular elegy for the last of the lotteries: 'Hear Lottery's last funereal call/ O'er all her vanished treasures.'⁸⁴ The poem begins thus:

My Bish, since fickle Fortune's dead,
 Where throbs thy speculating head
 That hatch'd such matchless stories
 Of gaining, like Napoleon, all
 Success on every capital,
 And thirty thousand glories?⁸⁵

This stanza alludes to Lamb, given that 'The Illustrious Defunct' begins with the same comparison between Bish and Napoleon (and that Hood later describes Bish as 'Charing Cross's Bonaparte'). And Hood, like Lamb, mourns the fact that modern puffery has lost one of its champions. The laurel wreath of advertising now belongs to others: to Charles Wright the champagne seller, to Henry Hunt in his capacity as manufacturer of roasted corn, and to Alexander Rowland the Macassar Oil proprietor:

The puff to others now belongs,
 The Wrights have risen upon thy wrongs,
 Rowlands to Hunts recoil!

The wheel of Fortune, now forlorn,
Turns but to grind the roasted corn,
Greased with Macassar oil.⁸⁶

Hood ends with a reference to perhaps the greatest English burlesque, *The Rape of the Lock*, with a vision of Bish ascending into heaven in a lottery wheel drawn – note the pun – by Christ’s Hospital boys:

And when – but Heaven protract the day –
The time is come for Life’s decay,
Prolonged shall be thy joys.
A favourite wheel shall carry thee,
And like thy darling Lottery,
Be drawn by Blue-coat boys.⁸⁷

In similar vein is an anonymous squib published in *The News of Literature* in 1825, another poem entitled ‘The Last of the Lotteries’. Like the poem of the same name published in the following year, this work holds Robinson responsible for the abolitionist victory and describes the ruin of the lottery-office keepers:

The cruel voice of Robinson decrees
That we must have the Lottery no more!
...
A wailing voice – ’tis Bish’s own – we hear
Behind King Charles, high-perch’d at Charing-Cross;
Eastward the woe spreads fast in grim career,
And Sivewright at famed Cornhill mourns his loss.
...
Goodluck laments his ominous name undone,
And Hazard mourns his occupation gone!⁸⁸

The poem bids farewell to the advertising techniques of the lottery professors, their placards, handbills, painted walls and press columns:

No more shall we behold the thronging street,
Fill’d with placards with figures scribbled o’er –
No more shall we the outstretched handbill greet,
Or hail the pole which tempting thousands bore;
Or, gazing high with spectacles on nose,
Some wond’rous wonder in large letters trace,
While in *brevier*, betwixt the staring rows,
A lottery-puff concealed its modest face.⁸⁹

Like both Lamb and Hood, the author mourns the impact of abolition upon contemporary advertising, portraying a forlorn copywriter lamenting the opportunities now lost to him:

Woe unto us poor devils of the quill,
For closed against us is one bounteous mart.
No more shall we compose the sentence, terse,
Or hymn Tom Bish in floods of numerous verse.
One mighty advertising source is dried –
One subject for the puffing tribe is gone;
Praised, therefore, though thou beest on every side,
Yet still *I* curse thee, Frederick Robinson!⁹⁰

In the 'Last of the Lotteries' poems, and in Hood's mock ode, we see a more tolerant and Horatian satirical spirit replacing the acerbic Juvenalianism of abolitionist satire on lotteries.

For Charles Lamb, the lottery 'sublimised our imaginations, and filled them with . . . delicious dreams'. The *News of Literature's* poem places a similar emphasis upon the 'rich visions' of lottery speculation, stressing the imaginative capital available from the possession of a ticket. Bish's jingles, it might be argued, are visionary poems. Though a Bishian advertisement might lack the aesthetic quality of a Coleridgean phantasmagoria, both appeal to the human capacity for dream and reverie. Whereas Romanticism tends to portray the visionary experience as rare, available only intermittently to a privileged band of seers, Bish's stance is decidedly more democratic. In 'the Lottery, by which a man may gain an estate', every man can luxuriate in the prospect of becoming his own Kubla Khan. 'Whither is fled the visionary gleam?' asks Wordsworth in the Great Ode, and 'The Last of the Lotteries' offers a burlesque equivalent, bidding a wry and wistful farewell to the pleasures of the lottery, and to Thomas Bish himself:

Farewell, rich visions! which to fancy's gaze,
Call'd up prospective twenty thousand pounds,
Which cheer'd the progress of those luckless days,
When not a ducat in the purse was found,
And yet we all could hope our fondest wishes
Would yet be crown'd by some good chance at Bish's.⁹¹

CHAPTER 5

'Barber or perfumer': Incomparable oils and crinicultural satire

'Rowland! I have great faith in Rowland. Without him, I believe, there would have been many bald women committing suicide!'

George Meredith, *Evan Harrington* (1861)

The subject of the ensuing pages is advertising by 'perfumers', a late Georgian term most commonly applied to barbers who had expanded their business into the manufacture and sale of products in the areas of grooming and beautification: skin lotions, toothpastes and, most importantly of all, hair oils (hair lotions, dyes and tonics were the most lucrative of the perfumers' products). They discuss the controversy regarding the best method of dressing the hair that exercised contemporary manufacturers and consumers alike: animal fat or vegetable fat, or, most particularly, bear's grease or macassar? As well as examining the promotional strategies of the perfumers, most notable of whom were Alexander Rowland and Son, they of the famed Macassar Oil, and James Atkinson, proprietor of the most well-known of all animal fat-based hair dressings, Atkinson's Bear's Grease, I also attend to various satirical works that deal with the dressing of the hair. Tonsorial, or 'crinicultural', satire is a fascinating sub-genre of Romantic period comic writing, and varies widely in its intent; some has clear political resonance, such as the mid-1790s political satire that greeted Pitt's introduction of a tax on hair powder (such as John Wolcot's *Hair Powder: A Plaintive Epistle to Mr Pitt* or the anonymous *The Minister's Head Dressed According to Law, or a Word of Comfort to Hair-Dressers* (both 1795), while others are less sociopolitically engaged comic treatments of the dressing of the hair (such as the *Useful Advice to Hair-Dressers, Barbers & c.*, by John Moor (1810)). The principal focus here, however, is on comic

engagements with perfumery in the 1830s and earlier 1840s, in the work of the youthful Balzac, Dickens and Thackeray, and, most particularly, on their neglected contemporary Samuel Warren's fine but little-read *Ten Thousand A-Year* (1841), a satirical novel that offers a witty critique of the commercial ethos of the age and its attendant promotional strategies.

I

The turn of the nineteenth century is a pivotal moment in the history of the dressing of the hair. The eighteenth-century taste for powdered hair and elaborate wigs was replaced by a fashion for bare heads and hair oils. In the early 1800s, the *Oracle* lamented, 'What a routine we have had of everything disgusting, in the name of fashion! Slouched hats, jockey waistcoats, half-boots, leather breeches, cropped heads, unpowdered hair.'¹ There are two principal reasons for this trend towards 'cropped heads, unpowdered hair' and a relative lack of ostentation in late Georgian hairstyling: fashion and, perhaps surprisingly, taxation. As with the contemporaneous vogue for uncomplicated lines in women's dresses, after the 1790s there was a move towards a certain simplicity in hair dressing, most particularly for men (though as graphic satire such as Cruikshank's 'Monstrosities' series demonstrates there were moments in Regency England where women sported ostentatious hairstyles to rival even those of the Restoration). A more pragmatic reason for these sartorial developments was fiscal, the consequence of William Pitt's emergency tax measures in the early years of the wars with the French. Alongside the introduction of income tax and the notorious window tax, Pitt brought in a tax on hair powder on 23 February 1795. Initially men would wear their hair unpowdered as a means of tax avoidance, and, indeed, for some Whigs and radicals not using powder became a political statement. Coleridge's patron Thomas Poole recalls a Jacobinical acquaintance appearing 'without any of the customary powder in his hair, which innocent novelty was a scandal to all beholders, seeing that it was the outward and visible sign of a love of innovation, a well-known badge of sympathy with democratic ideas'.² The Whig Duke of Bedford became famous for holding a meeting at Woburn Abbey for what *The Times* called 'a general cropping and combing out of hair powder'³ and Crop

Clubs were established such as one in Lambeth, also described by *The Times*, where ‘every member . . . is obliged to have his head docked as close as the Duke of Bridgewater’s old bay coach horses’.⁴ Thomas Wright’s *Caricature History* describes the immediate aftermath of the introduction of the tax:

The use of hair powder was almost immediately discontinued, and the produce of the tax was hardly worth the trouble of collecting it. It became at first a party distinction; the Whigs wore their hair cut short behind, and without powder, which was termed wearing the hair *à la guillotine*, while the Tories, who continued the use of hair-powder, were called *guinea-pigs*, because one guinea was the amount per head of the tax. The hair-powder tax was the subject of many songs and *jeux d’esprit*, as well as of several caricatures.⁵

Eventually party distinction gave way to fashion and by the 1820s men who powdered their hair were considered very old-fashioned.

Prompted by the tax, a whole variety of new hair-oil products were launched in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries: Rowland’s Macassar, Atkinson’s Bear’s Grease, Shaw’s Mindora Oil, Prince’s Russia Oil, C. and A. Oldridge’s Balm of Columbia⁶ and so on. Great claims were made for the various hair oils and lotions: that they preserved and thickened the hair, that they turned grey heads back to their original hue, that they reversed hair loss in both men and women. A puff collateral for Prince’s, for instance, claimed all three virtues for its Russia Oil:

JOHN BULL BEGINS NOW TO OPEN HIS COUNTENANCE.

There are various articles for the hair now puffing in the newspapers, but it is proved by hundreds that PRINCE’S celebrated RUSSIA OIL is the best article for dressing, preserving and promoting the hair, and, if used constantly not a hair will fall off or turn grey, and it is such a nourisher to the hair that if it has begun to turn grey will restore it again to its natural colour. [It] clears the scurf and keeps the head and hair clean and by using regularly for a few months will restore the hair on the bald part.

Consumers in the early nineteenth century could choose from a large number of branded hair oils. There were two principal kinds: those deriving from animal fats, with bear’s grease the most prized; and those made from plant or vegetable extracts, such as the famous Macassar Oil. Some were sole-proprietor brands with only regional availability, usually from a single shop, while others, such as the extensively advertised Rowland’s Macassar and Atkinson’s Bear’s Grease, had nationwide distribution networks and were



JANUARY.— The Announcement

Figure 41. George Cruikshank, 'January. – The Announcement'. Illustration to W. M. Thackeray's 'Barber Cox, and the Cutting of His Comb'. From *The Comic Almanack for 1840*.

advertised accordingly. Barbers' shops were a principal point of sale for hair oils, as demonstrated in the first of George Cruikshank's illustrations for W. M. Thackeray's comic serial, 'Barber Cox, and the Cutting of His Comb', which was originally published in Cruikshank's *Comic Almanack for 1840* (figure 41). Cox's 'Saloon of Fashion' is plastered with advertisements for 'Magic Razor Stropps', 'Circassian Cream', 'Genuine Fine Bear's Grease', 'Curling Fluid' and, inevitably, 'Rowland's Macassar Oil'. Thackeray's story also testifies to the fact that many of the proprietors of hair and shaving products were originally – and in some case remained – barbers. Mr Cox is himself both barber and hair-oil proprietor, his brand 'Cox's Bohemian Balsam of Tokay':

On the 1st of January, 1838, I was the master of a lovely shop in the neighbourhood of Oxford market; of a wife, Mrs Cox; of a business, both in the shaving and cutting line, established three-and-thirty years; of a girl and boy respectively of the ages of eighteen and thirteen; of a three-windowed front, both to my first and second pair; of a young foreman, my present partner, Mr Orlando Crump; and of that celebrated mixture for the human hair, invented by my late uncle, and called Cox's

Bohemian Balsam of Tokay, sold in pots at two-and-three, and three-and-nine; the balsam, the lodgings, and the old-established cutting and shaving business brought me in a pretty genteel income.⁷

As the *Edinburgh Review* noted in 1843, 'There is ... hardly a perfumer to be found who does not boast himself the inventor of some hair-reviving grease or other.'⁸ As early as 1785, George Crabbe, in *The Newspaper*, had noted the tendency for entrepreneurial barbers to diversify into cosmetic products, lamenting the transformation of the 'simple barber' into the 'perfumer', who is now as stylish as his customers, and models his own products (the 'gay perfumer, on whose soft cheek his own cosmetic blooms'). Crabbe's cosmeticist particularly targets female customers (the 'gay perfumer comes/ And advertises Beauty, Grace, and Love'). In a passage which is best understood as parody of advertising copy, he specifically names two contemporary proprietorial brand-name cosmetics for women, the 'Olympian Dew' and the 'Bloom of Circassia':

Come, faded Belles, who would their Youth renew,
And learn the wonders of Olympian dew;
Restore the Roses that begin to faint,
Not think celestial washes, vulgar Paint:
Your former Features, Airs, and Arts assume,
Circassian Virtues, with Circassian Bloom.⁹

The Bloom of Circassia was a well-advertised rouge which, according to a late eighteenth-century advertisement, 'differs from all others in two very essential points; first that it instantly gives a rose hue to the cheek, not to be distinguished from the lively and animated bloom of the rural beauty; nor will it come off by perspiration, or the use of a handkerchief'. The puff goes on to declare that 'A moment's trial will prove that it is not to be paralleled (Price 6s. and 3s. 6d. the bottle)'.¹⁰

Crabbe's perfumer wears his 'own cosmetic' on his 'soft cheek'. Here Crabbe reflects contemporary advertising copy, where customers were sometimes invited to see brand proprietors modelling their wares:

PATRONISED by the COURT and NOBILITY. – A PREPARATION for CHANGING RED or GREY HAIR to a beautiful black, brown, or light brown, which far surpasses any now in use; can be used without the tedious and unpleasant process of brushing it out, permanent in its

effects, and free from the disagreeableness of rubbing off on the hands, caps, & c. Sold with every direction for use, at 10s. 6d. and 7s. 6d. per bottle. The dye supplied by Mrs HARDEN, *and the effect seen on her own hair*, at her private residence, 66 Newman Street, Oxford Street; or at ladies' own residence if required.¹¹

Prosperous as Mrs Harden may have been, her operation was dwarfed by the nationally available brands, the most notable being Rowland's Macassar, an oil which prompted many imitators in the manner of the Bohemian Balsam of Tokay, and informed one of Byron's finest triple rhymes in *Don Juan*: 'In virtues nothing earthly could surpass her,/ Save thine "incomparable oil", Macassar.'¹² This product was first marketed in the 1790s,¹³ the invention of Alexander Rowland the elder, formerly a barber in St James's Street, and, indeed, only ceased production in the 1940s. Rowland had the good fortune to launch his product shortly before Pitt introduced an emergency wartime tax on hair powder: to a certain extent the success of his preparation was prompted by the government's fiscal measures. Based in Hatton Garden, Rowland (d. 1823), aided by the remarkable entrepreneurial and self-promotional gifts of his son, also Alexander (c. 1783–1854), diversified the product range of Alexander Rowland and Son from the Macassar Oil to other cosmetic brands: the 'Essence of Tyre' hair dye, 'Kalydor' face-cream,¹⁴ the 'Odonto' toothpaste. And aware of the lucrative nature of the proprietary medicines market, he also offered the 'Alsana Extract' ('for immediately relieving the most violent Tooth-Ache, Gum-Boils, Swelled face, & c.')15 and the 'Cereleum' for the headache (and also 'An infallible, instantaneous and permanent reliever of the most permanent Vertigo, by external application'). Rowland's products were well and ubiquitously advertised and by 1855, according to the *Quarterly Review*, the firm spent more than £10,000 per year on advertising.¹⁶ Alexander Rowland the younger also assumed the role of advertising author, publishing a series of advertising books: *An Essay on the Cultivation and Improvement of the Human Hair, with Remarks on the Virtues of the Macassar Oil* (1809), *An Historical, Philosophical and Practical Essay on the Human Hair* (1816), *A Treatise on the Human Hair* (1828), *the Proper Management of Practical Advice on the Human Hair* (1839), *The Human Hair Popularly and Physiologically Considered* (1853) and the posthumously published *Rowland's Guide to the Toilet and Personal Adornment* (1861).¹⁷ For Abraham Hayward, 'Mr Rowland holds a deservedly high rank amongst the purveyors for

the toilette table. His Kalydor for preserving the complexion, and his Macassar Oil for the Hair, command an extensive sale, and form the subject-matter of an endless variety of advertisements, remarkable for the confident tone of conscious superiority, and the seducing expectations they hold out.¹⁸ Figure 42 shows an example of Rowland's advertisements, an 1832 fly-sheet. On one side, Rowland's products are endorsed in puffing prose. This for instance:

This celebrated oil has during a long period never once failed of eliciting a redundancy of Hair, even on parts of the head that were previously bald, PROVED BY TESTIMONIALS received from the most DISTINGUISHED PERSONAGES in all parts of the globe; and in preventing the hair falling off, or turning grey, to the most advanced periods of life.

On the reverse is 'Christmas Festivities', a eulogistic jingle puff, in Spenserians, to the excellence of Rowland's product. Stanzas 3 and 4 urge responsible parents to use Rowland's products:

Parents and Guardians, who the latent germ
Of rising genius justly can descry, –
And the bud guarding from impending harm,
Who mark its progress with an anxious eye,
May ye with ultimate success supply
Your assiduities; – but not confin'd
To mental worth, while actively ye try
The person to improve as well as mind,
So that your charge may gain the favor of mankind.

Teeth white as ivory, even, and firmly set;
Blooming complexion; and a radiant skin;
With flowing tresses of dark brown, or jet; –
Attraction to the female sex will win;
And, truth to speak, it were a grievous sin
Those fascinations by neglect to foil;
Or let DECAY his wasteful work begin,
Averted when may be the hand of SPOIL,
By ROWLAND'S *sole Kalydor*, and *Macassar Oil*.

Rowland's advertisements for its hair dye, the Essence of Tyre, also combined brazen overstatement (to be charitable) with wit. A mock news report (or 'puff collateral' to use Sheridan's term) from the 1830s reads thus:

A whimsical occurrence took place a short time since. A person had a writ out against him; he escaped . . . by having made use of Rowland's

CHRISTMAS FESTIVITIES.



1.

CHRISTMAS again returns, and with him brings
 "The feast of reason, and the flow of soul!"—
 And, hark! with joyous shout the welkin rings
 Of school-boys—liberated from control;
 Those happy elves, to whom should Fortune dole
 Recurring freedom, and blythe hours of play,
 Who deem not that Adversity may roll
 Her future storms around them, but pourtray
 "No thought of ills to come, nor cares beyond to-day."

2.

But better fate,—perhaps a sun-lit ray
 Awaits them! and among them there may be
 An embryo statesman, who some further day
 May set from thralldrom neighbouring nations free,
 And permanent prosperity decree;
 Or, from those youngsters, happily some, Sage
 Philosopher or bard may rise to see
 His high renown progressing, and engage
 Immortal eulogy in every clime and age!

3.

Parents and Guardians, who the latent germ
 Of rising genius justly can descry,—
 And the bud guarding from impending harm,
 Who mark its progress with an anxious eye,
 May ye with ultimate success supply
 Your assiduities:—but not confin'd
 To mental worth, while actively ye try
 The person to improve as well as mind,
 So that your charge may gain the favor of mankind.

4.

Teeth, white as ivory, even, and firmly set;
 Blooming complexion; and a radiant skin;
 With flowing tresses of dark brown, or jet;—
 Attraction to the female sex will win;
 And, truth to speak, it were a grievous sin
 Those fascinations by neglect to foil;
 Or let DECAY his wasteful work begin,
 Averted when may be the hand of SPOIL,
 By ROWLAND'S *sole Kalydor*, and *Macassar Oil*.

5.

And ROWLAND'S Pearly Powder, justly styled
Odonto, that by Dentists eulogiz'd,
 Is, with *Macassar* and *Kalydor*, mild,
 Though potent in effect, while *all* are priz'd
 By Ladies, and by Monarchs, patroniz'd
 The world throughout, as firm auxiliaries still
 Of female Beauty, that have realiz'd
 Charms, and sustained them, neutralizing ill,
 And prone each sanguine wish most amply to fulfil.

6.

Macassar gives luxuriant heads of hair
 In briefest space, to permanently flow!
Kalydor on the fairist of the fair
 Enchantment of exterior will bestow
 By radiant skin.—*Odonto!* while the row
 Of teeth conferring, that as ivory pure,
 Semblance of youth even in old age, shall shew,
 And all combined, that firmly shall secure
 Attraction—even should life to patriarch age endure.

7.

These are not minor objects;—manly grace
 An intellectual sympathy implies;—
 And fascination in the female race,
 Chiefly in personal exterior lies;
 For seldom mental excellence supplies
 Just theme of admiration, if we find
 Beauty deficient;—but we highly prize
 The female form to perfectness inclin'd,
 Where loveliness and wit are happily combin'd.

8.

"An elegant exterior," Sages say—
 "A passport is to company the best."
 Parents and Guardians thence without delay
 On the specifics will of ROWLAND rest,
 The *solely genuine*, by the world confest,
 That manly grace and loveliness array
 In fascination;—thus their charges blest
 In youth with admiration, shall their sway
 Over all hearts assert to life's remotest day.
Hatton Garden.

A. R. S.

Figure 42. Advertising fly-sheet for Alexander Rowland and Son (December 1832).

CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR'S GIFTS.

The approach of the CHRISTMAS VACATION, for Young Ladies and Gentlemen, impel Messrs. ROWLAND to recommend the use of their MACASSAR OIL, as an essential article of domestic utility. Its advantages to the rising generation are incalculable, as a due attention to Children's Hair is of the greatest importance, both as to utility and elegance;—A MORE ACCEPTABLE PRESENT to Youth of both Sexes cannot be granted than a supply of ROWLAND'S MACASSAR OIL. It is invaluable in the Nursery. This celebrated Oil has during a long period never once failed of eliciting a redundancy of Hair, even on parts of the head that were previously bald, PROVED BY TESTIMONIALS received from the most DISTINGUISHED PERSONAGES in all parts of the globe; and in preventing the hair falling off, or turning grey, to the most advanced periods of life.

This Oil eradicates the scurf easy and pleasantly, generates with infancy ample growth of beautiful hair, and will sustain it in perfection through all stages of existence. Subduing all relaxing tendencies, & firmly keeps the hair in curl and other decorative formation during many hours, unimpaired by damp weather, crowded assemblies, the dance, or even equestrian exercise.

NOTICE.—Each *Genuine* bottle of the Original Macassar Oil is enclosed in a Wrapper, which has the *Name* and *Address* in *Red*, on *Lace-work*,

A. ROWLAND & SON, 20, Hatton Garden,
And counter-signed Alex. Rowland.

The Prices are 3s. 6d.—7s.—10s. 6d. and 21s. per Bottle.—All other Prices, or any without the Book and Label, are Counterfeits.

ROWLAND'S KALYDOR,

Which protects the SKIN and COMPLEXION from the baneful effects of COLD WINDS, or DAMP ATMOSPHERE; possesses properties of surprising energy, in producing delicate WHITE NECK, HANDS, and ARMS, and imparting a Juvenile Bloom to the complexion: assuages Inflammation; heals harsh and rough Skin; removes Cutaneous Eruptions; and produces A BEAUTIFUL COMPLEXION.

LADIES nursing their offspring, will find soothing relief, by its healing the Soreness of their Breasts.

GENTLEMEN, after shaving, will find it allay the smarting pain, and render the Skin smooth and pleasant; thus to the Traveller, whose avocations expose him to various changes of the weather, it proves an invaluable specific—a prompt resource; and, as conducing to comfort, a pleasing appendage and invaluable acquisition.

Sold in half pints at 4s. 6d. and pints at 8s. 6d. each.

NOTICE that the Name & Address is engraved on the Government Stamp affixed on the cork of each genuine bottle

ROWLAND'S ODONTO,

OR
Pearl Dentifrice,

Recommended by the most eminent of the Faculty, as the mildest, yet as the most salutary and efficacious Dentifrice that was ever discovered, (forming an efficient VEGETABLE WHITE POWDER, composed of Ingredients the most pure and rare,) a never-failing remedy for every disease to which the Teeth and Gums are liable, eradicating all deleterious matter; at the same time healing, strengthening, and firmly fixing the Teeth in their sockets, realizing

A Beautiful Set of Pearly Teeth!

and on the Gums operate as an ANTI-SCORBUTIC, restoring and sustaining their healthy appearance; and gives fragrance to the breath.

Price 2s. 9d. per box, duty included.

ROWLAND'S ALSANA EXTRACT,

For immediately relieving the most violent Tooth-Ache, Gum Boils, Swelled Face, &c.;

it is also an Excellent Stomachic, in Cases of Flatulency, Spasmodic Affections, &c. and gives instantaneous Relief.

Price 2s. 9d.—4s. 6d. and 10s. 6d. per bottle.

ROWLAND'S CERELÆUM,

For the Head-Ache,

An infallible, instantaneous, and permanent reliever of the most permanent Vertigo, by external application.

Sold in Bottles at 2s. 9d. each, duty included, by

A. ROWLAND & SON, No. 20, Hatton Garden.

And by most Perfumers and Medicine Vendors.

Essence of Tyre. The bailiffs passed him, and one said to his comrade, 'That's the man.' 'Why, you fool (rejoined the other,) that gemmen has black hair, and you know Mr – has grey'. This is one among the thousand instances of the beneficial effects of Rowland's Essence of Tyre, in changing the colours of the hair.¹⁹

Rowland's principal rival in hair-care products was James Atkinson, the Bond Street perfumer and cosmeticist, whose most notable brand was his bear's grease, a preparation which continued production until after the First World War. The fat of the bear was much prized in this period for its cosmetic and hair-restoring properties, and Atkinson's advertisement granted bears iconic status both in prose and display copy. Figure 43 shows the trademark chained bear logo used on his labels, pot-tops and display copy. The most particular quality of bear's grease was its supposed ability to facilitate hair-growth in the bald ('Bears'-Grease, which quickly clothes bald pates with Hair' as Sternhold's *The Daily Advertiser, in Metre* has it).²⁰ As one of George Canning's notes to the *Anti-Jacobin's* 'The Progress of Man' states, 'Bears' grease or fat, is also in great request; being supposed to have a criniparous or hair-producing quality.'²¹ The *Morning Chronicle*, for instance, carried this advertisement in 1798, a puff which claims that bear's grease can cause 'hair to grow on heads that were absolutely bald':

JUST KILLED, a very fine RUSSIAN BEAR, at the only Warehouse in Great Britain for Genuine Bear's Grease . . .

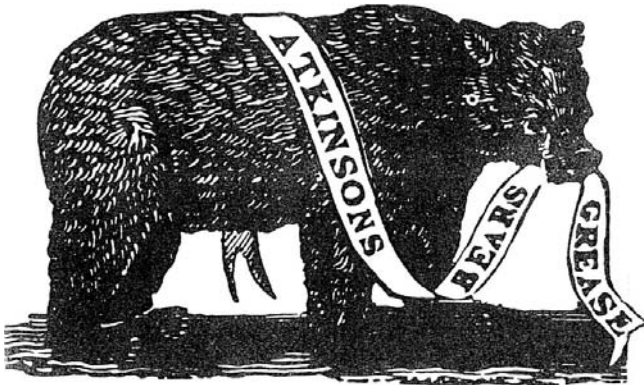


Figure 43. 'Atkinsons Bears Grease' [sic]. Trademark for James Atkinson (1830s).

The inestimable qualities of genuine BEAR'S GREASE, in causing, by proper attention and perseverance, the hair to grow on heads that were absolutely bald, is a theme that cannot be descanted upon too largely, since it embraces no less an object than the preservation and improvement of the greatest ornament of nature, and without which the most exquisite countenance is devoid of that embellishment which is the richest grace to exterior appearance.²²

Similarly, James Atkinson's prose copy occasionally warned purchasers to use gloves when applying bear's grease for fear of sprouting hair on the hand, leaving it to resemble an animal's paw.

In *The Shocking History of Advertising!*, E. S. Turner declared that 'a learned monograph might well be written, with the aid of advertisements from [the eighteenth century] and the next, on the bear's grease trade'.²³ Such a book remains to be written, but there is little doubt that the late Georgian advertising of the product is a topic of real, if often sometimes macabre, interest. To the modern eye, advertisements for bear's grease, boasting of the availability of grease fresh from the cadavers of recently slaughtered animals, can seem rather gruesome. *The Times*, for example, featured this grisly notice in 1793:

Just killed, an extra fine Fat Russian Bear, at Ross's Ornamental Hair and Perfumery Warehouse, No. 119 Bishopsgate (late Vickery's) three doors from the London Tavern.

The excellent virtue which the fat of bears possesses has been experienced by thousands of both sexes and all ages in this Metropolis . . . It is sold at 1s. per ounce or 16s the pound, to be seen cut off the animal in the presence of the purchaser.²⁴

Turner himself quotes a similar puff:

H. LITTLE, Perfumer, No. 1 Portugal Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, acquaints the Public, that he has killed a remarkable fine RUSSIAN BEAR, the fat of which is matured by time to a proper state. He begs leave to solicit their attention to this Animal, which, for its fatness and size, is a real curiosity. He is now selling the fat, cut from the Animal, in boxes 2s. 6d. and 5s. each, or rendered down in pots, from One Shilling to One Guinea each.²⁵

Before slaughter, live bears were kept in barbers' shops as a promotional tool. In 1824, readers of the *Examiner* were entertained with the proceedings of a case held before the Lord Mayor of London in which two City of London barbers had been accused of letting their in-house bears disturb the populace and charged

that the aforesaid animals represented a threat to the safety of onlookers: 'Mr Macalpine and Mr Money, two rival *friseurs*, residing in Threadneedle-street, were summoned for keeping two live bears, which were not sufficiently secured to prevent danger or annoyance to the public. Brady and another street-keeper represented the annoyance and danger occasioned by the animals to be very great ...'²⁶

The journal notes that the bears were kept for the express purpose of advertising the competing barbers' bear's grease: 'the rival decorators each kept a bear, for the purpose of demonstrating to the wise heads in the city, who attend solely to the exterior of their caputs, that it is not scented suet, or hog's lard, or any thing else, but genuine bear's grease which they (the proprietors) sell'.²⁷ The report goes on:

Numerous complaints were made to the Lord Mayor, of the conduct of these animals, and of their masters, in disturbing the whole street by their noise and contest. The bears attracted multitudes round the doors, and blocked up the thoroughfare. One of them could put his leg or arm out to its full extent, and seize any passenger with its claws. The other was almost entirely at liberty, and might, if it so pleased him, vent his displeasure on any of his Majesty's subjects who came near him. One of them ... at midnight particularly, whether it was for want of food or want of society, he made the place resound with his hideous howls.²⁸

Called as a witness, Mr Macalpine, who kept the bear allowed to wander at liberty, demonstrated the same pugnacious manner evident in his advertising copy:²⁹ 'Mr Macalpine declaimed with fury in defence of his bear, and endeavoured to make the Lord Mayor believe, that in its nature and in its manner, it was as harmless as a lamb. He had killed one bear already to appease the prejudice of the place, but he would not immolate his present bear to gratify any one.' The Lord Mayor warned Macalpine as to his further conduct and the case closed: 'if he suffered [the bear] to remain loose, or to create any further annoyance, it should certainly be indited as a nuisance'.³⁰

Such idiosyncratic promotional techniques inspired Dickens's portrayal of the barber Jinkinson in 'Master Humphrey's Clock' (1840–1) in which Sam Weller recalls his late friend's pre-occupation with bears:

His whole delight wos in his trade. He spent all his money in bears, and run in debt for 'em besides, and there they wos a growling away down in

the front cellar all day long, and ineffectually gnashing their teeth, vile the grease o' their relations and friends was being retailed in gallipots in the shop above; and the first-floor winder was ornamented with their heads; not to speak of the dreadful aggrawation it must have been to 'em to see a man always a walkin' up and down the pavement outside, vith the portrait of a bear in his last agonies, and underneath, in large letters, 'Another fine animal was slaughtered yesterday at Jinkinson's'.³¹

As so often in his early work, Dickens is here alert to the quotidian manifestations and contemporary nuance of advertising. However, here his eccentricities are derived from life rather than comic embellishment; Jinkinson's advertising methods, his boardman, bills and stuffed bears, are no exaggeration.

Dickens had also made comic sport with bear's grease in one of his finest early pieces, the 'Mudfog Papers' which he contributed to *Bentley's Magazine* between 1837 and 1838. In one of Mr X. X. Misty's perorations to the Mudfog Association for the Advancement of Everything, he 'communicated some remarks on the disappearance of dancing-bears from the streets of London, with observations on the exhibition of monkeys as connected with barrel-organs':³²

The writer had observed, with feelings of the utmost pain and regret, that some years ago a sudden and unaccountable change in the public taste took place with reference to itinerant bears, who, being discountenanced by the populace, gradually fell off one by one from the streets of the metropolis, until not one remained to create a taste for natural history in the breasts of the poor and uninstructed. One bear, indeed, – a brown and ragged animal, – had lingered about the haunts of his former triumphs, with a worn and dejected visage and feeble limbs, and had essayed to wield his quarter-staff for the amusement of the multitude; but hunger, and an utter want of any due recompense for his abilities, had at length driven him from the field.³³

Misty goes on to suggest that the metropolis is no longer populated by the buskers' dancing bears because of the perfumers' need for bears' flesh. As for the fate of the wretched brown bear, 'it was only too probable that he had fallen a sacrifice to the rising taste for grease'.³⁴ This prompts Professor Pumpinskull to make a connection between the fashion for bear's grease and the predatorial, even ursine, behaviour of contemporary young men about town, and the passage ends in a brilliant Dickensian comic aria:

Professor Pumpinskull wished to take that opportunity of calling the attention of the section to a most important and serious point. The

author of the treatise just read had alluded to the prevalent taste for bears'-grease as a means of promoting the growth of hair, which undoubtedly was diffused to a very great and (as it appeared to him) very alarming extent. No gentleman attending that section could fail to be aware of the fact that the youth of the present age evinced, by their behaviour in the streets, and at all places of public resort, a considerable lack of that gallantry and gentlemanly feeling which, in more ignorant times, had been thought becoming. He wished to know whether it were possible that a constant outward application of bears' grease by the young gentlemen about town had imperceptibly infused into those unhappy persons something of the nature and quality of the bear. He shuddered as he threw out the remark; but if this theory, on inquiry, should prove to be well founded, it would at once explain a great deal of unpleasant eccentricity of behaviour, which, without some such discovery, was wholly unaccountable.

The President highly complimented the learned gentleman on his most valuable suggestion, which produced the greatest effect upon the assembly; and remarked that only a week previous he had seen some young gentlemen at a theatre eyeing a box of ladies with a fierce intensity, which nothing but the influence of some brutish appetite could possibly explain. It was dreadful to reflect that our youth were so rapidly verging into a generation of bears.³⁵

II

Dickens apart, nineteenth-century satirists and parodists were not slow to exploit the comic potential of hair lotion. The most famous nineteenth-century example of what one might label crinicultural comic writing to glance at hair oil is, of course, Lewis Carroll's Wordsworthian parody, 'The Aged, Aged Man' from *Through the Looking-Glass* (1871) in which the White Knight explains the origins of Rowland's Macassar:

His accents mild took up the tale:
 He said, 'I go my ways,
 And when I find a mountain-rill,
 I set it in a blaze;
 And thence they make a stuff they call
 Rowland's Macassar Oil –
 Yet twopence-halfpenny is all
 They give me for my toil.'³⁶

Carroll's parody might be seen as a mid-Victorian successor to a comic engagement with hair oils and powders that had begun over seventy years before, during the 1790s, in the aftermath of the

introduction of Pitt's powder tax. Just as Whigs and radicals began to boycott hair power as a means of signifying their opposition to Toryism, so the tax began to be lampooned in contemporary satire. Chief among the Pitt-baiters was that indefatigable radical satirist Thomas Spence, whose broadside, 'The Poor Barber's Lamentation', attacks the chief minister and his hair taxes in enthusiastic doggerel:

O Cursed Billy P-tt, how cam'st thou to harbour,
 These cruel thoughts to starve an honest poor barber?
 I'm fearful that thou wilt soon make men appear like silly Pigs,
 By taxing first their Hair, and next their poor Periwig

...

Taxes we already pay, on Powders and Perfumes, Sirs,
 By Taxes too the light of Day he keeps out of our rooms, Sirs...³⁷

Spence's contemporaneous 'An Address to the insulted Swinish Multitude on Account of the Hair Powder Tax' fuses the porcine imagery which he had exploited so well in the anti-Burkean *Pig's Meat* (1793) with the onslaught on the taxes:

The rich and poor asunder to keep,
 A tax is devis'd with malice most deep,
 And which none but Slaves of the basest will pay;
 Such treatment no Freeman can bear I do say.³⁸

Spence's 'An Address to Mr Pitt, Accompanied by a Crop of Human Hair' defiantly declares that he is proud to wear his hair unpowdered, that he will be no 'guinea pig' (as those who paid the guinea tax were dismissively labelled) and that he hopes Pitt will slit his throat while shaving:

O Heaven-born minister of state,
 This tail from off my swinish pate,
 Most humbly I present it;
 For since no powder may we wear,
 Determin'd I've cut off my hair,
 And to your honour sent it.

Know then vile Tory, I'm a Whig,
 And will not be a Guinea pig,
 To satisfy your craving;
 Oh! that your razor would but slip
 Three inches underneath your lip,
 When you yourself are shaving.

A deadly gash I hope 'twould be,
To end your damn'd hypocrisy,
And rid us of a P-t.
A speedy peace I now pray for,
To finish this unlucky war,
Thus endeth my dull wit.³⁹

The tax on hair powder introduced by William Pitt was, as discussed above, instrumental in ensuring the rise of the perfumers, Atkinson and Rowland most particularly. Both men had nationwide mechanisms of production and publicity by the 1810s, and both eventually began to inform the comic literature of the age.⁴⁰ Atkinson, for instance, was the subject of C. R. Forrester's 'Ode to Mr James Atkinson' (1827), quoted in full in chapter above, and Rowland's company had the remarkable, and perhaps surprising, distinction of figuring heavily in an early work by one the greatest of all French novelists. Its product had wide circulation in the nineteenth century, certainly in Britain and the Empire, but also in the United States and in continental Europe. Indeed, in his early *The Rise and Fall of César Birotteau* (1837), a novel about finance, speculation and, in places, advertising, Honoré de Balzac uses Alexander Rowland and Son as the epitome of successful brand capitalism. The perfumer Birotteau, a noble fool with grand aspirations who ultimately brings ruin upon himself and his family, resolves to take up arms against the Macassar Oil with his own elixir, the Oil Comagène, a vegetable oil which is simultaneously hair dye and hair-restorer ('an oil to stimulate the growth of hair, to titillate the scalp, to revive the colour of male and female tresses').⁴¹ Birotteau feels that given the right publicity his product will be a runaway success: 'all the gray-heads in Paris will fling themselves upon the invention like poverty upon the world'.⁴² Unfortunately for him, the success and ubiquity of Rowland's Macassar dominates the market, and this knowledge keeps Birotteau awake at night, as he informs his long-suffering wife, Mimi: 'You have never found out my wakefulness, Madame! For three months the success of Macassar Oil has kept me from sleeping.' But Birotteau decides to take on Rowland's: 'I am resolved to take the shine out of Macassar!',⁴³ borrowing large sums to fund his new business venture:

I shall borrow forty thousand on the buildings and gardens where we now have our manufactory in the Faubourg du Temple; we have twenty thousand francs here in hand, – in all, one hundred and sixty thousand.

There remain one hundred and forty thousand more, for which I shall sign notes to the order of Monsieur Charles Claparon, banker . . . When the notes fall due we can pay them off with our profits. If we cannot pay them in cash, Roguin will give the money at five per cent, hypothecated on my share of the property. But such loans will be unnecessary. I have discovered an essence which will make the hair grow – an Oil Comagène, from Syria! Livingston has just set up for me a hydraulic press to manufacture the oil from nuts, which yield it readily under strong pressure. In a year, according to my calculations, I shall have made a hundred thousand francs at least. I meditate an advertisement which shall begin, ‘Down with wigs!’ – the effect will be prodigious.⁴⁴

Birotteau is convinced of the forthcoming success of his venture, especially because in the post-Napoleonic age elegance has replaced martial prowess as the defining manly characteristic of the Frenchman. Modern men are now more preoccupied with their appearance and with the impression they make with the ladies:

At a certain age men will turn their souls inside out to get hair, if they haven’t any. For some time past hair-dressers have told me that they sell not only Macassar, but all the drugs which are said to dye hair or make it grow. Since the peace, men are more with women, and women don’t like bald-heads; hey! hey! Mimi? The demand for that article grows out of the political situation. A composition which will keep the hair in good health will sell like bread.⁴⁵

The only cloud on the economic horizon for Birotteau is, of course, the Macassar Oil, and he personifies the Oil, portraying it as a fierce and vigorous enemy when he interviews for an assistant:

‘Do you feel within you the nerve to struggle with something stronger than yourself, and fight hand to hand?’

‘Yes, monsieur.’

‘To maintain a long and dangerous battle?’

‘What for?’

‘To destroy Macassar Oil!’ said Birotteau, rising on his toes like a hero in Plutarch.⁴⁶

Balzac’s mock-heroic rhetoric casts Birotteau as a new Napoleon taking on the Wellingtonian figure of Alexander Rowland in the field of tonsorial combat:

‘Let us not mistake; the enemy is strong, well entrenched, formidable! Macassar Oil has been vigorously launched. The conception was strong. The square bottles were original; I have thought of making ours triangular.

Yet on the whole I prefer, after ripe reflection, smaller bottles of thin glass, encased in wicker; they would have a mysterious look, and customers like things which puzzle them.⁴⁷

Birotteau uses a similar rhetoric when addressing his new assistant: 'But now, think of it. Macassar Oil will defend itself; it is specious; the name is seductive. It is offered as a foreign importation; and we have the ill-luck to belong to our own country. Come, Popinot, have you the courage to kill Macassar? Then begin the fight!' Birotteau sees economic rivalry as a form of chivalric ritual, with its own near-poetic discourse: he 'ruminat[ed] as he went along the Rue Saint-Honoré about his duel with Macassar Oil. He was meditating on the labels and the shape of the bottles, discussing the quality of the corks, the color of the placards. And yet people say there is no poetry in commerce!'⁴⁸

In search of endorsement, Birotteau approaches the scientist Monsieur Vauquelin who acknowledges, though rather damning with faint praise, that Birotteau's nut oil is essentially harmless to the hair. Rowland's product, on the other hand, can have a positively deleterious effect: 'Macassar oil has not the slightest action upon the hair . . . No power, chemical, or divine . . . can make the hair grow on bald heads; just as you can never dye, without serious danger, red or white hair.' However, despite Vauquelin's assertions, in the end the 'specious' product prevails. As Birotteau's wife knows, contemporary economic warfare is conducted through advertising; her husband must 'bow and scrape in advertisements and prospectuses, which will placard César Birotteau at every corner, and on all the boards, wherever they are building'. Inevitably, and despite the fact that Rowland's claims to restore hair to the bald and natural-looking black hair to the grey are condemned as lies, the multinational brand sees off the local upstart. As Birotteau laments, 'Macassar Oil has been thoroughly advertised; we must not underrate its power, it has been pushed everywhere, the public knows it.'⁴⁹ Unfortunately for him, he is unable to muster the commercial resources to allow him to compete. In the end, Birotteau is no more than an advertising Quixote, unable to tilt Rowland's windmill. Small-time French capitalism loses to English manufacturing, and the *nation boutique* triumphs economically as surely as it did twenty years before on the fields of Waterloo.

III

Balzac apart, the most interesting and amusing nineteenth-century treatment of hair oil and its marketing is found in Samuel Warren's comic novel *Ten Thousand A-Year* (1841), which features the adventures of an indigent draper's assistant, Mr Titmouse, who comes into a fortune. The parvenu Titmouse resembles the *nouveau riche* shopboy imagined in William Hazlitt's 1827 *Examiner* essay 'The Dandy School', who turns to the silver-fork novels of Benjamin Disraeli and Theodore Hook for guidance as to the mores of 'society' and learns only superficiality, forgetting that 'gentility' should ideally involve a set of moral values and responsibilities:

So a young linen-draper or attorney's-clerk from the country, who had gained a thirty-thousand pound prize in the lottery and wished to set up for a fine gentleman, might learn from these Novels what hotel to put up at, what watering place to go to, what hatter, hosier, tailor, shoe-maker, friseur to employ, what part of the town he should be seen in, what theatre he might frequent; but how to behave, speak, look, feel or think in his new and more aspiring character he would not find the most distant hint.⁵⁰

In a work much indebted to Pierce Egan and early Dickens, Warren's novel engages with the social epiphenomena of early Victorian London, including a witty and incisive satirical critique of the techniques of contemporary advertising which focuses upon Titmouse's attempts to change his hair colour through the use of branded hair dye.

Titmouse has long lamented his carrotty hair and his first thought on coming into money is to alter this 'detested hue' via the good offices of a Bond Street perfumer (a glance at Atkinson's, who were based in the same street), a premises 'well known to those who were in the habit of glancing at the enticing advertisements in the newspapers',⁵¹ and whose advertising material for its hair dye relies on (generally anonymous) endorsements from the great. Warren writes his own parodic copy, detailing the 'numberless instances of its efficacy, detailed in brief but glowing terms – as – the "Duke of * * * * – the Countess of **** – the Earl of, &c. &c. &c. &c. – the lovely Miss – –, the celebrated Sir Gossamer Goosegiblets (who was so gratified he allowed his name to be used)," –, all of whom, from having hair of the reddest

possible description, were now possessed of raven-hued locks'.⁵² Titmouse hastens to Bond Street, where he is served with the hair dye, which rejoices in the sesquipedelian brand name of the 'Cyanochaitanthropopion', by a shopman possessed of locks of the blackest hue. Like Mrs Harden of Newman Street, he offers himself as a living example of the excellence of his products. However, and possibly like Mrs Harden, he is a charlatan, as Warren comments in parentheses: 'The scamp had been hired for the purpose of lying thus in favour of the Cyanochaitanthropopion; his own hair being a *natural* black.'⁵³ This man 'was handsome; and his elaborately curled hair was of a heavenly black . . . which was better than a thousand printed advertisements of the celebrated fluid which formed the chief commodity there vended'. He produces a small bottle ('only seven and sixpence'), wrapped in a label festooned with advertisements: 'it lay like a miniature mummy, swathed, as it were, in manifold advertisements. "You'll find," said the black-haired gentleman, with bland glibness, "the fullest directions and testimonials from the highest nobility to the wonderful efficacy of the CYANOCHAITANTHROPOPION."⁵⁴ Rowland, remember, uses brand names such as 'Cerelæum', and here Warren offers his own parodic, multisyllabic nomenclature, adding a satirical footnote: 'This fearful-looking word, I wish to inform my lady readers, is an original and monstrous amalgamation of three or four Greek words . . . denoting a fluid "*which can render the human hair black*".' Displaying a wry awareness of the contemporary tendency to choose polysyllabic brand names derived from the classical languages, thereby associating advertising copy with more elevated cultural forms, Warren writes: 'Whenever a barber or perfumer determines on trying to puff some villainous imposition of this sort, he goes to some starving scholar, and gives him half-a-crown, or so, to coin a word like the above; one which shall be equally unintelligible and unpronounceable, and therefore attractive and popular.'⁵⁵ Titmouse hurries home with the 'wonder-working bottle' and begins 'the application of the matchless Cyanochaitanthropopion':

rubbing it into his hair, eyebrows and whiskers, with all the energy he was capable of, for upwards of over half an hour. Then he read over again every syllable on the papers in which the bottle had been wrapped; and

about eleven o'clock, having given sundry curious glances at the glass, got into bed, full of exciting hopes and delightful anxieties concerning the success of the great experiment he was trying. He could not sleep for several hours. He dreamed a rapturous dream – that he bowed to a gentleman with coal-black hair, whom he fancied he had seen before – and suddenly discovered that he was only looking at *himself* in a glass! This awoke him. Up he jumped – sprang to his little glass breathlessly – but ah! merciful Heavens! he almost dropped down dead! Would you have believed it? His hair was perfectly *green* – there could be no mistake about it!⁵⁶

Returning to Bond Street, he is placated by the perfumer, who assures him that his hair is simply in the 'intermediate' stage, and induces him to part with three-and-sixpence for the 'DAMASCUS CREAM', a parodic counterpart of Rowland's own hair dye, the 'Essence of Tyre'. The Damascus Cream, of course, leads Titmouse to wake up the next morning to find that 'his hair had become of a variously shaded purple or violet colour'.⁵⁷ On his return to Bond Street, the incorrigible tradesman offers him something to complete the transformation of his hair:

[']here it is – it is called the TETARAGMENON ABRACADABRA.'

'What a name!' exclaimed Titmouse with a kind of awe. 'Pon honour, it almost takes one's breath away' –

'It will do more sir; it will take your red hair away! By the way, only the day before yesterday, a lady of high rank, between ourselves, Lady Caroline Carrot, whose red hair always seemed as if it would have set her bonnet in a blaze – ha, ha! came here, after two days' use of the Cyanochaitanthropopion, and one day's use of the Tetaragmenon Abracadabra – and asked me if I knew her. Upon my soul I did not, till she solemnly assured me she was really Lady Caroline.'⁵⁸

Having laid out nine-and-sixpence for the Tetaragmenon Abracadabra, a fluid 'which cost a great German chemist his whole life to bring to perfection; and [contained] materials from the four corners of the world', Titmouse cautiously decides only to treat his eyebrows and whiskers. In the morning's light, the effects of the Tetaragmenon are clear:

When he looked at himself in the glass, about six o'clock on the ensuing morning, at which hour he awoke, I protest it is a fact, that his eyebrows and whiskers were as white as snow; which, combined with the purple colour of the hair on his head, rendered him one of the most astounding objects, in human shape, that the eye of man had ever beheld. There was the wisdom of age seated in his white eyebrows and

whiskers, unspeakable youthful folly in his features, and a purple crown of WONDER on his head.⁵⁹

Titmouse feels as if the ‘devil were wreaking his spite’ upon him; but Warren comments directly that devils of a more material kind were wreaking their mischief, the quack advertiser: ‘a more ordinary servant of the devil – some greedy, impudent, unprincipled speculator, who desirous of acting on the approved maxim – *Fiat experimentum in corpore vili* – had pitched upon Titmouse’.

In terms of nineteenth-century literary responses to advertising, Samuel Warren’s work is firmly in the antipathetic camp. The stance of his novel is perhaps closest to a near-contemporaneous work, Thomas Carlyle’s *Past and Present*, published two years after *Ten Thousand A-Year*. Carlyle attacks the ‘monstrous blast of puffery’⁶⁰ that is contemporary advertising. The advertiser is one of the worst examples of the loathed Quack, exemplifying what Carlyle calls the ‘prurient insincerity, open voracity for profit, and closed sense for truth whereof quacks are made’. Warren grants all three of these disagreeable moral attributes to his own advertiser. The raven-haired man is Carlyle’s ‘Quack’ (capital Q) and Titmouse his ‘Dupe’ (capital D). Warren ranges through the techniques of modern advertising: the appeals to social aspiration (the endorsement of Sir Gossamer Goosegiblets), the notion of the brand’s inventor as a latter-day alchemist (the German chemist), the proprietorial modelling (the raven-haired man), the brand name sesquipedalianism (the CYANOCHAITANTHROPOION), the borrowings from classical languages (the Tetaragmenon). Here the literary assimilations and borrowing of advertising degrade elevated culture, and advertising cannot escape its status as lying. ‘The atrocious puffs . . . were all lies,’ editorialises Warren, and the advertiser is ‘hired for the purpose of lying’. In Warren’s amusing but ultimately acerbic treatment of advertising culture, advertisers are no more than crooks, and their customers little more than gulls.

CHAPTER 6

'The poetry of hair-cutting': J. R. D. Huggins, the emperor of barbers

The particularity of this man put me into a deep thought whence it should proceed that of all the lower orders barbers should go further in hitting the ridiculous than any other set of men. Watermen brawl, cobblers sing: but why must a barber be for ever a politician, a musician, an anatomist, a poet, and a physician?

Sir Richard Steele on 'Don Saltero' (*The Tatler*, 1709)

British consumer goods, as Balzac's *César Birotteau* demonstrates, achieved significant market penetration in continental Europe in the early nineteenth century. Unsurprisingly they also did so in the Anglophone United States of America. Whatever antipathies might have historically existed between the two countries and whatever mutual suspicion might remain, the former colony, in the decades after independence, retained many of its close cultural and commercial links with the old country. In economic terms British products, blacking, hair oils and razor strops among them, were highly successful in the youthful Republic.¹ Looking back in 1857 at the first decade of the nineteenth century, the American *Historical Magazine* noted that the most notable British product of the day, Warren's Matchless, was one of the three most famous brands in the East Coast in the period, a time when 'Warren's Blacking and Huggins, the New York Barber, and Pease's Hoarhound Candy were famous throughout Christendom'.² Simultaneously, British satire, like many of the key literary brands of the late Georgian age, achieved a significant market share in American publishing, though, given the frequently piratical nature of that business, not always to the pecuniary advantage of the author. John Wolcot, 'Peter Pindar', for example, went through many editions in the period between the 1790s and the 1810s. Furthermore, contemporary American

satire, most notably that of Joel Barlow and the Connecticut wits, was also indebted to Great Britain in its dependence upon Pope and the post-Popean tradition of Samuel Johnson and Charles Churchill.

The figure who brings these diverse traditions together is, remarkably, the aforementioned New York barber. J. R. D. Huggins, the advertising figure rated by the *Historical Magazine* with Britain's ineluctable Robert Warren and the Republic's noisiest candy man Johnny Pease as one of the three most notable advertisers of the Republic, was simultaneously indefatigable self-publicist and satirist. John Richard Desborus Huggins, barber, advertiser and Menippean satirist, was the author of *Hugginiana; or, Huggins' Fantasy, being a Collection of the most esteemed modern Literary Productions* (1808), an extraordinary, though highly neglected, collection of advertisements which were first published in the East Coast public prints. Huggins is simultaneously a commercial advertiser, a gifted parodist, and an accomplished literary, social and political satirist. His extraordinary advertisements, published in newspapers from Boston to Philadelphia and stuck up on the walls of his various premises in the metropolis from 40 Greenwich Street to 92 Broadway, granted him both commercial success and a reputation as a wit in early nineteenth-century New York. Huggins was a former classical actor in Harper's Rhode Island Company³ who left the stage during the 1790s to establish himself as a barber. His businesses were enthusiastically promoted in an endless stream of comic advertisements. The 1855 *Cyclopaedia of American Literature* declared that 'Barber Huggins, at the beginning of the century afforded much amusement in New York by the parodies and fanciful flights of his professional advertisements in the Evening Post, Morning Chronicle, and other papers', noting that his advertisements 'were mixed up with the politics ... of the day'.⁴ As Van Wyck Brooks writes – in another rare critical mention of Huggins – in *The World of Washington Irving* (1944), Huggins's 'fame as a wit had spread from Georgia to Maine when, having shaved Tom Moore and Joel Barlow, he began to write squibs and satires to emulate them'.

His epigrams on Jefferson, Randolph and others had long been the joy of the Federalist and the Evening Post and all the wits and fashionables

had thronged his shop in order to be able to say they had been barbered by Huggins. The jokes and lampoons of all the wags had been stuck on this Pasquin of New York, and they had even been collected in a volume of Hugginiana, with woodcuts by Alexander Anderson and designs by J. W. Jarvis.⁵

Brooks's assertion that Huggins was inspired to the writing of satire by trimming the hair of Moore and Barlow is very likely apocryphal,⁶ but whatever the truth of the matter, Huggins's advertisements demonstrate a wide-ranging use of literary satire and parody; as the *New York Evening Post* declares in 1805, 'J. R. D. H. is scarcely better known by his skill as a friseur, than his humour as a writer. State-papers, tragedies, and ballads are rendered equally subservient to his purpose.'⁷ Huggins, seeing himself as fitted for 'the delicious task of trimming the Muse of Satire',⁸ employs a range of comic models in his work: parody, imitation, satire, burlesque and pasquinade. His use of parody is wide-ranging, with formal models drawn from literary greats such as Shakespeare, Milton and Pope through to his contemporaries Cowper, Sheridan, Darwin, Southey and Wolcot. That said, Huggins's imitative genius is not confined to literary models alone: nursery rhymes, Jeffersonian rhetoric, playbills, business cards, phrenological pseudo-science, Napoleonic edicts; all are grist to his advertising mill. And Huggins's aims transcend the engendering of new business; the barber of Broadway was also an able political satirist whose work engages with both European geopolitical conflict and with contemporary American party politics.

I

J. R. D. Huggins was not the first literary barber to use ornate advertising copy, or indeed, the first advertising *friseur* to use satirical and parodic literary models. Self-eulogising hairdressers, combative figures who bombastically endorse their own artistic skills and downcry their pernicious and talentless rivals, are not uncommon in the history of advertising. One of Thomas Hood's most particular favourites in his February 1825 *London Magazine* article, 'The Art of Advertizing made Easy', which surveys the contemporary advertising scene, is a puff for one C. Macalpine, 'Hair Cutter and Peruquier' to George IV. Simultaneously aesthete and

warrior, this Bobadil among barbers vigorously challenges all rivals to his supremacy:

Hebe herself wears not a more youthful nor Venus a more lovely appearance than do the British Fair when adorned by the magical touch of Macalpine . . . Macalpine, on an average operates personally upon three hundred heads of hair weekly, and pledges his professional reputation, which he values more than life, that others are paid for disfiguring that beautiful ornament which a skilful man can alone preserve in classic and luxuriant tresses. Macalpine being the only hair-cutter who obtained a prize, and that of 200*l.* challenges all Europe to a trial of skill for 100 guineas. Come the four corners of the Globe, with comb and scissars, and his great superiority has 'stomach for them all!!!' He will hurl them to the tomb of the Capulits.⁹

Hood drily suggests that Macalpine 'really should give lectures on the poetry of hair-cutting'.¹⁰ His comment, though facetious, is not entirely fanciful, given that the history of labourer-class poets features several examples of barber-poets. The most notable of all is, of course, Allan Ramsay, but there are other, less well-known figures, jobbing barbers who cultivated the muse. The Pontefract periwig-maker and barber John Lund produced several volumes of tales and satires in the mid-eighteenth century, and an even earlier example of a poetical barber is the famous James Salter, the self-styled 'Don Saltero'. Salter was an Irish barber and tooth-drawer who was patronised by Sir Hans Sloane and eventually set up a museum of curiosities at Cheyne Walk in Chelsea. Salter was adept at self-promotion, and produced ingenious advertising copy on behalf of both his gallery of ephemera and his tooth-drawing and barbering business for the public prints. For instance, a poetic advertisement published in the *Weekly Journal* in June 1723 described Salter's life journey, his progress from a barber-surgeon to the proprietor of the 'Chelsea Knackatory':

SIR, – Fifty years since to Chelsea great,
 From Rodnam on the Irish main,
 I stroll'd with maggots in my pate,
 Where much improved they still remain.
 Though various employs I've past,
 Toothdrawer, trimmer, and at last,
 I'm now a gimcrack whim-collector.
 Monsters of all sorts are here seen,
 Strange things in nature as they grew so;
 Some relics of the Sheba queen,

And fragments of the famed Bob Cruso
 ...
 Now if you will the cause espouse,
 In journals pray direct your friends
 To my Museum-Coffeehouse:
 And in requital for the timely favour
 I'll gratis bleed, draw teeth, and be your shaver.¹¹

The eccentricities of Salter, and indeed of barbers in general, were noted, as we have seen, by Richard Steele, who writes: 'The particularity of this man put me into a deep thought whence it should proceed that of all the lower orders barbers should go further in hitting the ridiculous than any other set of men. Watermen brawl, cobblers sing: but why must a barber be for ever a politician, a musician, an anatomist, a poet, and a physician?'¹² By the mid-eighteenth century, the barber with pretensions to intellectual accomplishment becomes a stock figure in English comic writing, most notably in the two greatest novels in the English picaresque tradition, *Tom Jones* and *Roderick Random*, in the characters of Partridge and Strap.¹³

The direct artistic predecessor of J. R. D. Huggins is another former barber, the razor-strop entrepreneur George Packwood, a key figure in the development of late Georgian advertising. As *Harper's Magazine* noted in 1866, 'Packwood, some fifty years ago, led the way in England of ... systematic advertising, by impressing his razor-strop indelibly on the mind of every bearded member of the kingdom.'¹⁴ Packwood was an ingenious and witty self-publicist whose puffs, many of which use variants of literary parody, are collected in his remarkable collection of comic advertisements *Packwood's Whim, or, The Way to Get Money and be Happy* (1796).¹⁵ However, even Packwood must give way to the resourceful Huggins. In the advertising techniques of this Broadway frizzer, we see the most sustained and perhaps the most inventive use of parody and satire in contemporary advertising literature. And in the case of Huggins, a politically committed partisan of the Federalist interest, the satire is as important as the advertising. Huggins aims to sell his services as a barber, and his combs, razor strops and wigs, but his work directly intervenes in the key political debates of the age, both local and global: the controversies between Jeffersonian Republicanism and Federalism, and the Napoleonic wars which were convulsing Europe in the first decade of the nineteenth century.

II

During the first ten years of the nineteenth century, John Richard Desborus Huggins poured out a series of striking comic advertisements in East Coast newspapers. In his earliest advertisements, published at the turn of the nineteenth century, he presents himself first as a 'Knight of the Comb'. However, Huggins eventually promotes himself to the 'Emperor of Barbers', issuing Imperial Proclamations and signing himself 'H. I. M.', 'His Imperial Majesty'. In 1808, the Emperor of Barbers' puffs were collected in *Hugginiana; or, Huggins' Fantasy, being a Collection of the Most Esteemed Modern Literary Productions. Exposing the Art of Making a Noise in the World, without Beating a Drum, or Crying Oysters; and Shewing How, like Whittington of Old, who Rose from Nothing to be Lord Mayor of London, a Mere Barber May Become an Emperor, if He Has Spirit Enough to Assume, and Talents Enough to Support the Title*. This book, a remarkable but utterly neglected work, and one rare outside of statutory libraries, was published by H. C. Southwick of No. 2 Wall Street, 'Most Excellent Printer to his most BARBER-OUS Majesty'. The influence of that other entrepreneurial shaver and advertiser George Packwood is obvious in *Hugginiana*, and is openly acknowledged in the frontispiece (figure 44), which shows the Emperor Desborus mounted on a charger and blowing a trumpet from which Packwood's name emerges. And like his master Packwood (whose products are enthusiastically eulogised throughout *Hugginiana*), Huggins is adept in the 'blast of puffery'. In his imitation of Mark Antony's famous speech from *Julius Caesar*, Huggins declares himself to be the sole agent for Packwood in New York:

By aid of PACKWOOD'S Strop,
The greatest, noblest, best of all inventions
(Of which he here stands sole and only agent)
He looks for greater gains.¹⁶

The link between the two men is reinforced by one of *Hugginiana's* plates (figure 45), in which 'The Genius of Shaving is seen issuing from Packwood's Warehouse, 16 Grace Church Street, London and showering down razor strops into Huggins, 92 Broadway, New York'. And that link, highly appropriately, is both commercial and literary. Huggins places himself in the tradition of Packwood,



Figure 44. Frontispiece to *Hugginiana* (1808).

endorsing his shaving wares and demonstrating a similar ingenuity in his advertisements. Though I would argue that the pupil exceeded his master, the clear model for *Hugginiana* is *Packwood's Whim, or, The Way to Get Money and be Happy*. Huggins styles himself the 'sole New York agent' for Packwood's razor strops, and the link between Packwood and Huggins is as much artistic as it is commercial; the 'Genius of Shaving' metaphorically represents the Packwoodian muse entering the premises at 92 Broadway.

Hugginiana collects and republishes puffs published between 1801 and 1808 and sees Huggins achieving a marketer's dream: making consumers pay for the advertising as well as the product. The advertisements are strung together by a connecting narrative tissue which gives the text the air of a picaresque novel, portraying Huggins's rise in the world, his battles with a baneful host of rival barbers and his elevation to undisputed imperial eminence. In the English picaresque manner, the text is loosely structured and episodic, with the presence of a central character (Huggins in this case) the sole uniting factor. And if Huggins's picaresque journey,



Figure 45. 'The Genius of Shaving is seen issuing from Packwood's Warehouse, 16 Grace Church Street, London and showering down razor strops into Huggins, 92 Broadway, New York'. Plate from *Hugginiana* (1808).

from Greenwich Street to Pine Street to Broadway, is no great distance in geographical terms, in his own metaphorical terms it is a momentous one.

An array of self-promoting individuals populate the pages of *Hugginiana*. Huggins himself occupies the centre, of course, but there is also an extensive cast of other characters, most notably the rival barbers Edward Quirk, H.J. Hassey and Don Emanuel Antonio de Biscarolaza ('Ladies' and Gentlemen's Hair Dresser, No. 72, Wall-Street'). Biscarolaza and Quirk are former colleagues of Huggins who eventually set up on their own and, in the epitome of capitalistic competition, start to produce exotic advertisements in the manner of Huggins. Biscarolaza, for instance, was, according to Huggins, 'once my journeyman – a lad of dull parts – Finding I could make nothing of him, I taught him how to pen an advertisement, and then set him adrift to shift for himself.'¹⁷ Huggins then offers samples of Biscarolaza's copywriting: 'His proficiency in the art may be gathered from the specimens which follow; many of which are in no wise inferior to my own.' Despite disingenuously declaring that 'There is nothing Don Emanuel holds in greater contempt than the ridiculous practice of puffing in the newspapers,' Biscarolaza shows himself an able practitioner of the art of advertising. After several relatively restrained puffs, he eventually reinvents himself as 'late Comb-Major, and Tonsor Generalissimo to his Most Catholic Majesty Carlos III, Dei Gratia Hispania et India Rex' and launches off in imitation of Huggins's wilder flights of fancy, boasting of his 'scratches' (wigs) made from mammoth hair and describing expeditions to the moon in search of tonsorial product innovation. Biscarolaza declares that he 'has received patterns of wigs, frizettes, &c. from the planet Venus, which have the most enchanting effect in heightening female beauty. Also, a few fierce whiskers from Mars, of the most courageous cut, suited for military gentlemen. These form a most pleasing addition to his former stock of Spanish, Roman, Grecian, and Mammoth scratches.'¹⁸

Some of Biscarolaza's puffs, like those of many of the rival hair-dressers featured in *Hugginiana*, feature knocking copy aimed at Huggins. These animadversions are then duly reprinted in *Hugginiana*, which, in the manner of *The Dunciad* and the *Anti-Jacobin* before it, reproduces the effusions of its enemies within its pages. Allied to this is Huggins's inclusion of verse tributes, press

commentary on his work and such writing on the subject of the dressing of the hair as catches his eye. It is also probable that at least some of Huggins's puffs were imitative tributes written for him by politically sympathetic literary customers such as Anthony Bleecker and Samuel Woodworth,¹⁹ or the Connecticut wits Richard Alsop and Theodore Dwight, the acerbically anti-Jeffersonian satirists whose most notable work *The Echo* (1807) contains an extensive tribute to Huggins and provided some of the cuts reproduced in *Hugginiana*.²⁰ There is evidence to suggest that Huggins also offered financial recompense for puffs from these men,²¹ though it is impossible to say to what degree, given the skilful ventriloquism of any paid copy. Though Huggins's self-fashioned persona remains the organising consciousness of *Hugginiana*, all of this means that the book, on occasions, has the appearance of riotous heteroglossia, full of competing voices all claiming to be in possession of the true secret of the care and maintenance of the hair.

'The Puff Candid', first published in the *New York Morning Chronicle* in February 1805, is a good example of Huggins's poetical copy:

To dress the hair with gentlest strokes of art,
 To tangled locks graceful charm impart,
 To wave them loose in many an airy hold,
 For this immortal HUGGINS wields the comb,
 Within his 'Academic Dressing Room';
 Where Belles and Beaux with eager footsteps stray
 To 'School for Fashions', 92 Broadway.
 Frizzers in vain their puffs and powder keep,
 And staring shavers wonder while they weep.
 HUGGINS disdains with vulgar jerks to twirl,
 The martial whisker or bewitching curl –
 Such vulgar jerks your stupid barbers show
 Whose heads of black, nor taste, nor fashion know.
 He bids your hair with gentlest touches rise
 (Not twigs – that fetch the water in your eyes).
 Fashion confest on Fredish heads he shews
 Like Paris belles, or dashing London Beaux!
 No common object to your sight displays,
 But what the stylish throng with joy surveys,
 A lovely fair's loose locks, in graceful state,
 Or close cropt buck, with rough and curly pate,
 While HUGGINS' fingers move by fashion's laws,
 Who'll risk his head in graceless BARBER's paws?

Who sees him curl, but envies every wave?
 Who views him lather, but must wish to shave?²²

Such Popean effusions are the most common prosodological manner of contemporary poetic, or ‘jingle’, advertising copy and *Hugginiana* also offers much more ingenious literary imitation. For example, this spoof playbill, in imitation of Goldsmith, published in the *Commercial Advertiser* for 27 June 1808 shows Huggins offering a feast of theatrical entertainment:

THE STROPS DO CONQUER;
 Or, The Razors Out-Whetted.

The principal parts to be sustained by Packwood’s Razor Strops,
 and
 Gentlemen
 of the Imperial Household.

Between the Play and farce, a new
 MELO-COSMEOTIS.

In which DESBORUS THE FIRST will sing the ancient Ballad, ‘I’m
 Emperor of
 Barbers here’.

A dissertation on WIGS, by Mr. Edwards, formerly of the Dublin
 Theatre.

The Grand Shaving Duet; or, the Wounded Segar, by Messrs. Paris
 and Fennemore.

HUGGINS’ ODE on the Fashions, by Shanewolf, Prince of
 PULL-TUSK.

...

The whole to conclude with a superb transporting scene, in which the Emperor is pourtrayed in the act of receiving the dollars, half dollars, quarters, shillings, and sixpences in his right hand, and graciously depositing them in the till with his left.²³

The evening was ‘reviewed’ in a follow-up notice by ‘Cocky Doodle’, published in the *Advertiser* on 8 July: ‘Mr. HUGGINS was in fine voice, and sung with extraordinary spirit and humour ... We cannot too highly extol the display of Hair Work, Perfumery, &c. in the second act, which for beauty of design, tasteful disposition, and superior finish, are certainly without parallel.’

Huggins’s puffs grow in invention from the early, relatively modest effusions of 1801 and 1802 to the baroque invention and ingenuity of the work published later in the decade. Figure 46 gives an example from 1808, Huggins’s ‘House that Jack Built’, which – eleven years before William Hone makes the same imitative

COMMERCIAL ADVERTISER,

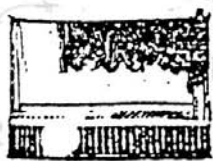
May 25, 1808.



This is the House that Jack built.



This is the Wig, that was made
in the House that
Jack built.



This is the Hair, that formed the
Wig, that was made in
the House that
Jack built.



This is the Comb, that frizz'd the
Hair, that formed the Wig,
that was made in the
House that Jack
built.



This is the MONARCH, that
handled the Comb, that frizz'd
the Hair, that formed the
Wig, that was made
in the House
that Jack
built.

Figure 46. 'House that Jack Built'. Advertisement for J. R. D. Huggins (1808).

gesture in *The Political House that Jack Built* – uses nursery rhyme parody to make its point.

Huggins also imitates more elevated literature. An 1807 advertisement in verse begins by quoting verbatim the first four lines of Erasmus Darwin's 'Apostrophe to Spring' and then launches into Darwinian parody:

Born in yon blaze of orient sky
 Sweet May! thy radiant form unfold;
 Unclose thy voluptuous eye,
 And wave thy shadowy locks of gold.
 The beauteous locks that from the head depend
 Beneath his care in gracious ringlets end;
 His style of dressing only now is priz'd,
 Huggins, by every beau is patroniz'd
 . . . No barber he whose rough plebeian steel
 Causes the chin those horrid pangs to feel
 . . . Such is his art that tender, timid, brave
 All come to HUGGINS when they want to shave.

Thus sings the bard – but 'the proof of the pudding is in the eating'. Come then, all ye who doubt, to the DRESSING ACADEMY, No. 92 Broadway, and if ye are not convinced, it will not be from a lack of assiduity on the part of Your obedient, truly devoted and very humble servant, J. R. D. Huggins.²⁴

On other occasions, Huggins offers his own critical readings of the classics of English poetry, which are interpreted, of course, in the light of their relevance to his tonsorial activities. For example, a November 1806 puff in the *Daily Advertiser* begins by quoting from Cowper's eulogy of winter in Book IV of *The Task*:

Oh Winter, ruler of th' inverted year,
 Thy scattered hair with sleet like ashes fill'd,
 Thy breath congeal'd upon thy lips, thy cheeks
 Fring'd with a beard made white with other snows
 Than those of age, thy forehead wrapp'd in clouds . . .²⁵

Huggins, who is of the opinion that his talents are more expansively expressed in winter than in the heat of a New York summer, feels that Cowper could not have encapsulated his position better had the poet himself been a barber. He comments that had Cowper

been destined to regulate the ton; had he, like him too, felt the difference between a winter's harvest in the field of fashion, and the

uncongenial and unprolific heat of a summer's sun, he could not more feelingly have painted in the preceding lines, the rapture, with which the IMPERIAL CHIEFTAIN, hails the approach of Winter. It is then that his talents are called into full exercise – it is then his genius soars to the upper regions, and plants on every eminence, the monument of his skill.²⁶

In a spoof allegorical interpretation of the poem, Huggins goes on to offer close readings of sections of *The Task*, demonstrating their relevance to his work. Thus, for instance, lines 543–4 of Book IV ('Indebted to some smart wig-weaver's hand/ For more than half the tresses it sustains') signify that each of the Emperor's customers is 'Indebted to the mighty (Huggins') hand/ For more than half the tresses it sustains'. Huggins's tendentious criticism musters its evidence well: what else but hairdressing does Cowper's 'Curling tendrils gracefully dispos'd' depict? He ends with a salute to his shop and more gleeful citation from Cowper, this time of the famous passage in *The Task* where the poet lampoons contemporary advertising:

His shop, too! Behold his Shop!! at
 No. 92 BROADWAY,
 Where may be found all that taste and fashion can
 require, fancy conceive, or art invent;
 ' – – – – A wilderness of strange,
 But gay confusion, roses for the cheeks,
 And lilies for the brows of faded age;
 – – – – – Ringlets for the bald,
 Heaven, earth and ocean plunder'd of their sweets,
 Nectarious essences, Olympian dews'.²⁷

Here Cowper's parody of the advertising columns in his daily newspaper, with their puffs for wigs and cosmetics, forms part of a parodic critical essay which is itself an advertisement. Cowper's advertising parody is transformed into parodic advertising, leaving the poet to act as the mouthpiece for the very products, wigs and hairpieces, with which he had made sport in *The Task*.

III

Huggins's rise from a knight to an emperor is an elevation which echoed in his change of premises, each one more fashionably situated – from 40 Greenwich Street, thence to 41 Pine Street in

1802, and finally to 92 Broadway in the following year. Huggins eulogises his new location in the *Evening Post* for 10 June 1803 in sprightly anapaestic verse in the manner of Christopher Anstey:

J. HUGGINS informs all the heads in the state,
 Of the wonderful change he has pass'd thro' of late:
 Promoted from Pine-street's dull glimmering ray,
 To the clear shining regions of stylish Broadway;
 Where the Goddess of Fashion, he dares to presume,
 Will soon fix her seat in his new Dressing-Room.²⁸

The salon at 92 Broadway, the 'Razor-voir of taste', becomes an Eldorado for those in search of hair care and hair-care products. Figure 47 shows one of the cuts devoted to it.

The move to 92 Broadway follows the dissolution of the firm of Huggins and Quirk, and Edward Quirk swiftly becomes one of the anti-heroes of *Hugginiana*. Hostilities begin almost immediately after the severance of the partnership, with the puff quoted above, where Huggins contrasts 'Pine-street's dull glimmering ray' with 'the clear shining regions of stylish Broadway', infuriating Quirk (who was still trading in Pine Street) and prompting him to reply three days later in the *Morning Chronicle* by pointing out that the much-vaunted site in Broadway was actually uncomfortably close to a graveyard: 'tis really laughable when he talks of the . . . gloomy situation of Pine-street, [when] his Dressing Room [is] in Broadway, where he presents you with the elegant prospect of graves and tomb-stones'.²⁹ Quirk also had his own line in puffing verse:

Where elegance with art is led,
 T' adorn and ornament the head,
 And curling tongs, and razors keen,
 Put hair in curls, and smooth the chin,
 The above and all such other work
 Is now performed by
 EDWARD QUIRK³⁰

Huggins, who 'looks down with sovereign contempt on the quiblings and QUIRKINGS of his insignificant enemies', replies to Quirk by reprinting the English satirist John Wolcot's fable, 'The Pig and the Magpie', in which a pig, enraged at a magpie's theft of a few hairs from his back, scalps himself by invading the magpie's nest in a bramble. Huggins adds, 'This is a pretty tale of Pindar's – aye and pat,/ To folk like you, so clever verbum sat.'³¹

COMMERCIAL ADVERTISER,

June 15, 1808.

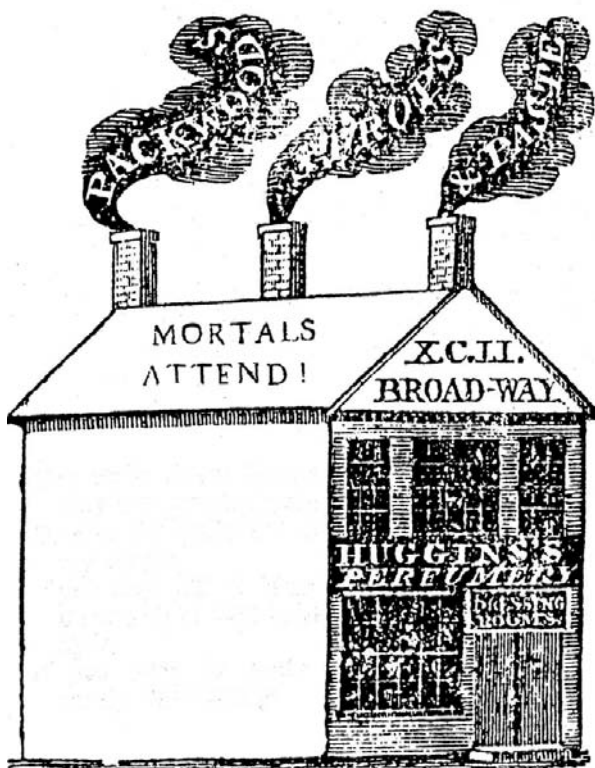
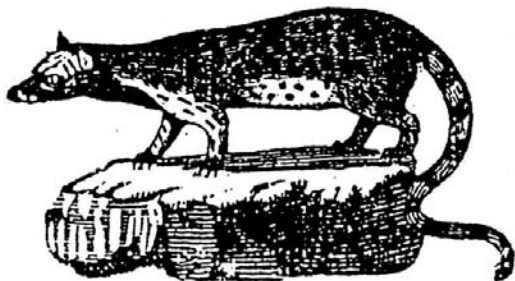


Figure 47. 'X.C.I.I. Broad-way'. Advertisement for J. R. D. Huggins (1808).

The epitome of self-improvement invoked in the full title of *Hugginiana*, Dick Whittington, was of course accompanied by a cat, and so is Huggins, as an almost equally noteworthy resident of 92 Broadway is his famous 'Skiagraphic Cat' (see figure 48). Huggins declares in the *Commercial Advertiser* for 23 April 1804 that he is the keeper of 'one of the most beautifulest animals in creation, together with a tame rat for the amusement of the Ladies'. This prompted another of Huggins's rivals, one H.J. Hassey,

MORNING CHRONICLE,

March 23 1804.



SKIAGRAPHIC CAT.

THIS astonishing phantasmagoric phenomenon which has excited so much attention among the natives, was originally caught in the desert of *Fudge*, kingdom of *Quix-me*, north-west corner of the moon, by that celebrated wight Don Emanuel, in one of his lunatic expeditions. Its favorite food is CANARY BIRDS, of which it has nearly cleared the Dressing Academy. It swallows them *songs and all*, so that its bowels have all the musical tones of a perfect ORCHESTRA.

Figure 48. 'Skiagraphic Cat'. Detail from an advertisement for J. R. D. Huggins (1804).

to attempt to outdo the Skiagraphic cat by offering an entire menagerie for sale at his premises at 122 Front Street, which were barber's shop, aviary and kennel rolled into one. According to Hassey, 122 Front Street contains a 'numerous and choice collection of Birds, Pigs (that is, Guinea Pigs), Squirrels, Rabbits and Dogs of every sort, size and colour'. And in March 1804 Hassey arrives in the *New York Evening Post* in the new guise of Miltonic imitator in a sprightly assault upon Huggins, who is compared to the figure of Sin in Book II of *Paradise Lost*:

Thus when with boasted vaunt the Barber pours
His epithets, of pride and envy mix'd,

On more successful rival in his trade
Crown'd with fair fame, well earn'd, and grac'd withal
By modest manners, the foul Brood return
To gnaw, in secret, his envenom'd sides,
And prick, with self condemning stings, their Sire.
With vast pretensions and high-sounding phrase,
Phantasmagoric, Cat-like, mewing noise;
A razor in his hand, and strutting forth
Infuriate in his heart, yet feigning fair,
And offering to the crowd smooth words like soap.³²

Hassey, or probably in this case his paid poetical copywriter, writes a most able Miltonic burlesque in the manner of John Philips's 'The Splendid Shilling'. Huggins next becomes Satan himself and is described in council with a host of servile lackeys:

Amid his Block-Heads and the gaping throng
Of menial hirelings crowding to the stall
Where he presides, like Satan midst his friends.³³

Against the mendacious boasts of this demonic throng, the figure of Truth personified appears, introducing a new hero, a Christ-like redeemer who will triumph over the forces of evil. This is none other than H. J. Hassey of 122 Front Street:

Yet when radiant TRUTH
Angelic led forth HASSEY to his view,
Her Hassey – and recited half a page
Of his unrivall'd worth, the charm was broke.
Apall'd the shaver shrunk; nor dar'd awhile
T' assail the ear of beauty, as of old
The ear of Eve by Satan was beguil'd
With false assurance and fair promise won
To her destruction: – Silence clos'd the mouths
Of the Grim Monster and the Knight of Soap.³⁴

The poem continues with a vision of Hassey's 'Feather'd choir' of birds triumphing over Huggins's Skiagraphic cat and ends by describing Hassey surrounded by his aviary, a picture of contentment which is contrasted with the dire fate awaiting Huggins:

Protected by his worth, while one retires
To useful labour, 'midst his warbling throng,
The other struts and puffs in empty boast,
Finds all his bluster vain – then dies forgot!³⁵

Four days later, also in the *Post*, Huggins notes that Hassey, the ‘bird-catcher’, ‘seems anxious to be on a par with the Skiagraphic cat, which is an enemy to the feathered tribe’. Huggins warns Hassey that he is in danger of having the Skiagraphic cat set upon him: ‘this infuriated animal . . . will be let loose, and the consequences will be truly barberous’.

On 11 July 1808, the readers of the *New York Commercial Advertiser* were presented with ‘A Modern Rape of the Lock’. This is the full text of the puff:

A MODERN RAPE OF THE LOCK.

‘HAPPY the FRISEUR, who in Delia’s HAIR,
With licens’d fingers uncontroll’d may rove;
And happy in his death, the DANCING BEAR,
Who died to make Pomatum for my LOVE.’

Last night, as o’er the page of Love’s despair
My Delia bent, deliciously to grieve,
I stood, a treacherous loiterer, by her chair,
And drew the FATAL SCISSORS from my sleeve.

And would not at that instant o’er my thread
The SHEARS OF ATROPOS had open’d then,
And when I rent the Lock from Delia’s head
Had cut me sudden from the sons of men.

She heard the scissors that fair lock divide,
And while my heart with transport panted big,
She cast a fury frown on me, and cried
‘You stupid puppy, you have spoil’d my WIG’.

Instanter go – bid HUGGINS quickly fly,
’Tis he alone, the mischief can repair –
He gave the touch, that thus deceiv’d thy eye,
And made the Wig to look like natural Hair.

Very few of the *Advertiser’s* readers will have known of the source of this poem, and Huggins offers no hints to guide them. The poem sees him pressing recent British parodic writing into the service of his wigs, or ‘Fac Similes of the Human Head of Hair’. The first four stanzas derive from Robert Southey’s ‘The Amatory Poems of Abel Shufflebottom’ (1799). The opening quatrain is the third stanza of Southey’s ‘Elegy III’ (in which ‘The Poet Expatiates on the Beauty of Delia’s Hair’) and stanzas two to four are borrowed almost verbatim from his ‘Elegy IV’. Here Huggins gestures

towards contemporary English parody, aligning himself with that currently vibrant tradition and exploiting its comic energy. Yet Huggins also offers an interesting and suggestive refinement of his formal model. Southey's parody of the florid and rococo extravagances of Della Cruscan sensibility was prompted by William Gifford's glancing reference in *The Mviad* (1795) to tawdry verse by those who have 'learn'd, by rote, to rave of Delia's charms'.³⁶ Gifford had previously offered, in his *The Baviad* (1791), a fearsome and vitriolic assault upon the bejewelled and overwrought nature of Della Cruscan verse. Though Southey does not endorse Gifford's polemic against the Jacobinical politics of Robert Merry and his school, he follows the stylistic criticism levelled in *The Baviad* in the 'Amatory Poems'. One of the key charges against the Della Cruscans in the satirical writing of both Gifford and Southey was that it paid undue attention to mundanities: 'the death of a bug, the flight of an earwig, the miscarriage of a cock-chaffer, or some other event of equal importance'.³⁷ Huggins, however, is in the business of the rhetorical elevation of the mundane. The artifice implicit in a lady's wig, a symbol of misplaced poetic priorities in Southey, and a signifier of misplaced moral priorities in the poem of Pope's echoed in Huggins's title, is here celebrated. 'A Modern Rape of the Lock' borrows a parodic attack upon poetic over-elaboration and the bejewelled celebration of triviality and co-opts it to sell hair-pieces.

IV

The relationship of Huggins's work to the 'muse of satire' is not limited to acts of parodic imitation of satirical models borrowed from the likes of Cowper, Southey and Wolcot. *Hugginiana* contains much explicit political satire. As well as fighting battles with rival hairdressers, Huggins also has an eye on rather more deadly strife. Huggins's puffing rodomontade has clear political overtones, and I shall now offer an analysis of the sociopolitical context of *Hugginiana* and its relationship both to European politics and the more provincial, but related, concerns of American partisan conflict. As the East Coast newspaper the *Troy Gazette* notes in 1806, 'John R. D. Huggins, a hair dresser in New York, proverbial for his . . . humorous advertisements, frequently turns the greatest events in the political and military world to his own account, and

makes them subjects for his wit and raillery.’³⁸ Thus, for example, shortly before the Battle of Trafalgar, Huggins comments that ‘Lord Nelson is doubtless yet in pursuit of the French fleet; but were he and his officers to land at New-York, there is a strong presumption they would repair to the Dressing Academy of John R. D. Huggins, No. 92, Broadway.’³⁹ The Anglophilia evident in Huggins’s constant parodic borrowings from British poetry is echoed in the pro-English bias of his political satire. After Trafalgar, Huggins’s sympathies are made even more explicit in his announcement that he has for sale two new kinds of combs, ‘the Collingwood cable and the much admired TRAFALGAR LAURELS for ladies heads’,⁴⁰ named after the English triumph and one of its heroes, Cuthbert Collingwood (who commanded the British fleet after Nelson was mortally wounded). Unlike Nelson’s navy, the French fleet would be less than welcome at the Dressing Academy, as Huggins manifests a clear anti-Gallicanism in his work. His oft-repeated refusal to stock Parisian hairdressing accessories and ceaseless celebration of British goods such as Packwood’s razor strops are charged with Anglophile political resonance. This antipathy to France is perhaps best understood in terms of contemporary American politics. Many of Huggins’s advertisements were originally published in the pro-Federalist *New York Evening Post* and in this period anti-Gallicanism was one of the defining characteristics of the Federalist party, as opposed to the studied neutrality or residual pro-Revolutionary sympathy still evident in Jeffersonian Republican circles. Underpinning *Hugginiana’s* ‘wit and raillery’ is pro-Federalist political satire.⁴¹ Indeed, Jefferson receives some fairly rough satirical handling in *Hugginiana*. In June 1805, Huggins describes his caricature of ‘PRAIRIE DOG’:

Although of the canine species, it represents a certain Great Personage, of whom the head of the animal preserves an exact likeness. Bonaparte is represented as a Hornet stinging him behind; which severe discipline, acts as a violent emetic on the terror-struck Spaniel – While under the dreadful operation of this new medicine, well known in Holland, Spain, Italy, and most parts of the Continent of Europe, by the name of Napoleon Physic, he reluctantly disgorges TWO MILLIONS OF DOLLARS at the feet of a certain Marquis. The cruel and unfeeling Don exultingly capers and sings all this while before poor Tray, who is represented to be in the most convulsive agonies.⁴²

The great personage referred to is doubtless President Jefferson and the money flushed out of him by 'Napoleon Physic' refers to the Louisiana purchase. Huggins's political satire is best understood as part of the Federalist satirical tradition established by the Hartford, or Connecticut, Wits during the 1780s and 1790s in the work of Huggins's customers and eulogists Dwight and Alsop, and in that of Lemuel Hopkins, John Trumbull and Joel Barlow before his conversion to Jeffersonianism. The Hartford group's vigorous political satire attacked Jeffersonian democracy and French infidelity in all its forms. Federalist satire such as that of Dwight attacked the pernicious influence of French thought in the new republic: 'The outlaws of Europe, the fugitives from the pillory and gallows, have undertaken to assist our abandoned citizens, in the pleasing work of destroying Connecticut . . . Can imagination paint anything more dreadful on this side of hell!'⁴³ Huggins shared his friend's antipathy to France, and his anti-Gallicanism extends beyond his unwillingness to sell French hair-care products. Writing in the midst of the Napoleonic wars, his self-appointment as 'Empereur des Friseurs' is underpinned by a preoccupation with another notable contemporary Emperor, Napoleon. *Hugginiana* is dedicated to George III and Gustav Adolphus (who had joined the anti-French alliance in 1805), a choice explicitly made because of their status as bulwarks of the anti-Napoleonic cause: 'To George the Third, King of Great Britain, and Gustavus Adolphus the Fourth, King of Sweden, the only reigning Monarchs, myself excepted, who have made an effectual stand against the arms of influence of the TYRANT OF THE WORLD, This Work is most graciously dedicated, by their Imperial, Royal and BARBER-OUS Brother, DESBORUS THE FIRST.' In the *Evening Post* of 13 January 1806, Huggins writes that Napoleon is 'now Emperor of the French' while 'J. R. D. HUGGINS maintains his empire in the circle of brilliant fashion and elegant taste'. However, he goes on, 'mark the difference! Bonaparte acquired his supremacy by usurpation, whereas the Imperial Leader of the Frizzing tribe, and principal of the Fashionable Seminary, by hair cutting'. In the same month, Huggins adopts the tone of Napoleon himself in a bulletin from 'The Emperor of the Friseurs, to the Citizens of the Metropolis':

CITIZENS! – Victory has every where rested on our razors. The enemy has been defeated in all directions. I hasten to communicate the detail.

On the 25th Thermidor, a courier arrived, bringing intelligence, that the enemy were in the vicinity of Rue de Broadway, and endeavouring by forced marches to turn our left. I immediately sent a strong detachment, composed of the fifth regiment of Puffs, who are the flower of my forces, the 4th Brigade of the division of Pomade; and a *corps de reserve* of the Pioneering Curlers; under the command of Generals Dawsonet, Hearte, and Paris, with orders to beat the enemy. The encounter took place at the fort of Rue de Greenwich – it was severe indeed – the enemy gave way in all directions, and before the combing up of the main body, they were completely routed – not a man of them escaped. 531,000,000 were found dead in the field. We took 675,000,000 stand of arms and all their Artillery, &c. ... The EMPEROR will feel himself flattered by the congratulations of the citizens, on this splendid victory over his inveterate rivals – where he executes all kinds of ornamental Hair-work, &c. in a style of Imperial perfection.

J. R. D. HUGGINS

Emperor de les modes, et Roi de Barbieres.⁴⁴

The *Troy Gazette* sees this parody as ‘severely satirizing the “enlightened” Corsican, ... a shrewd and enlightened burlesque on the style of modern European bullies and braggadocios’.⁴⁵ ‘Bulletin the Fourth’ of 28 March is reproduced alongside a cartoon (figure 49) which makes Huggins’s pro-English sympathies even more explicit. Huggins, mounted on a charging bull wearing a collar marked with the words ‘John Bull’ and wielding one of Packwood’s razors, upends the tiny figure of Napoleon. The heroic figure of the strop-wielder is saying ‘I’ll pack you to the Devil’, while Bonaparte, his sword falling lamely to the ground, laments that ‘I rose like a Rocket/ And I fall like the Stick’. The message of the fruitlessness of war is evident in the title of the cartoon, ‘The Unprofitable Contest of trying to do each other the most harm’. The same advertisement contains a short blank verse poem, ‘Peace Proclaimed’, which reinforces this sentiment:

Secure in foes defeated; battle won,
 And Fashion’s Empire subject to his sway;
 Victorious Huggins smiles – not lavish he
 Of Orphan’s anguish, and of widow’s tears; ...
 His razor oft in battle-blood embued
 He sheathes; and deck’d with many a Laurel, sleeps
 The harmless Curler; or at Beauty’s call
 Down her fair neck in conscious mazes guides
 The straying Ringlet; and delights to weave,
 The graceful Frizette for the brow of youth.⁴⁶



Figure 49. 'The Unprofitable Contest of trying to do each other the most harm'.
Cartoon for J. R. D. Huggins (1806).

Unlike Napoleon's, the victories of Desborus the First are 'harmless' and are not achieved at the cost of great human suffering; children are not orphaned nor women widowed in his triumph over 'Fashion's Empire'. Huggins is 'BARBER-OUS', while Napoleon is simply barbarous. Bonaparte and Huggins are both phlebotomists, but when the barber lets blood, it is in the cause of life and beauty rather than for the tyrant's lust for power.

The prefatory material to *Hugginiana* contains a tribute verse from *The Mirror* ('A small Poetical Volume by a Friend to the Fair') which also lends credence to the reading of Huggins's puffs as anti-Napoleonic satire. 'Flaxen Love Locks' salutes 'the Emperor of the tongs and comb' and envisages the flower of American womanhood wearing tresses dressed by Huggins alone and burning French-produced wigs:

Through nature's garb, we will our lilies show,
 Soon let her ringlets o'er our bosoms flow,
 And burn our wigs to let proud Gallia know,
 With Huggins' tasteful art we'll kill each beau,
 Nor with false locks, from guillotine, make show.⁴⁷

The author recognises and sympathises with Huggins's anti-Gallicanism, and shares his repudiation of 'proud Gallia', whose superficially fashionable beauty is underpinned by violence and terror. In this context, Huggins's boasts that he 'has for sale at his School for fashions, an elegant and extensive assortment of hair work, executed by the first artists of his profession in London' seem charged with Anglophile political resonance.

V

I shall conclude my discussion of Huggins by examining the implications of his use of imitation and parody, which is complex and suggestive. First of all, his work consciously exploits the techniques of English burlesque, notably of mock-heroic burlesque. Such poetry, after the manner of Philips's 'The Splendid Shilling', often exploits a humorous discrepancy between elevated form and mundane content. Thus the comic impact of Isaac Hawkins Browne's *A Pipe of Tobacco* derives from the application of the idioms of the likes of Pope, Thomson and Swift to the subject of smoking. Huggins's parody relies upon the same incongruity but, at the same time, offers an interesting variant upon burlesque. Applying an inappropriately grandiose manner to announce his qualities as a barber is amusing – and wit to this day is a key technique of advertising – but in the end Huggins's ironic and knowing exploitation of the dislocation between his register and his theme actually serves to dignify his subject. The cumulative effect of Huggins's parodic method is subtly to associate his advertising copy with decidedly more elevated cultural forms. Because of its verve and engaging comic brio, *Hugginiana's* parody, while it exploits the cultural remove between its form and its content, does not involve the diminution of Huggins's products, which are subtly celebrated and, in the final analysis, elevated. Huggins's mercantile burlesque has its comic cake and eats it.

Huggins's comic, almost encyclopaedic mixing of cultural form is close to Northrop Frye's notion of the Menippean satire, the heterogeneous satire that mixes literary genre. Gary Dyer's description of Peacock's novels might as easily be applied to *Hugginiana*: 'Menippean satires often employ multiple narrative voices, reproduce poems or songs, contain dialogues or symposia ... or vary their media to draw attention to their materiality.'⁴⁸ Also of

relevance here is Gary Kelly's notion of the 'quasi-novel', a term he uses to describe various Romantic period Menippean works: Egan's *Life in London*, Southey's *The Doctor* and Wilson's *Noctes Ambrosianae*. Kelly's description of the quasi-novel as 'disconnected and desultory, to accommodate . . . diverse materials, . . . [and] loosely held together by a narrative frame of recurring characters'⁴⁹ is highly pertinent to Huggins's method. Furthermore, his argument that the quasi-novel 'incorporated elements of other more accepted literary discourses . . . in order to dignify the sub-literary form of the novel' is absolutely central to *Hugginiana*, a work in a cultural form, advertising copy, which is a step or two lower down the 'sub-literary' ladder than the novel, and, indeed, one which marks its cultural aspirations by incorporating novelistic techniques themselves, as well as gesturing towards the belle-lettrist forms employed by more orthodox quasi-novelists. If the quasi-novel works through assimilative incorporation, then in *Hugginiana* this elevation is achieved through the work's governing parodic and imitative methodology.

I shall conclude with a brief discussion of a related aspect of *Hugginiana*, in which its crossing of generic boundaries is taken to its logical conclusion, given that the text seems in places to seek to erase its own generic status as advertising copy. Early in his book, Huggins offers a disquisition upon what one might label tonsorial linguistics, arguing that there is a clear difference between the activities of the everyday barber (which he describes as an 'ignoble trade') and his own profession: 'Superficial observers will not readily discover the distinction between A KNIGHT OF THE COMB and a barber; [but] to correct minds that distinction will be obvious. The one is a proficient not only in embellishing the head and beautifying the countenance divine, but in all the accomplishments of a finished gentleman: the other is a mere Jaw scavenger.'⁵⁰ Thus 'Knight of the Comb' is not a circumlocutory method of saying 'barber'; the two signifiers mark an actual and tangible distinction between different things. Similarly, Huggins does not work in a shop, but in his 'dressing rooms', and calling them such is not the dignifying periphrasis common in advertising copy, but a reflection of their real difference from a 'barber's shop': 'in short, there is as manifest a difference between a Knight of the Comb and a Barber, as there is between HUGGINS' DRESSING ROOMS and a barber's shop'.⁵¹ Here his copy seeks to disguise and deny its reliance upon rhetorical artifice. Huggins

attempts to convince us that his self-presentations as the Emperor, the Knight, the proud possessor of the Dressing Rooms and later the 'Academy of Fashions, 92, Broadway' are not empty barks, but the actual facts of the matter. Similarly, the full title of *Hugginiana*, while it draws attention to its self-reflective pre-occupation with the art of advertising ('the art of making a noise in the world'), simultaneously emphasises that it is not rhetoric alone that has elevated Huggins to his current pre-eminence as an Emperor, given that he has 'talents enough to support the title'. Indeed, on occasions Huggins offers mock disdain for the very activity of advertisement: 'Modest merit is content with the approbation evinced by the unexampled liberality of a discerning community: else may J. R. D. H. as is the fashion among the subordinate ranks of his community, claim extraordinary notice by the aid of newspaper PUFFS. – But this he disdains.'⁵² Other barbers puff, Huggins reflects reality: 'John R. D. Huggins is never flattered in being extolled as the best shaver in New-York or the known world.'⁵³ In an advertisement placed in the *Evening Post* on 21 December 1805, Huggins condemns empty puffing: his rivals in the 'Ignoranti have fancied, that [they had] only to scribble off an advertisement, and they would at once be exalted to [a] high state of public patronage . . . But dull as their own razors must they be, if they cannot discriminate between the support of genius, worth and talents, and that short lived patronage, the effect of curiosity, pity or ignorance.'⁵⁴ Huggins 'obtained his title' by merit, having 'genius, worth and talents' enough; it is his rivals who rely upon specious puffing and who are unable to substantiate their rhetoric, making a noise that is ultimately empty, relying upon self-promotion rather than actual talent. Huggins has been 'called' the 'best barber' rather than idly claiming that role for himself. Huggins attempts to convince us that his imperial self-representations are not dependent upon extreme forms of advertising rodomontade, but simply present the truth. If the quasi-novel gestures towards generic forms above and beyond those of the novel, then *Hugginiana* attempts an even more ambitious escape from its genre. Huggins's final, paradoxical manoeuvre, in these puffs that deny their status as puffery, is to claim that his work is not advertising at all.

CONCLUSION

'Thoughts on puffs, patrons and other matters': Commodifying the book

PUFFING – a species of cozenage and trickery much resorted to by the vendors of quack medicines, blacking, novels, and other trash, for the purpose of gulling the public and cajoling them into a purchase of their wares.

Horace Smith, *The Tin Trumpet* (1836)

Coal-burn him in Beelzebub's deepest pit.

Charles Lamb on Henry Colburn (letter to P. G. Patmore, 10
April 1831)

During the 1820s and 1830s, the increasingly sophisticated promotional techniques of contemporary publishers such as Richard Bentley, Frederick Mansell Reynolds, Thomas Tegg and, most significantly, Henry Colburn provoked some unease among poets and essayists, notably in a feeling that books were being marketed in the same way as more mundane products such as blacking, hair oil or lottery tickets. A series of essays and satires by literary figures such as John Clare, Thomas Hood, John Hamilton Reynolds, Robert Montgomery and Thomas Babington Macaulay directly compare the marketing tactics employed to sell consumer goods with the techniques used by what one might label the manufacturers in their own trade, the publishers. In Robert Montgomery's words, 'Novels can be crammed down the public, just in the same style as . . . Kalydor, Blacking, Champagne, and other bottled wonders';¹ the likes of Colburn have made themselves indistinguishable from Alexander Rowland the younger, Robert Warren or Charles Wright. A discussion of brand marketing informed literary journalists' and satirists' discussions of the contemporary publishing business. An attention to the subject of puffing (both by manufacturers of consumer goods *and* by

publishers) enabled authors to examine the economics and criticise the ethics of the contemporary book trade. Hood apart, most of these works share a common cultural anxiety, rooted in a threatened literary idealism, a sense that high art is sullied by its connections with commerce. According to this line of reasoning writing is a vocation or profession rather than a trade, and a book is no ordinary product; rather, it is, in Milton's great phrase, 'the life blood of a master spirit', and is sullied by the tawdry promotional antics of the booksellers. The work of a great poet or novelist is demeaned if it is advertised in the same manner as a blacking pot or a sixteenth in the lottery. Worse, in the hands of a scoundrel such as Colburn, puffery, with its lies, half-truths and manipulations, can promote a poetaster as a genius in the line of Milton, or a hack novelist as the heir of Richardson, distorting true literary worth and vitiating public taste. A consideration of these issues is an appropriate place to conclude my discussion of the synergy between Romanticism and advertising that arose within a commodity marketplace and a speculative economy.

I

Publishers, from William Caxton onwards,² have always used advertising to sell their wares, and late Georgian booksellers, from the first John Murray onwards,³ were not lacking in the entrepreneurial spirit. However, to the minds of many literary figures of the 1820s and 1830s, some of the most notable publishers of their day were taking that spirit to unprecedented heights. Writing in *The Age Reviewed* of publishers' sharp practice, Robert Montgomery draws a distinction between eighteenth-century bookselling and that of the present day: 'this was, I am aware, always the case to a certain degree; – but ours is the Brazen age of Impudence'.⁴ For Montgomery and many of his literary peers, the rampant commercialism and avarice manifest in contemporary publishing often involved the use of disgraceful promotional techniques: not simply making inflated claims on behalf of an inferior product, but also in promotional manipulations such as inflating numbers of editions, using in-house journals to provide positive reviews of products emanating from the same publishing house, quoting advertisements in the major weekly and daily newspapers as if they were reviews, and cajoling house authors to provide meretricious praise for their colleagues.

The emblematic figure in contemporary discussion of publishing and its promotional techniques is the most brilliant and most contentious figure in the post-Napoleonic publishing scene, Henry Colburn. Colburn was an enormously energetic and successful figure: he founded the *New Monthly Magazine* in 1814, the *Literary Gazette* in 1817 and the *Court Journal* in 1828, and also ran a highly lucrative business as a book publisher, of poetry, memoirs and travel writing, but most notably of novels (however disreputable Colburn's promotional activities may have been, it might be pointed out that his list included the likes of Benjamin Disraeli and Lady Morgan as well as a host of the now-forgotten).⁵ Though other publishers such as the eminently respectable Longman's were willing to engage in dubious practices such as quoting in their advertisements ecstatic reviews that had been published in journals in which they had an interest,⁶ it was Colburn whose name became irredeemably associated with the abuses of contemporary publishing. In 1863, looking back at the publishing scene in the first half of the century, *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* declared that 'The prince of puffers was Henry Colburn. He spent a fortune in advertising his own books, and succeeded, 'til the trick was found out, in cramming many a trashy production down the throat of a gullible public.'⁷ Books published by Colburn would be favourably reviewed in the journals that he owned or part-owned and the enthusiastic puffing by the *New Monthly Magazine* and the *Literary Gazette* of books published elsewhere within Colburn's literary empire became notorious in the period. These reviews would then be excerpted in advertisements published in other periodicals. And advertising material placed in *The Times*, for example, or in the *Morning Chronicle*, would subsequently be presented disingenuously elsewhere in ways that suggested that the source was the newspaper's editorial rather than its paid columns.

In the second volume of his *XIX Century Fiction* (1951), Michael Sadleir writes that Henry Colburn

regarded every author as having his price and the public as gullible fools . . . he had no literary taste of his own, merely an instinctive sense of the taste of the moment. In consequence . . . he published on the basis of quick turn-over, and made a fortune for himself by sheer topical ingenuity . . . Impervious to snubs; cheerful under vilification, so long as insults meant more business; thinking in hundreds where others

thought in tens, Colburn revolutionised publishing in its every aspect . . . He developed advertising . . . to a degree hitherto undreamt of. He had his diners-out who talked up his books at dinner-tables and soirées; he debauched the critics and put them on his pay-sheet . . . He was a book-manufacturer, not a publisher.⁸

Sadleir's summary judgment that Colburn was a 'book-manufacturer' is exactly that made by many of the publisher's contemporaries, many of whom saw him as to a large degree indistinguishable from the likes of Robert Warren, selling books in the same manner as the blacking manufacturer marketed his pastes. Thomas Hood, for instance, brackets publishing with the sale of blacking in his 1825 *London Magazine* article 'The Art of Advertizing made Easy': 'Colburn and Warren surprise you with the variety, brilliancy and country-circulation of their advertisements,' adding tartly that 'The former of the two has not yet, I believe, like the other, had his name whitewashed in letters twice as long as his Magazine upon the walls of the Metropolis.'⁹ Thomas Love Peacock makes a similar connection less charitably, writing in *Crotchet Castle* that 'modern literature ha[s] attained the honourable distinction of sharing with blacking and macassar oil, the space which used to be monopolized by razor-strops and the lottery, whereby that very enlightened community, the reading public, is tricked into the perusal of much exemplary nonsense'.¹⁰ Publishers' advertisements cheat the public by elevating the facile hackwork of those 'whose brains are high-pressure steam engines for spinning prose by the furlong, to be trumpeted in paid-for paragraphs in the quack's corner of newspapers'.¹¹ Hireling critic salutes literary mediocrity at the behest of venal bookseller and all, especially publisher, are consequently enriched.

Michael Sadleir's attitude towards Colburn the 'book-manufacturer' was anticipated a century earlier by the satirist George Daniel, whose 'The Conversazione' (1835) compares the publisher to the most notable contemporary entrepreneurial advertisers. Indeed, for Daniel, Colburn outstrips George Packwood, Alexander Rowland, Charles Wright and Henry Hunt in the art of 'moonshine':

Now damn'd be he who hears thee puff,
And cries, 'Hal Colburn, hold, enough!'
For since the first-born Puffer, down

To Packwood's strops, for half-a-crown;
Rowland's Macassar, Wright's Champagne,
Hunt's patent roasted – (rogue in grain!
Whose Blacking makes our leather soon shine),
Thou art the very prince of moonshine!¹²

Colburn is a vendor of shoddy goods, presenting talentless mediocrities as if they were the new Milton or Richardson. Literary London is populated by a motley collection of hacks ('Behold a tribe, unknown to Phoebus,/ Contributors of rhyme and rebus')¹³ and Daniel portrays one member of this tribe of 'Versemen, Prosemen, Penny-a-liners', a hack novelist starving in his attic, 'tak[ing] his manuscript to Colburn'. Colburn publishes this worthless effort and transforms his author's fortunes by puffing, his manipulations prompting Daniel into ironic celebration:

Blest as th' immortal Gods is he,
The lucky scribe, who prints with thee
His waste demy, in volumes three!
For through the town thy trumpet blows
The merits of his verse and prose,
Then how he struts, and frets, and crows!
And shines (where Fame would blush to enter),
Of ev'ry little group the centre.¹⁴

Henry Colburn also features largely in Robert Montgomery's *The Age Reviewed* in that satire's attack on the 'Art of Puffing'.¹⁵ Colburn, 'Prince Puff',¹⁶ is portrayed as a figure who runs a 'novel-shop' rather than a publishing firm, and one who uses the strategies of the brand proprietor to market his wares and build market share. Montgomery begins his satire with a mock lament that he has not sought Colburn's patronage in publishing his book:

Too high praise cannot be administered to the eminent merits of Mr C-, for that delectable method he pursues, in introducing an author to the public. – I ought sincerely to lament, that the Fates decreed my volume should not luxuriate under the fostering puffs of his patronage, – but poetry is such a drug! – 'Try C-', says every literary friend to an author, 'he'll make your work sell.'¹⁷

Colburn makes literary works sell through cunning advertising and meretricious cross-promotional reviewing – puffing and

cheating. Native genius has now no chance unless corrupt reviews and adulatory advertising support it:

Since now, no sterling volumes dare to sell,
 Save Murray buy, or Colburn puff them well: –
 For what can meritorious arts complete,
 Without an underling to puff and cheat?
 Genius alone is yours – the worse for you!
 For that must wither – fanned by no Review; –
 Or cozening Fortune never guides you where
 Our cockney quillmen fattening plaudits share . . .¹⁸

In a manner familiar in the satirical literature of the period, Montgomery makes the sign of literary debasement a connection with brand advertising. He compares Colburn with the vintner Wright, the two manufacturers being indistinguishable; advertising Arcadians both: ‘It is doubtful to say which will be handed down to posterity, as the greatest master in the history of magnanimous puffing – Charles Wright, or C-, “Arcades ambo”. Let but the smile of C-’s suavity illuminate the MS., and your forthcoming prodigy will meander through all the papers in the full tide of paragraphic celebrity.’¹⁹ Conversely, in his later attack on Wright, that ‘vinous Colburn’, it is the publisher’s name that is used as an insult. Montgomery attacks Wright’s trademark verse copy: jingle puffs, ‘accursed rhymes’, demean poetry, making the Muse act ‘I’ the manner of a whore’. Montgomery’s satirical sensibility is dually offended by the vintner and the novel-shop man: by Colburn’s refusal to treat publishing as a vocation rather than a business, and by Wright’s co-option of the highest literary art form to sell champagne. Poetry, in its submission to the commercial ethic, becomes as polluted as Wright’s champagne itself. Montgomery calls for:

honest vengeance on humbugging W –
 That vinous Colburn, whose accursed rhymes,
 Delude the country, and disgrace the times:
 Poetic rogue! – will not the day-light gain
 Enough poor victims for thy false champagne?²⁰

In this new world of anarchic literary inversion, booksellers have become tradesmen and shopkeepers poets. Indeed, Montgomery provocatively argues that contemporary literature is so debased that it now ranks even lower than contemporary mercantilism: ‘Literature is now degraded far below a trade.’²¹ For him, ‘Of all

the cants which are canted in this canting world, though the cant of hypocrites may be the worst, the cant of criticism is the most torturing.²² The corruption of criticism is to blame for the cankered state of contemporary letters. Colburn and his 'prostituted herd' of hireling critics have reneged on their duty of awarding praise only when praise is due, mediocre poets are promoted by hack critics like blacking or roasted corn, and the reviews in literary magazines are untrustworthy because of their links to publishers. He gives as an example of Colburn's transformation, through puffery, of base literary metal into gold, the early work of one of his most successful silver-fork novelists (interestingly and perhaps surprisingly to the modern eye), Benjamin Disraeli: 'Vivian Grey, by Mr D'Israeli, Jun. made some little noise, through the puffing talents of unequalled Colburn, and the fashionable nonsense its pages contained.'²³

Montgomery acknowledges that dubious practices had always been part of the publishing scene, but the present day, 'the Brazen age of Impudence', is particularly culpable, and has brought the art of puffery to hitherto unimaginable heights and the business of publishing to hitherto unimaginable lows:

If criticism performed its honourable functions, authors would be fewer, and learning saved from its present attached stigma; but it is exactly the contrary. Authors spring up faster and thicker than weeds in the 'deserted village'; while each one has a critic 'who comes hobbling after'. Those who live at a distance from London, are apt to pay an implicit credit to the metropolitan reviews; but a month's residence in London, and an acquaintance with the literary coteries, will teach them to laugh at most of the criticisms, and consider nearly all the reviewers as a despicable, prostituted herd of quill-drivers. This is not bravado, but simple fact.

You can scarcely mention a magazine or a paper, that has not a certain publisher and certain critic, who play a literary shuttlecock, most admirably. Besides all this perfidious venalism, there are party rancour, envy, malice, pique, and all the concomitants of little minds, constantly affecting the critics. This was, I am aware, always the case to a certain degree; – but ours is the Brazen age of Impudence.²⁴

With dispassionate, disinterested and non-partisan criticism neutralised, the corrupt Colburn is free to turn out his wretched and licentious novels by the yard, saluting them in specious advertisement and having them dutifully puffed in the *Literary Gazette*

through the good offices of his lackey, the journal's editor William Jerdan:

Each week turns out a garbled lump of shame, –
 Some pand'ring novel with a far-fetched name, –
 Or wind-blow from disorder'd craniums blown,
 The filthy brain-work of the small 'Unknown':
 High-pric'd the venal grubs their varnish sell,
 'Twill warm old maids and titillate the belle;
 From them will Jerdan peck, and Colburn puff,
 Till all but author cry out, – 'quantum suffi!'²⁵

The satirical onslaught on puffery by the likes of Daniel and Montgomery is part of a two-pronged attack on the practice, in which both satirists and literary journalists confronted what they saw as the abuses of contemporary bookselling. Robert Montgomery's attacks on Henry Colburn, for example, anticipate the prose polemics of John Hamilton Reynolds published in the *Athenæum* during the 1830s. After taking over the editorship of the paper in June 1830, Charles Dilke announced that his journal would only print unbiased and disinterested reviews (this itself was a clever marketing manoeuvre, it might be pointed out); contributors would not be allowed to review their friends' work and the corruptions of contemporary bookselling would be systematically exposed. Reynolds was the leading figure in the journal's campaign against puffery. Inevitably, Colburn was the central target for his attacks. The publisher had recently merged his company with that of the rival business of Richard Bentley. From their premises in Burlington Street, Bentley and Colburn had launched a sustained puffing campaign in favour of a part-published collection of books for children, the Juvenile Library. Reynolds's 17 July *Athenæum* review of the first volume, *Lives of Remarkable Youths of Both Sexes*, condemned the work as sloppily compiled and error-ridden, and pointed out that the risible ambiguity of the book's title was emblematic of the slipshod nature of the work as a whole. The inadequacies of the book, of course, would matter less were it not for the fact that Colburn and Bentley were busily puffing it with their customary assiduity, and Reynolds attacks the publishers for their brazen impertinence in presenting lazy hackwork as elevated literature. Condemning them by association, Reynolds wryly points out that brothel keepers, enthusiasts for illegal pugilism and pornographers could be

held to account by the law, but the reprehensible behaviour of the publishers escaped sanction. Colburn and Bentley are systematically duping the reading public, their advertising copy aiming to pick the 'breeches-pocket' of the unwary:

People who keep disorderly houses, – attend boxing matches, – vend wicked pictures or books, are indictable and occasionally indicted; but publishers who infest the newspapers with their own speculative productions are amenable to no law and escape punishment. No one will have the hardihood to say that the 'Juvenile Library' is not become a positive nuisance in the newspapers; for it is scarcely possible to get through a single column of Chronicle or Herald, without having to suffer a Burlington Street paragraph. Nothing can be so moral and edifying as the 'Juvenile Library'; nothing so pure and pleasant as its style; nothing so disinterested and generous as its object. The paragraphs, which are paid for, say all this; and some persons in London, and many credulous country readers, cannot read the same mystic hymn to the breeches-pocket day after day, without believing that things are as they are said to be.²⁶

Like so many of his contemporaries, Reynolds compares the marketing of books with the sale of ostensibly less exalted items, associating Colburn and Bentley not only with blacking entrepreneurs but also with manufacturers of hair oil and proprietary medicines:

There can be little doubt that the stupidest cluster of trashy papers, the most insignificant articles, may by dint of eternal paragraph be forced into sale. It could not otherwise happen that Day and Martin, Rowland, Colburn and Bentley, Eady, Warren and those after their kind could lavish so much money in the praises of their oils, their books, their pills and their polish if there did not exist a class of human being who are greedy of belief.²⁷

Colburn and Bentley have made themselves indistinguishable from the advertising herd, peddling substandard goods to the foolish and credulous. In Reynolds's bleak account, advertisers are no more than quacks, and 'It is the duty of an independent journal to protect as far as possible the credulous, confiding and unwary from the wily arts of the insidious advertiser.'²⁸

II

Gerald Griffin's neglected post-Popean satire on the publishing scene of the 1820s, 'The Prayer of Dullness', envisages the goddess

of *The Dunciad* revisiting London, only to find, much to her horror, that the age of dunces has been superseded by a literary golden age: towering poets (Byron, Moore and Campbell) have supplanted her poetasters and Walter Scott has displaced her hack novelists ('An unknown lawyer in the north,/ Shook her Minerva press to splinters').²⁹ Dullness prays for 'Some ally in my hour of care' to restore the empire of 'bad taste on earth'. Salvation arrives in the malign form of Puff, the personification of advertising, who blows 'a thrilling blast' on his 'brazen trumpet':

My name is Puff – the guardian sprite,
 And patron of the dull and shameless,
 Things born in shades, I bring to light,
 And give a high fame to the nameless.
 Me modest merit shuns to meet,
 His timid footsteps backward tracking,
 The worthless all my influence greet,
 From – 's books – to Turner's blacking.³⁰

The marketing techniques used on behalf of both books and blacking ensure the rise of shameless mediocrity (here once again the link between books and blacking informs contemporary satire). Puff consoles Dullness, promising the eventual defeat of modest merit:

Receive me goddess in thy train,
 And thou shalt see a change ere long,
 The stage shall be thine own again,
 Thine, all the sons of prose and song.³¹

Dullness accepts and through the good offices of Puff and his cohorts assumes her throne once more. The reading public are deluded by the brazen blast of puffery to a point where they cannot sort the literary wheat from the chaff and become immune, once again, to the claims of modest genius:

The prophecy was registered,
 The prophecy has been fulfill'd,
 The brazen trumpet's boast is heard,
 Where once the voice of Genius thrilled.
 Reader, before your hopes are undone,
 This axiom you will bear in mind,
 That puffing has been proved in London,
 The only way to raise the wind.³²

In Griffin's satirical dystopia, puffery blinds the eyes of the reading public. What his poem shares with most of the contemporaneous satires and essays discussed in this chapter is its sense of advertising as a distorting force in contemporary letters. 'The opinion of the great body of the reading public is very materially influenced' by puffery, declares Thomas Babington Macaulay in 1830; 'they are ashamed to dislike what men, who speak as having authority, declare to be good.'³³ Publishers' advertisements present base metal as gold and corrupt, in Macaulay's phrase, 'the purity of the national taste'.³⁴

Late Georgian critics of the ethics of the publishing trade endorsed a number of solutions to the problem of puffery. Thomas Love Peacock wittily argued that the very fact of a book or a brand being heavily advertised was a sure sign of its mediocrity and that the discerning reader should consequently avoid it; 'though the reading public is tricked into the perusal of much exemplary nonsense' by the advertising columns, 'the few who see through the trickery have no reason to complain, since as "good wine needs no bush", so, *ex vi oppositi*, these bushes of venal panegyric point out very clearly that the things they celebrate are not worth reading'.³⁵ John Clare, on the other hand, while similarly lamenting the distorting influence of puffery on contemporary literature, placed his faith in posterity. Time would try the question with the over-inflated reputation, and the distortions of puffery eventually fade away. As so frequently in the period, his writing on advertising combines satire and prose polemic. In 'Some account of my kin, my tallents & myself', composed in June 1821, Clare examines the subject of books and their marketing:

Things may (as gran observes of Turners Blacking)
 Be very good & very worthy praise
 But theres such puffing & such swindling quacking
 That merits next to nothing now adays
 Some praise themselves some by their friends are stuck
 As highs our weathercock upon the steeple
 While all beside are trampled in the muck
 I humbly hop[e] youre no such kind of people
 Truth waits times touchstone as the just attacker
 To burst the bubble & to put to rout
 Each pompous sounding literary cracker . . .³⁶

Beginning from the jocular paradox involved in his grandmother's praise of the well-advertised Turner's blacking as needing no

advertisement, Clare sees the puffing system as endemic, elevating the 'literary cracker' and trampling honest merit 'in the muck'. However, he trusts to posterity to 'burst the bubble' of false praise: 'times touchstone' will ensure the just reward of the worthy and the fading of the unworthy. Clare returned to this subject in his critical essay, 'Popularity in Authorship', which was published in the *European Magazine* in 1825, in which he similarly declares that time will sort the meritorious from the meretricious:

Byron is one of the eternals, but as yet he is only one of those in the nineteenth century, and is too young to be placed above the venerables of time, let popularity noise and bustle as she may; for no doubt when all the eternals of the nineteenth century come to be weighed in the balance, even of the next, they will be found to be light weight against Shakespeare alone. Eternity will not rake the bottom of the sea of oblivion for puffs and praises, and all its attendant rubbish, the feelings that the fashion of the day created, and the flatteries it uttered. She will not seek for the newspaper that is illuminated with the puffing praise of Walter Scott's ('the great unknown') fashionable oration over Caesar; she will not look for Byron's immortality in the company of 'Rowland's Kalydor' and 'Atkinson's Bear's Grease;' she will seek it in his own merit, and her impartial judgement will be his best recompense.³⁷

Writing some five years after Clare, Thomas Babington Macaulay also placed his faith in literary posterity: 'we have no apprehensions that puffing will ever confer permanent reputation on the undeserving . . . Men of real merit will, if they persevere, at last reach the station to which they are entitled, and intruders will be ejected with contempt and derision.'³⁸ However, for Macaulay this did not mean that men of good taste, such as himself, should not give posterity a helping hand in taking up arms against puffery (as *The Dictionary of National Biography* points out, Macaulay's onslaught on Robert Montgomery saw him 'trying to anticipate the office of time'). Plain speaking by those who were prepared to fight for true literary worth could do much, even if its *ad hominem* manner caused distress ('If our remarks give pain . . . we are sorry for it. But, at whatever cost of pain to individuals, literature must be purified from this taint').³⁹ In the same year as the *Athenæum* took up the cudgels against publishing malpractice, Macaulay launched his own broadside in what remains the age's most influential attack on puffery, published in the April 1830 number of the *Edinburgh Review*. Ironically, his essay takes as an example of

the worst kind of puffing the work of none other than the author of *The Age Reviewed* and *The Puffiad*. Macaulay excoriates two recently published volumes by Robert Montgomery, *The Omnipresence of the Deity* (1828) and *Satan* (1830), developing his withering notice into a systematic assault upon publishers' marketing practices. His essay is, perhaps, the exemplary articulation of the idealist defence of literature in the face of sophisticated marketing techniques supposedly aimed at deluding the public and distorting literary value. Equally representative is Macaulay's strategy of condemning publishers by association, in his comparison of booksellers with empirics and vendors of consumer goods.

Macaulay begins by arguing that with the growth in the size of the reading public, authors no longer need to rely upon rich and powerful benefactors: 'As a taste for books becomes more and more common, the patronage of individuals becomes less and less necessary.'⁴⁰ Whereas Dryden and Otway served aristocratic patrons, the idea of the likes of Scott or Moore 'looking out for some lord who would be likely to give him a few guineas in return for a fulsome dedication, seems laughably incongruous'.⁴¹ However, though this 'evil is removed, another evil has succeeded it'. The 'public' rather than the aristocrat is now the patron and 'Men of letters have . . . ceased to court individuals, and have begun to court the public. They formerly used flattery. They now use puffing.'⁴² Macaulay declares that 'it is high time to make a stand against the new trickery. The puffing of books is now so shamefully and so successfully practised, that it is the duty of all who are anxious for the purity of the national taste, or the honour of the literary character, to join in discountenancing it'.⁴³ Macaulay takes his readers through the devices used by publishers: the cross-promotion in journals owned by a book's publisher ('the publisher is often the publisher of some periodical work [and] in this periodical work the first flourish of trumpets is sounded'),⁴⁴ the use of paragraphs which are then recycled in subsequent advertisements as reviews ('The fulsome eulogy makes its appearance on the covers of all the Reviews and Magazines with "Times" or "Globe" affixed, though the editors of the Times and Globe have no more to do with it than with Mr Goss's way of making old rakes young again').⁴⁵ 'It is no excuse', thunders Macaulay, 'for an author, that the praises of journalists are procured by the money or influence of his publisher, and not by his own.'⁴⁶ He goes on to

make the neatest formulisation of the idealist dismissal of advertising: works of art 'should come before the public, recommended by their own merits alone'.⁴⁷

Macaulay declares that, in the modern age, authors have allowed themselves to be promoted in the same manner as consumer goods, explicitly associating publishing with contemporary advertising. His glancing reference to 'Mr Goss', for example, none too subtly associates the publishers with one of the most notable of late Georgian pox-doctors. Later in the review he returns to the fray, wryly imagining that the most notable contemporary advertisers have lost their copywriters, who have now abandoned them to wield the quill of puffery for the likes of Henry Colburn: 'All the pens that ever were employed in magnifying Bish's lucky office, Romanis's fleecy hosiery, Packwood's razor strops, and Rowland's Kalydor, – all the placard-bearers of Dr Eady, – all the wall-chalkers of Day and Martin, seem to have taken service with the poets and novelists of this generation.'⁴⁸

Macaulay sees Robert Montgomery as the most egregious example of an over-inflated literary reputation: the 'puffers, a class of people who have more than once talked the public into the most absurd errors . . . surely never played a more curious, or a more difficult, trick, than when they passed Mr Robert Montgomery off upon the world as a great poet'.⁴⁹ The hapless Montgomery is chosen for the critical lash 'because his works have received more enthusiastic praise, and have deserved more unmixed contempt, than any which, as far as our knowledge extends, have appeared during the last four years'.⁵⁰ *The Omnipresence of the Deity* had by 1830 been many times reprinted, and Macaulay declares that he will examine 'what sort of poetry it is which puffing can drive through eleven editions' in just two years. His answer is unequivocal: 'a roaring cataract of nonsense':

His writing bears the same relation to poetry which a Turkey-carpet bears to a picture. There are colours in the Turkey-carpet, out of which a picture might be made. There are words in Mr Montgomery's writing which, when disposed in certain orders and combinations, have made, and will again make, good poetry. But, as they now stand, they seem to be put together on principle, in such a manner as to give no image of anything 'in the heavens above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth'.⁵¹

The corrupting force of puffery has led the public to believe a poetaster a genius: 'And this is fine poetry! That is what ranks its author with the master-spirits of the age! This is what has been described, over and over again, in terms which would require some qualification if used respecting *Paradise Lost!*'⁵² Advertising threatens to destroy 'the purity of the national taste [and] the honour of the literary character'.⁵³

III

Gerald Griffin's satire on puffery 'The Prayer of Dullness' was written during the poet's unhappy spell in London during the mid-1820s. The idealistic young Irishman, still only in his early twenties, hoped to make a name for himself as a dramatist and journalist in literary London but soon became disillusioned both with the state of the English stage and with the realities of the metropolitan publishing scene, with its nepotism and incestuousness, but particularly with its dependence upon puffery. For Griffin, like so many of his satirical contemporaries, puffery foisted second-rate talent upon the public taste and obscured the chances of the worthy poet with few links to the world of metropolitan publishing. Worse, however, to his mind was the fact that even the great figures of the day seemed to be complicit: 'even the *Waverley* novels were puffed into notice',⁵⁴ wrote a scandalised Griffin, shocked to learn that the work of a figure whom he so much admired had been promoted in much the same way as a silver-fork novel. His lament is contemporaneous with that of John Clare's 1825 *European Magazine* dismissal of 'the puffing praise of Walter Scott' and the advertisements for the latest edition of Byron in which the poet jostles for column space with *Kalydor* and bear's grease. For Clare, the literary greatness of a Byron or a Scott is not to be revealed in the advertising columns devoted to him. Such things are transient, and Clare places his faith in posterity's 'impartial judgement' to establish an author's true worth. Yet, as John Clare was only too aware, writers live in the here and now, with economic uncertainty and the need to put food on the table of their dependants, rather than resting in the bosom of posterity, and both he and Griffin recognise that even the most elevated of literary figures are sometimes forced to sup with the devil. As Wordsworth's laments about the sums spent by Longman's on

advertising his works demonstrate, even the most elevated of authors cannot easily escape his links with the commercial world. Perhaps such a realisation underpins the poet's wry portrayal of himself as a tradesman in a letter of 9 April 1816 to R. P. Gillies in which he laments Longman's failure to acknowledge receipt of a manuscript: 'from this you may judge of the value which the Goods of the author of the Excursion at present bear in the estimation of the Trader'.⁵⁵ Wordsworth has, in effect, become a commercial supplier, and his verses his goods. Certainly an anxiety that such a situation prevailed in the contemporary publishing scene informed the anti-puffery jeremiads of Wordsworth's contemporaries, which lament the fact that, because of the distortions of puffery, the poetaster can outsell the genius: as Macaulay writes in his review of Montgomery: 'The circulation . . . of this writer's poetry has been greater than that of Southey . . . and beyond all comparison greater than that of . . . Coleridge.'⁵⁶

Underpinning Macaulay's attack on puffery is his lamentation that, by the logic of the marketplace, Wordsworth and Coleridge, for the sake of argument, must engage in unseemly commercial competition, aided by advertising, with Byron or Rogers, rather than 'com[ing] before the public recommended by their own merits alone'. A similar notion informs the literary-critical force of that sustained parodic meditation on poetry and advertising, W. F. Deacon's *Warreniana*. In the epigraph to the collection ('I have even been accused of writing puffs for Warren's Blacking. Lord Byron'⁵⁷), Deacon adapts Byron's famous appendix to *The Two Foscari* in which the poet jocularly denied composing blacking puffs for Day and Martin's. Deacon's parodic masterpiece offers mock-substantiation of the accusation in making the most successful poet of the age a copywriter in 'The Childe's Pilgrimage'. Making the likes of Byron, Scott and Wordsworth paid hirelings for Warren's blacking is suggestive. For however important the incongruity between aesthetic form and mercantile content might be in Deacon's book, in one respect there is no mismatch between the imaginative and the financial. The 'intellect of England', like Robert Warren himself, is paid according to the laws of supply and demand, 'each author furnishing a modicum of praise in the style to which he was best adapted, and receiving in return a recompense proportioned to his worth'.⁵⁸ Here Deacon is making an important argument about the nature of literature in the

Romantic period. If this is an age where selfhood is one of poetry's central thematic preoccupations, it is also one where book publishing is commercialised as never before. Similarly, in his awareness of the wit and ingenuity of contemporary advertising and his sensitivity to the co-option of high art by commercial culture, Deacon demonstrates his understanding of the nature of advertising in the late Georgian age, the mercantile art form which articulates the commercial spirit of the age at least as surely as Romanticism does that of the wider literary culture. It is not insignificant that Thomas Hood's essay on the subject is called 'The Art of Advertizing'. Commerce becomes increasingly aestheticised in the Romantic period, and aestheticised in remarkable ways. Conversely, and however unwelcome the truth might be to high Romantic argument, and despite the protestations of Macaulay, Reynolds and others, books have become commodified. 'Byron' and 'Scott' are commercially successful brands; 'Wordsworth' and 'Coleridge', as the 'Essay, Supplementary to the Preface' testifies, less so. Romanticism is ineluctably involved with marketing and an author's original and individual genius is sold along the same lines as Robert Warren's 'original matchless BLACKING'.

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

- 1 E. S. Turner, *The Shocking History of Advertising!* (London: Michael Joseph, 1952), p. 56.
- 2 Graeme Stones and John Strachan, eds., *Parodies of the Romantic Age*, 5 vols. (London: Pickering and Chatto, 1999), vol. IV, p. 28.
- 3 William Frederick Deacon, *Warreniana; with Notes, Critical and Explanatory, by the Editor of a Quarterly Review (1824)*, ed. John Strachan, vol. IV of Stones and Strachan, *Parodies of the Romantic Age*.
- 4 *Collected Verse Parody*, ed. John Strachan, vol. II of Stones and Strachan, *Parodies of the Romantic Age*.
- 5 I take 'satirical culture' to include parody, the satirical imitation of a formal model, whether particular or idiomatic. Allied to this is comic imitation, a key strategy in Romantic era advertising copy.
- 6 Abraham Hayward, 'The Advertising System', *Edinburgh Review*, vol. 77 (February 1843), p. 4.
- 7 See chapter 2 below. Mention might also be made here of the remarkable promotional antics of the Reverend John Henley, by Pope's account in *The Dunciad*, 'Preacher at once and Zany of thy age'. See Simon During's *Modern Enchantments: The Cultural Power of Secular Magic* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002), and Lance Bertelsen's essay on 'Popular Entertainment and Instruction', in *The Cambridge History of English Literature 1660-1780*, ed. John Richetti (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 61-86. During's fine book is also useful in its attention to eighteenth-century conjurors, including the magician and quack Gustavus Katterfelto (see pp. 111-12 below).
- 8 I take 'late Georgian' to be the last third of the Georgian age, roughly speaking from the 1780s to the 1830s. On the assumption that the 'Romantic period' spanned the French Revolution of 1789 and the Great Reform Act of 1832, the two terms are not synonymous. All Romantic literature is late Georgian but not all late Georgian literature, both literally and in literary terms, is Romantic.

- 9 ‘Macassar oil, an unguent for the hair, grandiloquently advertised in the early part of the 19th century, and represented by the makers (Rowland and Son) to consist of ingredients obtained from Macassar’ (*Oxford English Dictionary* (hereafter *OED*)).
- 10 As *Harper’s Magazine* noted in 1866, ‘Packwood, some fifty years ago, led the way in England . . . of systematic advertising, by impressing his razor-strop indelibly on the mind of every bearded member of the kingdom’ (*Harper’s Magazine*, November 1866, p. 788).
- 11 Samuel Solomon, *Guide to Health, or, Advice to Both Sexes in a Variety of Complaints. With an Essay on the Venereal Disease, Gleets, Seminal Weakness; and that Destructive Habit Called Onanism; Likewise, an Address to Parents, Tutors, and Guardians of Youth* (London: printed for the author, 1795). The *Guide* can be summed up in a sentence rather shorter than its title: ‘Buy the Cordial Balm of Gilead’.
- 12 Neil McKendrick, ‘George Packwood and the Commercialisation of Shaving: The Art of Eighteenth-Century Advertising or “The Way to Get Money and be Happy”’, in Neil McKendrick, John Brewer and J. H. Plumb, eds., *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England* (London: Europa Publications, 1982), pp. 146–94.
- 13 Though his focus is not primarily on the cultural strategies of advertising copy, Nicholas Mason has published two excellent recent articles on the interface between advertising, Romanticism and publishing: ‘Building Brand Byron: Early-Nineteenth-Century Advertising and the Marketing of Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage’, *Modern Language Quarterly*, vol. 63 (2002), pp. 411–40 and “‘The Quack has become God’”: Puffery, Print, and the “Death” of Literature in Romantic-Era Britain’, *Nineteenth-Century Literature*, vol. 60 (2005), pp. 1–31.
- 14 In the same field, Anne McClintock’s *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (New York and London: Routledge, 1995) presses readings of advertisements into the service of a postcolonialist examination of late nineteenth-century imperialism. Richard Ohmann’s ‘The Discourse of Advertising’, readings of American advertisements in the period between 1890 and 1905 (chapter 8 of *Selling Culture: Magazines, Markets, and Class at the Turn of the Century* (London and New York: Verso, 1996)), is also relevant here, as is Jennifer A. Wicke’s *Advertising Fictions: Literature, Advertisement, and Social Reading* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988) which discusses the relationship between advertising and the twentieth-century novel, notably Joyce’s *Ulysses*, and argues that the former is in many ways constitutive of the latter.
- 15 See my discussion at pp. 24–6 below. The inattention to late Georgian advertisements demonstrated in Loeb’s and in Richards’s work is not restricted to literary critics alone. There is no book in

the field of advertising history specifically dedicated to the period; late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century advertisements, where they are discussed, are almost invariably addressed within wider surveys such as Frank Presbrey's *The History and Development of Advertising* (New York: Doubleday, 1929), Turner's *The Shocking History of Advertising!* and T.R. Nevett's *Advertising in Britain: A History* (London: Heinemann on behalf of the History of Advertising Trust, 1982), a volume which remains the standard work on the subject.

- 16 'S. H.', 'The Graffiti of Pompeii', *Notes and Queries*, second series, vol. 9 (14 January 1860), p. 21. The 'Lucky Corner' was actually the lottery office of Pidding & Co. rather than that of Thomas Bish (and not 'Bysh' as S. H. has it).
- 17 'Curiosities of Advertising Literature', *Chambers' Edinburgh Journal*, new series, vol. 15 (January–June 1851), p. 55.
- 18 [Thomas Hood], 'The Advertisement Literature of the Age', *The New Monthly Magazine*, vol. 67 (January 1843), p. 111.
- 19 A term applied to Bish in 1825 in *The News of Literature (The Spirit of the Public Journals for the Year 1825: Being an Impartial Selection of the Most Exquisite Essays, Jeux d'esprit, and Tales of Humour)* (London: Sherwood, Gilbert and Piper, 1826), p. 52.
- 20 There are of course a number of (dis)honourable exceptions to this generalisation, the promotional strategies of the quack doctors most notably.
- 21 In a letter of 1 May 1805 to Sir George Beaumont (*The Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth: The Early Years 1787–1805*, second edition, ed. Ernest de Selincourt, revised by Chester L. Shaver (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), p. 586).

A 'DEPARTMENT OF LITERATURE': ADVERTISING IN THE ROMANTIC PERIOD

- 1 Thomas McFarland, *Romantic Cruxes: The English Essayists and the Spirit of the Age* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), p. 19.
- 2 Quoted in Ivon Asquith, 'Advertising and the Press in the late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries: James Perry and the *Morning Chronicle* 1790–1821', *Historical Journal*, vol. 18 (1975), p. 718.
- 3 Among them Marcus Wood's *Radical Satire and Print Culture 1790–1822* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994) and *Blind Memory: Visual Representations of Slavery in England and America, 1780–1865* (New York: Routledge, 2000); Iain McCalman, *Radical Underworld: Prophets, Revolutionaries, and Pornographers in London, 1795–1840*, revised edition (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998); Kevin Gilmartin,

Print Politics: The Press and Radical Opposition in Early Nineteenth-Century England (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Ian Heywood's *The Revolution in Popular Literature: Print, Politics and the People, 1790–1860* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); and John Barrell's *The Spirit of Despotism: Invasions of Privacy in the 1790s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

- 4 See Nevett, *Advertising in Britain*, pp. 61–6 for a discussion of James White and the early London advertising agencies.
- 5 A proprietary medicine is one where the owner claims its invention and sole manufacturing rights and keeps the formula secret. A patent medicine is one where letters patent have been obtained, and involves the declaration of the ingredients by the manufacturer.
- 6 Frank Presbrey, *The History and Development of Advertising* (New York: Doubleday, 1929), p. 300.
- 7 *Blake: Complete Writings. With Variant Readings*, ed. Geoffrey Keynes (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 451.
- 8 *Chambers' Edinburgh Journal*, new series, vol. 2 (28 December 1844), p. 401.
- 9 The term is not gendered in this period, and girls sometimes carried advertising boards.
- 10 Quoted in Nevett, *Advertising in Britain*, pp. 56–7.
- 11 William Hone, *Every-Day Book or, Everlasting Calendar of Popular Amusements*, 2 vols. (London: published for W. Hone by Hunt and Clarke, 1826–7), vol. II, pp. 1499–500. Hone continues: 'As this motley band made its way through the streets of London followed by troops of small boys, it occasionally stopped. A man would ring a bell, cry "Oyeh, oyeh" and "God save the King" and pronounce, in mournful tones, the "death of the lottery on Tuesday next!"' (*ibid.*, p. 1500).
- 12 *The Economist*, 27 June 1846, p. 829. The journal's championing of the carts was prompted by Sir Peter Laurie's attempt to introduce a parliamentary bill banning them. The leader writer backs up his *laissez-faire* argument by drawing a contrast between the industrious capitalistic advertiser and the drone-like upper-class man of leisure:

But because some of the noblemen and gentlemen may have been delayed going to a horse race . . . or to a dinner . . . by a van or two carrying a placard, this useful industry, both to the man who desires to advertise and the man who has got a van and horse to be so employed, is to be put down by a little surreptitious law-making. This is wrong; and the general meddling spirit of the day, of which it is a specimen, particularly the meddling of the idle and opulent classes, ought to be chastised and kept in check by the press. (p. 829)

- 13 The *OED*'s first reference to the sandwich dates from this period, in the 1836 *Sketches by Boz*.
- 14 The first example of the word cited in the *OED* dates from 1753.
- 15 *Real Life in London*, 2 vols. (London: Jones and Co., 1821), vol. I, p. 158.
- 16 Quoted in Nevett, *Advertising in Britain*, p. 55.
- 17 See pp. 39–42 of this chapter.
- 18 Pidding's premises at 1 Cornhill were known as the 'Lucky Corner'.
- 19 [Thomas Hood], 'The Art of Advertizing made Easy', *London Magazine and Review*, new series, vol. 1 (February 1825), pp. 247.
- 20 Bee's association of wall-chalking with graffiti testifies to a contemporary irritation with the practice, and by 1839 parliamentary measures were introduced to curb it.
- 21 Nevett, *Advertising in Britain*, p. 41.
- 22 Except in Ireland, where duty was 1s plus 1s additional (in Irish currency) for every ten lines after the first ten lines (*Parliamentary Papers*, vol. 17 (London: House of Commons, 1826–7), p. 28).
- 23 'R. K. D.', 'A Letter to Viscount Althrop on the proposed Reduction in the Newspaper Stamp and Advertisement Duties' (1831). Quoted in Nevett, *Advertising in Britain*, p. 27.
- 24 Charles Dickens, *Sketches by Boz. Illustrative of Every-Day Life and Every-Day People*, ed. Thea Holme (London: Oxford University Press, 1957), p. 257.
- 25 Quoted in Nevett, *Advertising in Britain*, p. 53.
- 26 Presbrey, *History and Development of Advertising*, p. 90.
- 27 Nevett, *Advertising in Britain*, p. 67.
- 28 *Ibid.*, p. 75.
- 29 Thomas Richards, *The Commodity Culture of Victorian England: Advertising and Spectacle, 1851–1914* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), p. 6.
- 30 *Ibid.*, p. 50.
- 31 *Ibid.*, p. 53.
- 32 Furthermore, fascinating though the advertising surrounding the Exhibition might be, I would endorse Terry Nevett's more prosaic identification of the pivotal moment in the development of advertising in the Victorian period as the abolition of the duty two years later (see Nevett, *Advertising in Britain*, p. 67).
- 33 Henry Sampson, *A History of Advertising, from the Earliest Times. Illustrated by Anecdotes, Curious Specimens, and Biographical Notes of Successful Advertisers* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1874), p. 239.
- 34 Lori Anne Loeb, *Consuming Angels: Advertising and Victorian Women* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 7.
- 35 See Asa Briggs, *The Age of Improvement 1783–1867* (London: Longman, 1959), pp. 28–9.
- 36 *Ibid.*, p. 28.

- 37 Nevett, *Advertising in Britain*, p. 25.
- 38 Faster coaches, swifter sea vessels and improving roads assisted in the development of nationally distributed brands. Even so, the products available on the widest basis – polishes, wines, hair oils – were those with a fairly long shelf life.
- 39 Hood, ‘The Art of Advertizing made Easy’, p. 245.
- 40 A modern equivalent is perhaps the use of classical music in television advertisements, as the use of a portion of Delibes’s *Lakmé* in long-running campaigns for British Airways demonstrates.
- 41 ‘Recommended by the Faculty’, boasts the Greenwood’s puff in the *Ballot*, 16 January 1831, another example of a late Georgian advertiser marketing everyday foodstuffs as health products (as per Henry Hunt’s roasted corn (see p. 248 below)).
- 42 Hayward, ‘The Advertising System’, p. 28.
- 43 *The Halliford Edition of the Works of Thomas Love Peacock*, ed. H. F. B. Brett-Smith and C. E. Jones, 10 vols. (London: Constable, 1924–34), vol. II, p. 328. Tanner was not the first advertiser to use sesquipedalianism. The Reverend John Henley (see n. 7 to ‘Introduction’ above) had rejoiced in the practice in the earlier eighteenth century. See Graham Midgley, *The Life of Orator Henley* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973).
- 44 ‘Shopkeepers’ Greek’, *Chambers’ Edinburgh Journal*, vol. 15 (1851), p. 358.
- 45 *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine*, vol. 14 (August 1823), p. 147. One is surprised that ‘Maga’ did not recommend the use of Kalydor to ‘pimpled Hazlitt’.
- 46 ‘Shopkeepers’ Greek’, p. 359.
- 47 ‘Z.’ [J. G. Lockhart], ‘The Cockney School of Poetry, No. IV’, *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine*, vol. 3 (August 1818), p. 524.
- 48 ‘Shopkeepers’ Greek’, p. 359.
- 49 See Charles Meymott Tidy, *The Story of a Tinder Box. A Course of Lectures* (London: SPCK, 1897) p. 28.
- 50 Such as Charles Darwin in South America in 1845: ‘I carried with me some promethean matches, which I ignited by biting’ (Darwin, *The Voyage of the Beagle* (New York: P. F. Collier and Son, 1909), p. 42).
- 51 Fifteen years before Jones’s ‘A New Light’, S. T. Coleridge had used the same phrase in his description of the epoch-making importance of the ‘discovery of electricity’ to modern science:

And now a new light was struck by the discovery of electricity, and, in every sense of the word, both playful and serious, both for good and for evil, it may be affirmed to have electrified the whole frame of natural philosophy ... the new path, thus brilliantly opened became the common road to all departments of knowledge: and, to

this moment, it has been pursued with an eagerness and almost epidemic enthusiasm which, scarcely less than its political revolutions, characterise the spirit of the age. (S.T. Coleridge, *Hints towards the Formation of a More Comprehensive Theory of Life*, ed. Seth B. Watson (London: John Churchill, 1848), pp. 31–2.)

If the work of Romantic figures such as Coleridge and Mary Shelley insists upon the connection between literature and natural philosophy, then Jones makes the same cultural juxtaposition.

52 *Athenæum*, no. 213 (26 November 1831), p. 774.

53 *Ibid.*

54 Buoyed by his success, the next month saw Jones assuming another role which approximates to the alchemical (inasmuch as the alchemists sought the universal panacea) in turning quack. In the midst of the cholera panic that gripped the English public in late 1831, Jones published an advertisement baldly headed ‘Cure of Cholera Morbus’, in which he claims that ‘S. JONES’S HOT AIR and STEAM BATHS’ provide ‘the CURE of the CHOLERA’.

55 See Nevett, *Advertising in Britain*, pp. 129–33.

56 Though there is a voice of paradoxical dissension in an 1836 advertisement for Brett’s Improved Brandy:

BRETT’S IMPROVED BRANDY – NOT PATENT; Availing ourselves of the continual improvement in the science of distillation, we deem it expedient to declare that our IMPROVED BRANDY will never be obtruded on the public with the specious denomination of ‘Patent’, inasmuch as really Patent Brandy, however imperfect its composition, is precluded from all possibility of improvement.

57 Hood, ‘The Art of Advertizing Made Easy’, p. 246.

58 Blake, *Complete Writings*, p. 459.

59 Perring has his footnote in history as, in Thomas Carlyle’s phrase, the ‘seven-feet Hat-manufacturer’. Perring built a ‘Hat upon Wheels’, which he claimed cost some sixty guineas, and which was carried on an advertising cart, ‘perambulating the town daily, reminding the observer where good cheap hats may be bought, at Cecil House, 85 The Strand’ (Quoted in Diana and Geoffrey Hindley, *Advertising in Victorian England 1837–1901* (London: Wayland Publishers, 1972), p. 87). In *Past and Present* (1843), Carlyle labels the seven-feet hat ‘the topstone of English puffery’:

Consider, for example, that great Hat seven-feet high, which now perambulates London Streets: which my Friend Sauerteig regarded justly as one of our English notabilities, ‘the topmost point as yet’, said he, ‘would it were your culminating and returning point, to which English Puffery has been observed to reach!’ – The Hatter in the Strand of London, instead of making better felt-hats than

another, mounts a huge lath-and-plaster Hat, seven-feet high, upon wheels; sends a man to drive it through the streets hoping to be saved *thereby*. He has not attempted to *make* better hats, as he was appointed by the Universe to do, and as with this ingenuity of his he could probably have done; but his whole industry is turned to *persuade* us that he has made such! He knows too that the Quack has become God. Laugh not at him, O reader; or do not laugh only. He has ceased to be comic; he is fast becoming tragic. To me this all-deafening blast of puffery, or poor Falsehood grown necessitous, of poor-heart Atheism fallen now into Enchanted Workhouses, sounds too clearly like a Dooms-blast! I have to say to myself in old dialect: 'God's blessing is not written on all this; His curse is written on all this!' (*The Works of Thomas Carlyle*, ed. H. D. Traill, 30 vols. (London: Chapman and Hall, 1896–9), vol. X, pp. 141–2)

- 60 In the 'Prospectus' to the *Examiner*, January 1808.
 61 'Cuthbert Bede' (i.e., Edward Bradley), 'Curiosities of Advertising', *Notes and Queries*, vol. 7 (1 January 1853), p. 4.
 62 'Prospectus' to the *Examiner*, January 1808.
 63 For example, figure 23 (p. 134).
 64 Turner, *The Shocking History of Advertising!*, p. 56.
 65 For full discussion of Robert Warren's advertisements, see chapter 3 of this book.
 66 William Combe, *A Tour in Search of the Picturesque* (1812), in *The Three Tours of Doctor Syntax* (London: John Camden Hotten, 1869), p. 109.
 67 Neil McKendrick cites a witty example of Packwood's jingle copy published in the *Sunday Monitor* in April 1795:

EXTEMPORE ON PACKWOOD'S RAZOR-STROPS

Sans doubt e – Mr Packwood, your elegant Strops
 Are the best that e'er mortal invented,
 We have nothing to do but to lather our chops,
 The razor soon makes us contented.
 Surely magic herself has been lending her aid,
 To assist in the brilliant invention:
 And the fam'd Composition you also have made
 Should assuredly gain you a pension.

SIR

My friend has experienced the salutary effects of your
 incomparable Razor Strops, &c. – In the effusion of
 gratitude, penned the preceding lines.

Your most cordial well-wisher
 Stubborn Roughbeard.

(Quoted in McKendrick, Brewer and Plumb,
The Birth of a Consumer Society, p. 158.)

- 68 Wright is listed with the most notable advertisers of the day, the likes of Rowland, Packwood, Hunt and Colburn, in George Daniel's 'The Conversation' (1835) (see p. 256 of this book).
- 69 See p. 268.
- 70 William Hazlitt, *The Complete Works of William Hazlitt*, ed. P. P. Howe, 21 vols. (London and Toronto: Dent, 1932), vol. XI, p. 169.
- 71 Wright's was not the only vintners to use jingle copy in this period. The ingenious advertisements for Sheppard's Wine and Spirit Warehouse of Blackman Street published during the 1830s commonly used verse. Sheppard's advertisements testify to the fact that poetical copy was not restricted to press columns alone and was frequently used in handbills and posters. Sheppard's 'I sing, I sing of times gone by', a broadside which uses the rough and ready ballad manner of many conventional sheets, offers a poetical salute to the hostelry to the tune of 'The good old days of Adam and Eve':

I sing, I sing of the present age, sir,
 When drinking has become the rage, sir,
 When instead of drinking water,
 For three-pence you can get a pint of Porter;
 When spirits so cheap have become, sir,
 You can treat yourself with a glass of Rum, sir,
 To SHEPPARD'S in the Borough, haste, sir,
 He is the man can suit your taste, sir.

- 72 Pluckwell's only quarrel with the wonder-working substance is his lament that despite the inestimable benefits that Grimstone's Eye-Snuff would have for the poor, the indigent in his charge cannot afford it.
- 73 There are many examples in Jacob Larwood and John Camden Hotton's *The History of Signboards* (1866). For instance, an alehouse in Troutbeck in Cumberland boasted a pub sign representing 'two faces, the one thin and pale, the other jolly and rubicund; under it was the following rhyme:

Thou mortal man that liv'st by bread,
 What made thy face so red?
 Thou silly fop, that looks so pale,
 'Tis red with Tommy Burkett's ale.

(Jacob Larwood and John
 Camden Hotton, *The History of
 Signboards* (1866), new edition
 (London: Chatto and
 Windus, 1914), p. 40).

The Robin Hood at Turnham Green had this ditty painted on its sign:

Try Charrington's ale, you will find it good,
 Step in and drink with Robin Hood,
 If Robin Hood be not at home,
 Come in and drink with Little John.

(Ibid., p. 74)

74 Quoted in Andrew W. Tuer, *Old London Street Cries and the Cries of Today* (London: Field and Tuer, The Leadenhall Press, 1885), p. 36. I am grateful to Jane Moore for drawing this book to my attention.

75 See pp. 130–2 of this book.

76 See p. 175 of this book.

77 Indeed, it would seem that jingle copy has ancient antecedents. J. P. Wood quotes an example of a poetic puff dating as far back as ancient Greece, by the cosmetician Aesclyptöe:

For eyes that are shining, for cheeks like the dawn,
 For beauty that lasts after girlhood has gone,
 For prices in reason the woman who knows
 Will buy her cosmetics of Aesclyptöe.

(James Playstead Wood, *The Story of Advertising*
 (New York: Ronald Press, 1958), p. 18.)

78 Quoted in Larwood and Camden Hotton, *History of Signboards*, pp. 490–1.

79 Ibid., p. 491.

80 This poem was originally published in 1701 as ‘In Imitation of Milton’ and republished in 1705 in its now-familiar title. I am grateful to Richard Terry for this information.

81 Hayward, ‘The Advertising System’, pp. 3–4.

82 R. W. Hackwood, ‘Poetical Advertisements’, *Notes and Queries*, first series, vol. 12 (3 November 1855), p. 340.

83 Reviewed in the *Athenæum*, 18 February 1832. The work

contains facts and observations relating to the use of vapour baths in general; but, of course, has particular reference to Capt. Jekyll's patent portable baths. We have examined not only the pamphlet but the bath itself, and the latter appears to us a very useful invention; but twelve guineas is a price out of all reason; and, till they are manufactured at a much cheaper rate, the patent will neither benefit the patentee nor the public. (*Athenæum*, no. 225 (18 February 1832), p. 111)

84 See p. 60 of this book.

85 See p. 112 of this book.

86 See p. 96 of this book.

87 Discussed extensively in chapter 6.

- 88 Rowland's father, also Alexander (d. 1823), founded the firm and invented the Macassar Oil, but it was the younger Rowland (c. 1783–1854) who proselytised for the Oil in such works as the *Historical Essay* and who seems to have possessed an even greater gift for publicity than his father.
- 89 'Mr Thomas Jones, of Liverpool, in 1806, had a violent fit of Illness, owing to which he lost the Whole of his Hair; after using two bottles of Macassar Oil his Hair grew very thick, and has continued to do so ever since:

To Messrs Rowland and Son.

June 8, 1808.

Gentlemen,

Having received such Benefit from the Virtues of your Macassar Oil, I think it necessary to continue the use of it; therefore, beg you will send me Six Bottles by Coach, the Bearer will pay you.

Your humble Servant,

Liverpool, THOMAS JONES'.

(Alexander Rowland, *An Essay on the Cultivation and Improvement of the Human Hair, with Remarks on the Virtues of the Macassar Oil* (London: printed for the author, 1809), p. 31.

- 90 *Ibid.*, pp. 29–30.
- 91 *Ibid.*, p. 30.
- 92 *Ibid.*, pp. 30–1.
- 93 Alexander Rowland, *An Historical, Philosophical and Practical Essay on the Human Hair* (London: printed for the author, 1816), p. 56.
- 94 *Athenæum*, no. 213 (26 November 1831), p. 769.
- 95 For which, see p. 52 of this book.
- 96 *Byron's Letters and Journals*, ed. Leslie A. Marchand, 12 vols. (London: John Murray, 1973–82), vol. VII, p. 229.
- 97 Samuel Solomon, *Guide to Health*, 'sixty-fifth edition' (London: printed for the author, 1815), p. iv.
- 98 See Nevett, *Advertising in Britain*, p. 35.
- 99 Though an MD degree from Marischal College was not necessarily regarded negatively (Tobias Smollett purchased one and yet was deemed fairly respectable as a medical practitioner), some English opinion held that Scottish universities too often licensed quacks. John Corry asks in his *Quack Doctors Dissected* (1810):

Will it be believed by posterity, that at the commencement of the nineteenth century Quack Doctors were enabled, by the credulity of Englishmen, to amass wealth; nay, that any pretender to the art of healing might for a few pence purchase the academic degree of M.D. in a Scotch University, and afterwards obtain a patent to slay his thousands and tens of thousands according to law? (John

Corry, *Quack Doctors Dissected* (London: printed for the author, 1810), p. 5)

- 100 Imitation is one key measure of the success of such branded products, and Solomon's anodyne itself has his imitators, in such stuff as 'Jordan's Cordial Balm of Rakasiri', advertised in 1830 in the following manner: 'To the delicate female enfeebled by the fatiguing routine of the fashionable life, the careworn man of business, and those particularly whose constitutions sympathize with the effects of undue indulgence in early life, this remedy cannot be too confidently recommended' (quoted in Nevett, p. 35). Here too the proprietor furnishes his product with a name resonant of the Middle East.
- 101 Roy Porter, *Quacks: Fakers and Charlatans in English Medicine* (Stroud: Tempus Publishing, 2000), p. 158. This volume is an enlarged version of Porter's *Health for Sale: Quackery in England 1650–1850* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989).
- 102 Solomon, *A Guide to Health*, pp. 37–9.
- 103 Benjamin Kingsbury, *A Treatise on Razors; in Which the Weight, Shape, and Temper of a Razor, the Means of Keeping it in Order, and the Manner of Using it, are Particularly Considered; and in Which it is Intended to Convey Knowledge of All that is Necessary on this Subject* (London, E. Blackader, sixth edition, 1810; reprint of second edition, enlarged (1799)), p. 15.
- 104 *Ibid.*, p. 28.
- 105 *Ibid.*, p. 14.
- 106 *Ibid.*, pp. 29–30.
- 107 *Ibid.*, p. 41.
- 108 Samuel Warren, *Ten Thousand A-Year* (1841), revised edition, 2 vols. (Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1854), vol. II, p. 102.
- 109 Those with knowledge of contemporary baby-farming might consider that this advertisement has sinister overtones. That said, baby farms did not customarily announce themselves in the public prints.
- 110 Beginning with several improving volumes by Mrs Trimmer such as 'Prints and Descriptions of Scripture History', but also featuring sprightly diversions such as Sarah Martin's *The Comic Adventures of Old Mother Hubbard and her Dog*.
- 111 Widow Welch's pills survived for another century, and have the distinction of being mentioned in Joyce's *Ulysses*:

Gerty MacDowell who was seated near her companions, lost in thought, gazing far away into the distance was in very truth as fair a specimen of winsome Irish girlhood as one could wish to see. She was pronounced beautiful by all who knew her though, as folks

often said, she was more a Giltrap than a MacDowell. Her figure was slight and graceful, inclining even to fragility but those iron jelloids she had been taking of late had done her a world of good much better than the Widow Welch's female pills and she was much better of those discharges she used to get and that tired feeling. (James Joyce, *Ulysses, The 1922 Text*, ed. Jeri Johnson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 333.)

- 112 He also offers 'Atkinson's Curling Fluid – keeps the hair in curl during the exercise in dancing and walking'.
- 113 Quoted in Nevett, *Advertising in Britain*, p. 120.
- 114 William Godwin, *The Enquirer. Reflections on Education, Manners, and Literature. In a Series of Essays* (London: G. G. J. and J. Robinson, 1797), p. 214.
- 115 *Ibid.*, p. 216.
- 116 *Ibid.*, p. 219.
- 117 *Ibid.*, p. 218.
- 118 See chapter 3 of this book.
- 119 See pp. 76–81 of this book.
- 120 'No quackery' banners were not uncommon in more conventional medical advertising: 'NO QUACKERY. – Important to all. Steedman's Soothing Powder, for Children cutting their Teeth ...'.
- 121 It was not uncommon for proprietors of brand medicines or empirics to distinguish themselves from the 'quack'. One Dr Johnston, in a 'Public Notice to the Unhappy', a puff collateral published in Feargus O'Connor's *Northern Star* on 13 January 1838, warns against itinerant quacks, with their array of advertising techniques, handbills, advertising pamphlets and the like. Instead of such disreputables, men suffering from venereal disease and women attempting to procure abortions should apply to him, and to him alone:

Dr Johnston particularly cautions the public against a company of Quacks and Impostors ... distributing bills and pamphlets to gull the Public. You may know him by his splendid watch guard, which he is in the habit of wearing (if it is not in pledge). He is in the habit of changing his name in every town, in consequence of drawing in a young man and getting his acceptance on several accommodation bills, and the dark deeds of the said Quack will be brought forward to the next Assizes ... Observe Dr Johnston is not a travelling empiric, here to-day and gone tomorrow, he being a native of Hull, and his well-tried abilities have been proved for the last twenty years. And he will undertake to cure the Venereal Disease in a few days.

N.B. The delicate female under the most distressing circumstances will meet with that patient attention and friendly advice which the nature of her situation may particularly require.

- 122 See the *Radical Reformer* for 12 May 1833, where Mallett declares that 'ONE HUNDRED POUNDS will be given to any Medical Practitioner who will produce a Medicine equally efficacious in the cure of the Cough and Asthma'.
- 123 For Taylor, see McCalman, *Radical Underworld*, pp. 118–91.
- 124 *Poor Man's Guardian*, 14 April 1832.

'HUMBUG AND CO.': SATIRICAL ENGAGEMENTS
WITH ADVERTISING 1770–1840

- 1 'Parody of a Cambridge Examination Paper', *The Spirit of the Public Journals for the Year 1825*, p. 111.
- 2 *Ibid.*, p. 113.
- 3 *Ibid.*, pp. 112–13.
- 4 See my discussion in the Conclusion.
- 5 For Grose, see Wood, *Radical Satire and Print Culture*, p. 156.
- 6 'Advertisement (Extraordinary)', *The Spirit of the Public Journals for the Year 1825*, p. 207.
- 7 Porter, *Quacks*, p. 15.
- 8 'Literary Announcements Extraordinary! or, Great News for the Booksellers!', *The Spirit of the Public Journals for the Year 1825*, pp. 530–1.
- 9 *The Comic Almanack, an Ephemeris in Jest and earnest, containing Merry Tales, Humorous Poetry, Quips and Oddities. By Thackeray, Albert Smith, Gilbert à Becket, The Brothers Mayhew. With many Hundred Illustrations by George Cruikshank and other Artists. First Series, 1835–1843* (London: John Camden Hotton, 1872), p. 44.
- 10 Robert Montgomery, *The Age Reviewed: A Satire: In Two Parts: Second Edition, Revised and Corrected* (London: William Charlton Wright, 1828), p. 265.
- 11 For an account of Morison's career, see William H. Helfand, 'James Morison and His Pills', *Transactions of the British Society for the History of Pharmacy*, vol. 1, no. 3 (1974), pp. 101–35.
- 12 James Morison, *Morisoniana; or, Family Adviser of the British College of Health; being a collection of the works of Mr Morison* (London: British College of Health, 1831), p. ii.
- 13 *Ibid.*
- 14 'The Vegetable Pills' (Preston: John Harkness, undated).
- 15 *The Complete Newgate Calendar*, ed. J. E. Rayner and G. T. Crook, 5 vols. (London: Navarre Society Ltd, 1926), vol. V, pp. 282–3.

- 16 Though there is no direct evidence to prove this, it is likely that James Morison himself was involved in the preparation of the defence case and in the calling of sympathetic testimony.
- 17 *Newgate Calendar*, vol. V, p. 283.
- 18 Robert Southey, *Letters from England*, ed. Jack Simmons (London: The Cresset Press, 1951), p. 297.
- 19 *Newgate Calendar*, vol. V, p. 283.
- 20 Who included Gilbert à Becket, Henry and Horace Mayhew, Albert Smith and William Makepeace Thackeray.
- 21 *The Comic Almanack*, p. 35.
- 22 *Ibid.*, pp. 33–4.
- 23 *Ibid.*, p. 33.
- 24 Compare John Morgan's 'The Wonderful Pills, or, a Cure for the World' (London: Hill, early 1830s), a broadside satire on Morison:
- Take thirty-six of No. 1,
To-night to banish sorrow,
Then take one hundred and twenty-eight
Of No. 2 to-morrow . . .
- 25 *The Comic Almanack*, pp. 33–4.
- 26 *Ibid.*, p. 12.
- 27 For an entertaining account of Long's career, see Neville Williams, *Knaves and Fools* (London: Barrie and Rockliff, 1959), pp. 185–94. Long possesses the dubious distinction of being mentioned in P. T. Barnum's gallery of quacks: 'As for the quacks, patent medicines and universal remedies, I need only mention their names. Prince Hohenlohe, Valentine Greatrakes, John St John Long, Doctor Graham and his wonderful bed, Mesmer and his tub, Perkins' metallic tractors – these are half a dozen' (P. T. Barnum, *The Humbugs of the World. An Account of Humbugs, Delusions, Impositions, Quackeries, Deceits and Deceivers Generally, in all Ages* (New York: Carleton, 1866), p. 15.
- 28 *The Newgate Calendar*, vol. V, p. 240.
- 29 *Valpurgis; or, the Devil's Festival. In Two Cantos. The Ball and Drawing Room*, ed. H. W. P. (London: W. Kidd, 1831), p. 22.
- 30 For which see Wood, *Radical Satire and Print Culture*, p. 191. The parody is not to be confused with Dr John Stoddart's *New Times*, itself the formal model for Hone and Cruikshank's *A Slap at Slop* (see p. 94).
- 31 For which see pp. 92–4, and Wood, *Radical Satire and Print Culture*, pp. 203–14.
- 32 For which, see pp. 156–61 of this book.
- 33 Wood, *Radical Satire and Print Culture*, p. 203.
- 34 Here what Marcus Wood sees as the 'fluctuating radical sympathies' (Wood, *Radical Satire and Print Culture*, p. 203) evident in Fairburn's

work in the early years of the *Gazette* are replaced by a clear antipathy to British ultra-radicalism.

- 35 *Quizzical Gazette Extraordinary, and Wonderful Advertiser*, no. 4 (1822), p. 39.
- 36 *Ibid.*
- 37 *Ibid.*, no. 3 (1821), p. 29.
- 38 *Republican* (2 April 1831), p. 8.
- 39 *The Satires of Thomas Moore*, ed. Jane Moore, vol. V of John Strachan, gen. ed., *British Satire 1785–1840*, (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2003) p. 314.
- 40 This is one of several examples from the 1640s and 1650s quoted in Larwood and Camden Hotton's *History of Signboards: 'ARTICLES OF HIGH TREASON made and enacted by the late Halfquarter usurping Convention, and now presented to the publick view for a general satisfaction of all Englishmen. Imprinted for Erasmus Thorogood, and to be sold at the sign of the Roasted Rump. 1659'* (p. 12).
- 41 See Wood, *Radical Satire and Print Culture*, pp. 57–95.
- 42 See John Barrell, '*Exhibition Extraordinary!!*': *Radical Broad-sides of the Mid 1790s* (Nottingham: Trent Editions, 2001), *passim*.
- 43 Wood, *Radical Satire and Print Culture*, p. 83.
- 44 S. T. Coleridge, *Lay Sermons*, ed. R. J. White (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), p. 143.
- 45 Wood, *Radical Satire and Print Culture*, p. 83.
- 46 Van Butchell was the subject of a risibly ambiguous advertisement in *The Times* in 1826:

PILES AND ABSCESSSES: A gentleman, severely afflicted for 44 years, has recently experienced a perfect and most miraculous cure of this distressing complaint. During this long interval he had tried the most eminent of the faculty in vain, but was, from extreme suffering, at length induced to consult Mr VAN BUTCHELL of No. 9, Half Moon Street, Piccadilly, who has perfectly cured him of this long-standing, and, as he always considered, constitutional complaint in the short space of eight weeks. A principle of gratitude to Mr Van Butchell, as well as humanity to his fellow-sufferers, induces this advertisement. Real sufferers may see the party by applying any morning before 10 o'clock to Mr Smith's, Myddleton Street, Clerkenwell.

- 47 A footnote reads 'Vide in daily papers, Doctor Solomon's Charitable Subscriptions and Abstergent Lotion'.
- 48 Canning, 'Ambubaiarum Collegia, Pharmocopolæ', in *Collected Shorter Satires*, ed. Nicholas Mason, vol. I of Strachan, *British Satire 1785–1840*, p. 105.
- 49 *Ibid.*, p. 103.

- 50 Nicholas Mason has established that ‘Ambubaiarum Collegia, Pharmacopolæ’, which was many times reprinted in the nineteenth century as ‘The Grand Old Constitution’, was first published in the *Daily Advertiser and Oracle* on 28 April 1803 (Strachan, *British Satire 1785–1840*, vol. I, p. 102). Mason demonstrates that Canning continued his campaign against Addington for many months, his satirical tools including the mock-advertisement: ‘Even after Addington’s May 1804 resignation, Canning refused to give up, publishing mock elegies on the fallen administration, advertisements of yard sales at Downing Street, and prognostications of what the “Doctor” would include in his valedictory address.’
- 51 Strachan, *British Satire 1785–1840*, vol. I, p. 106.
- 52 *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 103.
- 53 Wood, *Radical Satire and Print Culture*, pp. 154–204.
- 54 William Hone and George Cruikshank, *The Political House that Jack Built* (1819), in Stones and Strachan, *Parodies of the Romantic Age*, vol. II, pp. 290–1.
- 55 Strachan, *British Satire 1785–1840*, vol. V, p. 278.
- 56 ‘Cholera Humbug!! The Arrival and Departure of Cholera Morbus’ (Hurstpierpoint: W. Randall, c. 1831).
- 57 ‘The Wish’, by ‘Crispin’, published in October 1831, utilises a similar metaphorical terrain, but its politics are less optimistic, seeing the Act, which had just been passed by the House of Commons, as a failure:

By the powers of Moll Kelly! I'd have you to think
 Of Reform, and the Cholera Morbus;
 They both have kick'd up the most d–nable stink,
 But what have they left to reward us?
 They have left us the Lords, they have left us the Tithes,
 They have left us the taxes to starve us,
 They have left us the Army – have left us the Debt,
 And Police – they have left to reward us!
 Now I wish that the Bishops – I wish that the Lords,
 And the Tithes, and the Taxes, which starve us;
 I wish that the Sinecures, Pensions, and Debt,
 Had all got the CHOLERA MORBUS!!!

- 58 See pp. 30–1.
- 59 ‘The Wonderful Metropolis’ (London: Pitts, c. 1830).
- 60 ‘Shopkeepers’ Greek’, p. 359.
- 61 James Payne, ‘Patents all the Rage. A New Comic Song Sung by Mr Munden at the Theatre Royal Covent Garden with Universal applause. Written & Adapted to the Well known Tune of Push about the Jorum. By James Payne, Author of the Herefordshire Song &c. &c.’ (London: Holland & Jones, 1798).

62 Ibid.

63 Horace Smith, *The Poetical Works*, 2 vols. (London: Henry Colburn, 1846), vol. II, pp. 258–9.

64 ‘The Bill Sticker’ (London: Pitts, undated broadside).

65 For educated dustmen, see Brian Maidment, *Reading Popular Prints 1790–1870* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), pp. 53–100.

66 That is, a shoe polisher.

67 That said, as late as 1854, in *Hard Times*, Dickens returned to the well in Josiah Bounderby’s mendacious recollections:

For years upon years, the only pictures in my possession, or that I could have got into my possession, by any means, unless I stole ’em, were the engravings of a man shaving himself in a boot, on the blacking bottles that I was overjoyed to use in cleaning boots with, and that I sold when they were empty for a farthing a-piece, and glad to get at it! (*Hard Times*, ed. Paul Schlicke (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 223)

68 See pp. 216–17 of this book.

69 See p. 215 of this book.

70 See p. 135 of this book.

71 *Household Words*, 22 March 1851. Dickens’s essay mines similar territory to one of *Chambers’ Edinburgh Journal’s* fine series of articles on the minutiae of the advertising trade, ‘The Billsticker’ (*Chambers’ Edinburgh Journal*, new series, vol. 20 (July–December 1854), pp. 121–3) which describes the poster man as ‘a personage of no small importance’:

He may be said to live in the eye of the public as much, if not more, than any other man of his day; and is, whatever pretenders may choose to think, or cavillers to say to the contrary, essentially a public character. He is a literary man in a sense at once the most literal and extensive, and he caters for the major part of the population almost the only literature that they ever peruse. He is a publisher to boot, whose varied and voluminous works, unscathed by criticism, are read by all the world, and go through no end of editions. (p. 121)

72 *Dickens’ Journalism*, ed. Michael Slater, 4 vols. (London: Dent, 1994–2002), vol. II, *The Amusements of the People and Other Papers: Reports, Essays and Reviews 1834–51* (1996), p. 343.

73 Ibid., p. 345. Dickens’s reference is to Hood’s ‘News from China’, a Smollettesque epistolary series in which a traveller in China writes reports to relatives back home, including one of a violent skirmish: ‘The loss on the English side was trifling; only one man belonging to our ship being killed, – a London Bill-sticker who had volunteered

with the Expedition, to get a sight, as he said, of the great Chinese Wall' (*The Works of Thomas Hood*, ed. Tom Hood and F. F. Broderip, 10 vols. (London: Moxon, 1869–73) vol. III, p. 437). Hood also talks about exporting advertising to China in 'The Advertisement Literature of the Age' (*ibid.*, vol. IX, pp. 1–12), which recommends that the bards of Warren's blacking be dispatched to the Orient to compose advertising copy for the newly emerging Chinese commercial economy with Great Britain: 'We trust the opening of the trade with China may afford a vent for this as well as other branches of our native industry, as it certainly will, if the people of the celestial empire stand as much in need of fustian as of broadcloth' (p. 3). I am grateful to Sara Lodge for this information.

74 *Dickens' Journalism*, vol. II, pp. 345–6.

75 Charles Dickens, *The Old Curiosity Shop* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1951), pp. 213–14.

76 For whom, see p. 135 of this book.

77 See pp. 140–2 of this book.

78 Probably by James Harley. See Benjamin Colbert's edition in Strachan, *British Satire 1785–1840*, vol. III, pp. 235–380.

79 George Daniel, 'Eclogue IV. Crambo', lines 25–38, in *The Modern Dunciad: Virgil in London; Or, Town Eclogues. To which are added, Imitations of Horace* (London: William Pickering, 1835), pp. 144–5.

80 Writing blacking puffs is still seen as almost proverbial for literary debasement as late as 1885. In *The Autobiography of Christopher Kirkland*, E. Lynn Linton portrays her hero, who has decided on 'Literature ... as a profession', conversing with his outraged father:

'I thought, with your fine ideas, you had more ambition than to make yourself a mere newspaper hack, a mere Grub Street poet', he said, throwing into his words that galling emphasis which impetuous youth finds so hard to bear. 'Do you think you can do nothing better for yourself than write poems for Warren's blacking, or scratch up Bow Street details for a dinner?'

'I do not intend to write poems for Warren's blacking, nor to scratch up Bow Street details for a dinner', I answered – I honestly confess it – insolently; for my father had the fatal power, as some others have also had, of rousing the worst passions in my nature.

'And if to be a literary hack now is the way to literary fame hereafter', I continued, 'I will serve my apprenticeship as others have done. Sir Walter Scott was not a literary hack!' (E. Lynn Linton, *The Autobiography of Christopher Kirkland*, 3 vols. (London: R. Bentley, 1885), vol. I, p. 225)

81 *The Complete Poetical Works of Thomas Hood*, ed. Walter Jerrold (London: Henry Frowde, 1906) p. 309.

82 See pp. 201–2 of this book.

- 83 *Complete Poetical Works of Thomas Hood*, p. 422.
- 84 [Thomas Hood], *Matheus and Yates at Home* (London: Duncombe, 1829), p. 9.
- 85 Sara J. Lodge, ‘Changing the Literary Note: Parodies, Puns and Pence in the Work of Thomas Hood’ (unpublished D. Phil. dissertation, University of Oxford, 1999), p. 249.
- 86 Stones and Strachan, *Parodies of the Romantic Age*, vol. IV, p. 65.
- 87 Richard Terry, *Mock-Heroic from Butler to Cowper: An English Genre and Discourse* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), p. 6.
- 88 This is not to imply that the mock-heroic cannot be satirical in its dealings with brand proprietors, as in the sprightly mock-heroic attacks on quacks in Sir Samuel Garth’s *The Dispensary* (1699), for which see Gregory Colomb, *Designs on Truth: The Poetics of the Augustan Mock-Epic* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992).
- 89 ‘Alfred Crowquill’ (Charles Robert Forrester), *Absurdities: In Prose and Verse* (London: Thomas Hurst & Co.; W. Morgan, 1827), pp. 44–6.
- 90 I am grateful to Nicholas Mason for drawing this poem to my attention.
- 91 ‘Thomas Sternhold’, *The Daily Advertiser, in Metre*, new edition (London: G. Kearsly, 1781), pp. 12–13.
- 92

SHIP NEWS DEAL.

Fell down, the Concubine, Wind W. S. West;
 The Charming Polly’s carried into Brest;
 The Amorous Susanna, Captain Leer,
 Was boarded by the Trimmer Privateer;
 The Rosy Bess, the Helmsman being drunk,
 Was run down by the Jolly Tar, and sunk;
 The good Ship Drury, Captain Simon Sneak,
 Weigh’d anchor, and made sail for Stangate-Creek;
 The Female Patagonian, Captain Hoar,
 In turning up, miss’d Stays, and run ashore.

(pp. 11–2)

- 93 ‘This day by Auction to be sold by Browning – Some Children’s Cauls, preservatives from drowning . . .’ (p. 22).
- 94 ‘Thomas Sternhold’, *The Daily Advertiser, in Metre*, pp. 22–3.
- 95 Robert Montgomery, *The Puffiad: A Satire* (London: Samuel Maunder, 1828), p. 62.
- 96 *Ibid.*, p. 27.
- 97 Montgomery, *The Age Reviewed*, p. 167.
- 98 *Ibid.*, p. 255.

- 99 Ibid.
- 100 Ibid., p. 91.
- 101 Ibid., pp. 265–6.
- 102 *The Poetical Works of the Rev. George Crabbe: with his Letters and Journals*, 8 vols. (London: John Murray, 1838), vol. II, pp. 131–2.
- 103 Ibid., vol. II, pp. 133–4.
- 104 Ibid., vol. II, pp. 134–5.
- 105 Ibid., vol. II, p. 135.
- 106 Ibid., vol. II, p. 132.
- 107 *The Task*, IV. 78–85. *Cowper: Poetical Works*, ed. H. R. Milford, corrected by Norma Russell (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 184.
- 108 For Katterfelto, see Neville Williams's entertaining, if perhaps condescending, account in *Knaves and Fools*, pp. 211–15.
- 109 Ibid., p. 212.
- 110 Both the Piccadilly and Cox's Museum performances also featured Katterfelto's famous projective microscope through which maggots would be enlarged to grotesque proportions. James Graham of the Temple of Health sourly labelled his rival the 'German Maggot Killer' (quoted in William, *Knaves and Fools*, p. 213) and, as early as 1781, Katterfelto's microscope was giving rise to satirical verse. In Sternhold's *The Daily Advertiser, in Metre*, Warren's Milk of Roses is praised by reference to Katterfelto, with the implication that perfumers, advertisers and quacks are close to being indistinguishable from each other:

A new Discovery, the Milk of Roses –
 A Wash to kill the Maggots in your Noses –
 A Son of famous Colonel Katterfelto –
 Removes the Vapours instantly, if smelt to . . .
 ('Thomas Sternhold', *The Daily
 Advertiser, in Metre*, p. 12)

As ever in the period, satirical verse and graphic caricature excavate the same mine, with Sternhold's poem contemporaneous with graphic satire such as 'The Quacks', in which Graham and Katterfelto take (literal) aim at one another. The sex therapist Graham, with a huge phallus-shaped pestle held suggestively between his legs, challenges Katterfelto: 'Away thou German Maggot Killer, thy fame is not to be Compared with mine', while Katterfelto responds with 'Dare you see de Vanders of the Varld, which make de hair Stand on tiptoe'. Like Cowper the artist borrows Katterfelto's advertising slogan; the Doctor proclaims 'O Vonders! Vonders! Vonderfull Vonders'. For the slow of wit, a duck at Graham's feet reinforces the message: 'Quack, Quack, Quack'.

- 111 Neville Williams offers this description of Katterfelto's advertising methods:

Katterfelto had two black servants. They were dressed in colourful liveries and went round the town blowing trumpets to attract a crowd before they handed out bills for their master's performance. These bills and the doctor's lengthy advertisements in the papers were in a class by themselves, headed 'Wonders, Wonders, Most Wonderful Wonders'. One bill concluded: 'Dr Katterfelto, as a divine and moral philosopher, begs leave to say that all persons on earth live in darkness if they are able to see but will not see his wonderful exhibition'. Another advertisement related the visit of an Oxford don who had made a special trip from his college to 22, Piccadilly, to see for himself the marvels that everyone was talking about. 'He told me', said the conjuror, that 'if he had come 300 miles on purpose, the Knowledge that he had received would amply reward him, and that he should not wonder that some of the nobility should come from the remotest part of Scotland.' (Williams, *Knaves and Fools*, p. 212)

- 112 Cowper: *Poetical Works*, pp. 153–4.
 113 Crabbe, *Poetical Works*, vol. III, p. 128.
 114 *Ibid.*, vol. III, p. 131.
 115 *Ibid.*, vol. III, pp. 134–5.
 116 *Ibid.*, vol. III, pp. 132–3.
 117 *Ibid.*, vol. III, pp. 136–7.
 118 For example, Eady's 'Public Notice to the Unhappy' declares that 'Dr Eady continues to be consulted in all cases of Syphilitic Disease, and Derangement of the General Health, Nervous Disability, the effects of Malpractice, the free indulgence of Pleasure, and other causes.' Such ethically neutral copy prompted the ever-irascible Robert Montgomery to accuse Eady of actually condoning and encouraging vice among the young by proffering cures for venereal diseases: 'What is this but teaching the young to run into vice by continually reminding them and forcing on their notice, a ready cure? For shame, – nasty Eady! – you ought to be pounded for this in your own mortar, if you have one' (Montgomery, *The Age Reviewed*, p. 255).
 119 Crabbe, *Poetical Works*, vol. III, p. 138.
 120 *Ibid.*, vol. III, p. 139.
 121 *Ibid.*, vol. III, p. 140.
 122 *Ibid.*
 123 *Ibid.*, vol. III, p. 141.
 124 *Ibid.*
 125 *Ibid.*, vol. III, p. 131.

‘WE KEEPS A POET’: SHOE BLACKING AND
THE COMMERCIAL AESTHETIC

- 1 Horace Smith, *The Tin Trumpet* (London: Whittaker & Co., 1836), p. 114.
- 2 Blacking was also referred to as ‘jet’ or ‘japan’.
- 3 *The Poetical Works of John Gay*, ed. G. C. Faber (London: Oxford University Press; Humphrey Milford, 1926), p. 59.
- 4 Tuer, *Old London Street Cries*, p. 44.
- 5 A point made by *Blackwood’s* in 1855: ‘the last of the ancient shoeblacks was seen about the year 1820’ (*Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine*, vol. 78 (July 1855) p. 65). By the 1840s, street cleaning was almost forgotten; so much so that a correspondent could write to *The Times* in 1844 in terms which suggested that London blacks would be an innovation:

You take so much interest in the welfare of the working classes, that I hope you will not deem a very simple suggestion unworthy of an insertion in your columns. At Paris, in the wider streets . . . many persons find employment in cleaning, for a mere trifle, the boots and shoes of those who pass by. This practice is found to be a very great convenience to the public. The apparatus for this purpose is very simple, consisting of a stand or chair, brushes and blacking. Now, I think that in many of the streets of London several poorer persons who now have little or nothing to do might find in this way a profitable and useful employment. (*The Times*, 26 October 1844)

- 6 ‘A Shilling Pot of Paste’, declares Robert Warren in ‘30, Strand. Ned Capstan: or, A Land-Cruise Postponed.’ (figure 23), ‘is equal to Four 1s. Bottles of Liquid.’
- 7 Tuer, *Old London Street Cries*, pp. 44–6.
- 8 A. E. Richardson, *Georgian England: A Survey of Social Life, Trades, Industries and Art from 1700 to 1820* (London: B. T. Batsford, 1931), p. 27.
- 9 Charles Tomlinson, ed., *Cyclopædia of Useful Arts, Mechanical and Chemical, Manufactures, Mining, and Engineering*, 2 vols. (London and New York: G. Virtue & Co., 1854), vol. I, p. 139.
- 10 According to the Deaths column of *The Times*, 28 November 1836, Day died on 26 October 1836 in ‘the fifty third year of his age’.
- 11 I derive this information from the ‘Prospectus to the share issue of Warren’s Blacking Company (Limited)’, *The Economist*, vol. 23, no. 8 (July 1865), p. 841. The issue was designed ‘to purchase, carry on and extend the old established and well-known business, founded by the late Robert Warren’.
- 12 *The Female Instructor; or, Young Woman’s Companion: being a Guide to all the Accomplishments which adorn the Female Character, either as a*

Useful Member of Society – A Pleasing and Instructive Companion, or, A Respectable Mother of A Family. With Many Pleasing Examples of Illustrious Females. To Which are Added, Useful Medicinal Receipts, and a Concise System Of Cookery, with Other Valuable Information in the Different Branches Of Domestic Economy (Liverpool: Nuttall, Fisher and Dixon, c. 1815), p. 390. Ivory black is charcoal made from animal bones.

- 13 Alec Davis argues in *Package and Print: The Development of Container and Label Design* that blacking had moral as well as social resonance during the nineteenth century. Seeing more than a love of appearance for appearance's sake in the contemporary fascination with the product, he maintains that lustrous footwear had an ethical dimension: 'In the slushy streets of nineteenth-century towns, blacking was no doubt more valuable than it is today, and we know that for most Victorians well-polished boots were essential as a symbol of rectitude' (Davis, *Package and Print: The Development of Container and Label Design* (London: Faber and Faber, 1967, p. 30)).
- 14 William Combe, *The English Dance of Death, from the Designs of Thomas Rowlandson, with Metrical Illustrations, by the Author of 'Doctor Syntax', 2 vols.* (London: R. Ackermann, 1815), vol. II, p. 56.
- 15 Thomas Wright, *The Works of James Gilray, the Caricaturist with the Story of His Life and Times* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1874), p. 282.
- 16 *Ibid.*
- 17 See pp. 148–54 of this book.
- 18 That said, perhaps the most poignant reference to blacking in the working-class culture of the period comes in the list of convicts who arrived in Australia on the *Charles Kerr* in October 1837. Among the 250 male convicts landed at Sydney was John Trim of Bristol, transported for fourteen years for stealing blacking.
- 19 Davis, *Package and Print*, p. 30.
- 20 As pointed out above, Charles Day, who was, it might be remembered, no more than joint proprietor of Day and Martin, had accumulated the enormous sum of £450,000 from it by the time of his death in 1836 (*The Times*, 31 October 1836). And this sum excluded the value of Day's estate at Caterham in Surrey (*The Times*, 29 November 1836). Day left £100,000 to found the Blind Man's Friend Charity (see *The Times*, 8 December 1851).
- 21 See the 'Prospectus to the share issue of Warren's Blacking Company (Limited)', *The Economist*, vol. 23 (8 July 1865), p. 841. By the 1850s, Warren's was trading as Warren, Russell and Co. Given the frustrating lack of attention to advertisers in Victorian biographical collections such as *The Dictionary of National Biography*, Robert Warren's dates are unknown. However, he was certainly dead by the time of the stock issue of 1865, where he is referred to as 'the late Robert Warren'.

- 22 George Gordon, Lord Byron, *The Complete Poetical Works*, ed. Jerome J. McGann and Barry Weller, 7 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980–93), vol. V, p. 626.
- 23 *Ibid.*, vol. VI, p. 222.
- 24 *Chambers' Edinburgh Journal*, new series, vol. 2, no. 52 (28 December 1844), p. 401.
- 25 Presbrey, *History and Development of Advertising*, p. 85.
- 26 Hood, 'The Art of Advertizing made Easy', p. 247.
- 27 *Ibid.*
- 28 *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, vol. 59 (March 1846), p. 316.
- 29 Turner, *The Shocking History of Advertising!*, p. 55.
- 30 The phrase is quoted in Hayward, 'The Advertising System', pp. 3–4. Amusing though the Mrs Warren anecdote is, it is probably apocryphal, given that the same story had been told of the wife of Warren's most inventive predecessor in the literature of advertising. In Maria Edgeworth's 'Ennui, or Memoirs of The Earl of Glenthorn' (1809), the narrator remarks:
- A gentleman of my acquaintance lately went to buy some razors at Packwood's. Mrs Packwood alone was visible. Upon the gentleman's complimenting her on the infinite variety of her husband's ingenious and poetical advertisements, she replied, 'La! sir, and do you think husband has time to write them there things his-self? Why, sir, we keeps a poet to do all that there work.' (Maria Edgeworth, *Tales of Fashionable Life*, 3 vols. (London: J. Johnson, 1809), vol. I, p. 187).
- 31 *Westminster Review*, vol. 2 (July 1824), p. 213.
- 32 *Cosmopolite*, 7 November 1832. Day and Martin's were similarly willing to advertise in unstamped newspapers (see, for example, the *Ballot* for 9 January 1831).
- 33 *Cosmopolite*, 25 August 1832, p. 4.
- 34 Hayward, 'The Advertising System', p. 4.
- 35 Wilfred Partington speculates on 'The Identity of Mr Slum' in 1937, reproducing a letter of 10 June 1823 from one Alexander Kemp to Sir Walter Scott: 'my MS. Volume of Original Poetry was been submitted to the perusal and honored with the approbation of several eminent writers. From that volume I presume to annex a few extracts; and add at the same time a specimen of puffing advertisement, of which I have written for Warren (30, Strand) above two hundred, all of different incident, but all embracing the same hacknied subject of eulogy, the "unparalleled Blacking"; for the remuneration of two Shillings and Sixpence each!' (Wilfred Partington, 'The Identity of Mr Slum: Charles Dickens and the Blacking Laureate' (London: privately printed, 1937), p. 9.

- 36 Dickens, *The Old Curiosity Shop*, pp. 213–14. John Forster, Dickens's biographer, claims that it was the jingle poets employed by the blacking company of Jonathan Warren (which briefly employed Dickens) who inspired the portrayal of Mr Slum: 'The poets in the house's regular employ he remembered, too, and made his first study from one of them for the poet of Mrs Jarley's waxwork' (*The Life of Charles Dickens*, ed. A.J. Hoppé, 2 vols. (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1966), vol. I, p. 33).
- 37 Forster, *Life of Charles Dickens*, vol. I, pp. 20–1.
- 38 Quoted in Peter Akroyd, *Dickens* (London: Sinclair Stevenson, 1990), p. 96.
- 39 Akroyd, *Dickens*, p. 96.
- 40 John Drew, 'A Twist in the Tale', *Guardian*, 1 November 2003, Saturday Review section, p. 34. Drew makes his case well. That said, it may be that either Dickens or his uncle may have gilded the lily in their desire to secure gainful literary employment for the would-be journalist and misrepresented the true nature of Dickens's blacking activities. And the words 'possibly his' in Payne Collier's diary remain ambiguous: Barrow 'referred me jocosely to the rhymes (possibly his) which accompanied the wood-cut advertisements of Warren's Blacking, containing the figure of a dove'.
- 41 Forster, *Life of Charles Dickens*, vol. I, p. 33.
- 42 *Poetical Works of John Gay*, p. 67.
- 43 *Ibid.*, p. 68.
- 44 *Ibid.*, pp. 68–9.
- 45 *Ibid.*, pp. 69–70.
- 46 Mark Lemon was a friend of Charles Dickens. It is striking that Dickens's own Jingle, Alfred, the loquacious villain of the early numbers of *The Pickwick Papers*, made his appearance in the same month, April 1836, as *The P.L.*
- 47 The play was well received, as *The Times's* review, published on 26 April 1836, makes clear. *The P.L.* is 'short, laughable, and clever ... and is likely to be a favourite ... The house was well filled, and if repeated acclamation and noisy approbation be a symptom of future success, the present managers may calculate on a rich reward for their exertions.'
- 48 Mark Lemon, *The P.L.: or 30 Strand! A Burletta in One Act* (London: J. Duncombe, 1836), p. 10.
- 49 *Ibid.*, p. 8.
- 50 *Ibid.*
- 51 *Ibid.*, pp. 15–16.
- 52 See p. 101 of this book.
- 53 The list of *dramatis personae* states 'Othello (Off the boards, but between them) Mr Ennis'.

- 54 *The Extravaganzas of J.R. Planché, Esq.*, ed. T.F. Dillon Croker and Stephen Tucker, 5 vols. (London: S. French, 1879), vol. II, pp. 285–6.
 55 *Ibid.*, p. 286.
 56 Quoted in Turner, *The Shocking History of Advertising!*, p. 56.
 57 ‘Mrs Jane Crow’, broadside ballad (Birmingham: Taylor, undated). John Oxenford’s *No Followers, A Burletta* (1837) makes similar sport, this time with Warren’s, when the drunken Toby addresses Lucius Lily (‘A Black’ as the *dramatis personae* informs us):

TOBY.

(Hiccup.)

Hold your tongue in the presence of superiors, you’re an inferior order, (Hiccup) you nigger.

LUCIUS.

No such ting! we men ob colour, de beauties ob de uniberseal uniberse, we be de black spot on de domino – de white man be de white ob de domino, only put to show de black off to more advantage.

TOBY.

Zounds, he’s as bright as Warren’s Blacking, but I can fathom you – though you’re as deep as the sea, (Hiccup) – as the black sea! (John Oxenford, *No Followers, A Burletta, In One Act, As Performed at the New Strand Theatre* (London: W. Strange, 1837), p. 9)

- 58 Strachan, *British Satire 1785–1840*, vol. V, p. 62.
 59 Montgomery, *The Puffiad*, p. 127.
 60 *New Monthly Magazine*, vol. 11 (October 1824), p. 416.
 61 *Ibid.*
 62 *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine*, vol. 12 (July 1822), pp. 109–10. In the very first of the *Noctes*, ‘Odoherly’ had claimed to have written Day and Martin’s puffs: ‘By Mahomet’s mustard-pot, I’ve written so much, I don’t remember half the things I’ve done in your own lubberly Magazine, and elsewhere. At one time I wrote all Day and Martin’s poetry. They were grateful. They kept the whole mess of the 44th in blacking’ (*Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine*, vol. 11 (March 1822), p. 369).
 63 *An Address from H. Hunt, Esq., M.P., to the Radical Reformers of England, Ireland, and Scotland*, no. 13 (9 January 1832), p. 104.
 64 *A Penny Paper for the People*, 15 January 1831, pp. 2–3. For Hunt’s triumphal entry into London, see also the *Ballot*, 18 January 1831.
 65 A brilliant piece of improvisation prompted by an interruption to his speech by the discovery of a pickpocket among the crowd. *A Penny Paper for the People*, 15 January 1831, p. 2.
 66 *Ibid.*
 67 *Ibid.*

- 68 ‘Liston’s Drolleries – Something New Starts Every Day’ (London: Pitts, c. 1830).
- 69 Daniel, *The Modern Dunciad*, p. 228.
- 70 Hunt’s blacking did figure in the debate. The Tory MP and former naval dignitary Sir Joseph Yorke replied to Hunt’s three-hour speech by commenting that ‘he did not see why the destruction of machinery should be considered so venial an offence, and if the hon. member’s blacking factory were destroyed, he doubted much if the hon. Member would be so good as to white-wash the culprits’ (*Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates*, third series, vol. 2 (London: T. C. Hansard, 1831, p. 294). Hunt recovered well: ‘An hon. Admiral . . . had referred to his blacking. He would not amaze the House by a battle between his blacking and the hon. Admiral’s bilge-water’ (p. 308).
- 71 This moment is an echo, conscious or unconscious, of Hone’s ‘WARREN’S BLACK-RAT BLACKING’ parodic advertisement in *A Slap at Slop* (which is discussed on pp. 92–4 of this book).
- 72 ‘The Managers Last Kick, or, The Distruction of the Boroughmongers’, anonymous broadside (London: J. Quick, 1831 or 1832).
- 73 John Morgan, ‘The Present Times, or A Row about the Boroughmongers’, broadsheet ballad (London: J. Phair, c. 1831). Demonstrating political consistency, if not ingenuity in finding new rhymes, Morgan also attacks Hunt in one of his ‘Flare Up’ series, ‘Flare Up! Or, the Countryman in London’, where the belligerent rustic visitor to London (‘Bedlam’ as he calls it), encounters Orator Hunt:

Then next I seed an orator, a dreadful cove for clacking,
 ‘Hollo, says I, old squire H – , Flare-up, and make your blacking.’
 (John Morgan, ‘Flare Up! Or, the Countryman in London’,
 broadside ballad (London: W. Taylor, early 1830s))

- 74 ‘The New Parliament: or, The House turned Upside-down!’, broadside ballad (London: W. Taylor, c. 1831).
- 75 *Figaro in London*, no. 105 (7 December 1833), p. 194.
- 76 *Ibid.*, p. 195.
- 77 *Ibid.*
- 78 Montgomery, *The Age Reviewed*, p. 101.
- 79 *Ibid.*, p. 255.
- 80 In a spoof account of the discovery of Warren’s Blacking during the First Crusade. This may have inspired Richard Harris Barham’s ‘A Strand Eclogue’, in which a meeting of the Antiquarian Society elects Robert Warren as a fellow for rediscovering an ancient blacking recipe:
- Now, sir, before my speech I close
 I’ve one more member to propose.

The Gentleman I'm going to mention,
Is famous for a grand Invention;
Revival, I should rather say,
The greatest far of this our day.

...

You've heard of Nimrod, Prince of Greece,
The same that stole the Golden Fleece,
And founded, after many a year,
The Melton hunt in Leicestershire?
A 'mighty Hunter' he, you know,
God knows how many years ago;
Though his receipt has long been lacking,
'Tis known he used most famous Blacking,
Which became lost unto the trade
Somewhere about the third Crusade,
And this my friend has found again! (Hear, hear.)
I needn't say no more, 'tis plain
You all anticipate me, and
When I name Warren of the Strand,
I cannot entertain a doubt
You'll hail him with a general shout;

... The President, with his cocked-hat *en echelon*, at length announceth that Robert Warren, Esq., is elected Fellow by acclamation. (Richard Harris Barham, *The Ingoldsby Legends; or Mirth and Marvels*, by Thomas Ingoldsby (London: Bentley, 1881), pp. 154–5)

81 Deacon, *Warreniana*, in Stones and Strachan, *Parodies of the Romantic Age*, vol. IV, pp. 110–11.

82 *Ibid.*, p. 174. Deacon also parodies Leigh Hunt, 'Barry Cornwall', Thomas Moore and others. The final poetic parody in *Warreniana* is an imitation of the founding document of Romantic parody, Canning and Frere's 'The Friend of Humanity and the Knife-grinder'. Instead of the friend of humanity, here we have a friend of science conversing with one of Warren's apprentices, who offers him the following sage counsel:

We shall be glad to have your honor's custom,
Sixpence per pot we charges for our best jet
Blacking, but if you give us back the pot, we
Makes an allowance.

(p. 200)

Warreniana, the masterpiece of late Romantic period parody, ends by gesturing towards the beginning of the form.

83 *Ibid.*, p. 28.

84 *Ibid.*, pp. 126–7.

85 *Ibid.*, p. 37.

86

The Cape it was peopled wi' city and town,
 The Hottentots adepts in fashion were grown;
 And bucks frae the Nile wi' brow coats on their backs,
 And douce inexpressibles length and lax,
 Like those whilk o'night may be seen at Almack's;
 Through the towns o' the Cape strutted deftly along, . . .
 The tradesman beheld a' these dandy adults,
 Wi' their hessians of Hoby and trowsers of Stultz,
 And knew that his blacking, more black than the berry,
 Lent grace to the boots of each Cape Tom and Jerry.

(*Ibid.*, p. 38)

87

But halt, my Muse; not thine in vengeful verse
 The countless dupes of fashion to rehearse;
 Not thine to hurl, a cannonading scribe,
 The bolts of war on quackery's mushroom tribe;
 A gentler theme invites thy willing lays; –
 'Mid Granta's meads, where bloom poetic bays,
 'Tis thine to pluck a berry from each bough,
 And twine the wreath round Warren's classic brow.

(*Ibid.*, p. 77)

88 McKendrick, Brewer and Plumb, *Birth of a Consumer Society*, p. 148.

89 William Wordsworth, 'Ode. Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood', lines 106–7.

'PUBLICITY TO A LOTTERY IS CERTAINLY NECESSARY':

THOMAS BISH AND THE CULTURE OF GAMBLING

1 *Second Report from the Committee on the Laws relating to Lotteries* (London: House of Commons, 24 June 1808), p. 11.

2 *Collected Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, ed. Earl Leslie Griggs, 6 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1956–71), vol. VI, p. 629.

3 For the history of lotteries, see John Ashton, *A History of English Lotteries* (London: The Leadenhall Press, 1893), and C. L'Estrange Ewen, *Lotteries and Sweepstakes. An Historical, Legal, and Ethical Survey of their Introduction, Suppression, and Re-Establishment in the British Isles* (London: Heath and Cranton, 1932).

4 This lottery was not concluded until 1569.

5 Though £10 tickets were available in some of the late eighteenth-century draws.

6 According to the *Second Report from the Committee on the Laws relating to Lotteries*, a significant number of morocco-men were women: ‘A very considerable portion of women who could write, and who know a little of figures, are employed in this nefarious trade; and, whenever any of them are convicted and imprisoned, there is generally a stipulation with their principal that they shall be allowed two guineas per week during their imprisonment’ (p. 10).

7 *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine*, vol. 66 (December 1849), p. 672.

8 One of the select band of winners portrayed in *literary* history is Dickens’s Chops the Dwarf who features in ‘Going into Society’, published in *Household Words* in 1858. Chops, whose real name is, appropriately enough, ‘Stakes’, is a member of Toby Magsman’s show who wins £12,000 in the lottery and ‘goes into society’ as a result. His experiences there are not of the happiest:

‘Magsman’, he says, and he seemed to myself to get wiser as he got hoarser; ‘Society, taken in the lump, is all dwarfs. At the court of St. James’s, they was all a doing my old business – all a goin three times round the Cairawan, in the hold court-suits and properties. Elsewheres, they was most of ’em ringin their little bells out of make-believes. Everywheres, the sarser was a goin round. Magsman, the sarser is the uniwersal Institution!’

I perceived, you understand, that he was soured by his misfortunes, and I felt for Mr Chops.

‘As to Fat Ladies’, he says, giving his head a tremendous one agin the wall, ‘there’s lots of THEM in Society, and worse than the original. HERS was a outrage upon Taste – simply a outrage upon Taste – awakenin contempt – carryin its own punishment in the form of a Indian’. Here he giv himself another tremendous one. ‘But THEIRS, Magsman, THEIRS is mercenary outrages. Lay in Cashmeer shawls, buy bracelets, strew ’em and a lot of ’andsome fans and things about your rooms, let it be known that you give away like water to all as come to admire, and the Fat Ladies that don’t exhibit for so much down upon the drum, will come from all the pints of the compass to flock about you, whatever you are. They’ll drill holes in your ’art, Magsman, like a Cullender. And when you’ve no more left to give, they’ll laugh at you to your face, and leave you to have your bones picked dry by Wulturs, like the dead Wild Ass of the Prairies that you deserve to be!’ Here he giv himself the most tremendous one of all, and dropped. (*Household Words*, vol. 18 (1858), extra Christmas number, pp. 21–2)

9 Ashton gives several examples, such as this from 1787: ‘We read in the *Gentleman’s Magazine* of this year a suicide clearly traceable to lottery speculation, and it gives what purports to be “a copy of a paper left by the unhappy young gentleman who lately shot himself with two pistols in Queen Street, Westminster”, wherein he curses

“the head that planned, and the heart that executed, the baneful, destructive plan of a lottery” (p. 109). Using two pistols indicates admirable determination of purpose.

- 10 *The Works of Charles and Mary Lamb*, ed. E. V. Lucas, 7 vols. (London: Methuen, 1903–5), vol. I, p. 260.
- 11 Including an extract from Lamb’s ‘Illustrious Defunct’. Hone, *Every-Day Book*, vol. II. pp. 1404–536. I am grateful to Marcus Wood for drawing Hone’s work to my attention.
- 12 See Bish’s oral testimony to the Parliamentary Committee on the Laws relating to Lotteries, 7 April 1808.
- 13 See Ashton, *A History of English Lotteries*, p. 127.
- 14 *Ibid.*
- 15 *The Works of Charles and Mary Lamb*, vol. I, p. 263.
- 16 This was the first lottery of the year. There were 15,228 tickets divided between fourteen licensed lottery offices. Branscomb had the largest number of tickets, with 3,479, followed by Bish with 2,825, Hazard with 1,765, Richardson and Goodluck with 1,702, and Hornsby with 1,023 (‘An Account of the Names of such Persons who have taken out Licences for lottery Offices in the years 1809 and 1810: Together with an Account of the Number of Tickets shared by each Office’ (London: House of Commons, 1810)).
- 17 A fact reinforced by another Hazard handbill for the same lottery, ‘Sweethearts and Gold; or, The Matrimonial Recipe’:

SWEETHEARTS, blithesome, spruce and gay,

Haste ye, haste ye, haste away,
Soon is Fortune’s holiday! . . .

Fifty Thousand Guineas rare,
May be had, and I know where,
They’ll the prizes doubtless share!

HAZARD’s house, with fame o’er grown,
Has for prizes long been known,
As the house of greatest *ton*,
Haste then, Sweethearts, haste away,
Soon is Fortune’s Holiday!

Never hesitate, nor stand,
For the time is close at hand,
When this holiday is plann’d;
Good St Valentine, you see,
And Dame Fortune, both agree
In the closest harmony,
Haste then, Sweethearts, haste away,
Soon is Fortune’s Holiday!

- 18 Bish also engaged in Shakespearean imitation, in his ‘Shakespeare’s Seven Ages: A Paraphrase’, published four years later:

All the world's a LOTTERY,
 And men and women mere *Adventurers*:
 As planets rule, do mortals play their parts
 Throughout life's seven ages. First the *Infant* –
 For him, his mother, anxious to obtain
 An independence, buys a *Lottery Chance*,
 And marks the ticket with her darling's name.

The poem ends thus:

But, last of all – to crown advent'rous life,
 Would be no second childishness, to gain
 A prize that comfort yields – when age becomes –
 Sans teeth – sans eyes – sans taste – sans everything.
 Would every Age know *Where*, with prospect bright,
 Of great success, by *Fortune's* fav'rite Fane,
 FAME tells 'tis kept by BISH – who never fails
 In each new *Scheme*, to sell – PRIZES IMMENSE.

- 19 There are historical precedents for the use of jingle in puffs by late Georgian lottery-office keepers such as Bish and Hazard. Ashton, *A History of English Lotteries* (pp. 77–9), quotes an advertising poem in praise of the private lottery for Cox's Museum which was held in 1773, which begins:

Who'er in this season of public distress,
 Would court Lady Fortune with certain success,
 To her shrine let him now with alacrity press,
 For tickets in Cox's new lottery,
 Let him haste and buy tickets of Cox.

- 20 Principally at Pickett Street, but also in Skinner Street and Fleet Market.

- 21 That is, money.

22

Now look at me – 'Oh, Signor, si' –
 Pray who gives you your board O,
 And when did you last take your tea?
 'O Sair, – Non mi, ricordo'.
 You say the Queen – 'Oh Signor, si' –
 Slept so and so on board O
 Where might the other bedrooms be?
 'O Sair, – Non mi, ricordo'.

- (Leigh Hunt, 'Memory or Want of Memory', lines 30–7 (in *Poetical Works, 1801–21*, ed. John Strachan, vol. V of *The Selected Writings of Leigh Hunt*, gen. eds. Robert Morrison and Michael-Eberle Sinatra, 6 vols. (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2003), p. 272)

- 23 Wood, *Radical Satire and Print Culture*, p. 174.
- 24 And to complete the network of influence and imitation here, Leigh Hunt's work itself borrows from William Hone, in its use of the catechetical parody that Hone had used to great effect in his notorious 1817 parody 'The Late John Wilkes's Catechism of a Ministerial Member', which had been instrumental in landing him in court on a charge of blasphemy.
- 25 *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, vol. 66 (December 1849), p. 671. *Blackwood's* later details the 'pernicious effects' of the lottery: 'Suicide was rife; forgery grew common; theft increased enormously' (*ibid.*, p. 672).
- 26 Hone, *Every-day Book*, vol. II, p. 1451.
- 27
- And Heaven be prais'd
It is easily raised,
Credulity's always in fashion:
For Folly's a Fund,
Will never lose ground,
While fools are so rife in the nation.
(Henry Fielding *The Lottery: A Farce*
(London: J. Watts *et al.*, 1732), p. 1).
- 28 Quoted in Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People: England 1727–1783* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 572.
- 29 Quoted in Robin Furneaux, *William Wilberforce* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1974), p. 254.
- 30 *Second Report from the Committee on the Laws relating to Lotteries*, p. 11. The Committee also saw illegal insurances as inseparable from the legitimate lottery: 'the lottery and illegal Insurance are inseparable . . . the former cannot exist without the latter for its support' (*ibid.*, p. 10).
- 31 *Ibid.*, p. 13.
- 32 Quoted in Hone, *Every-Day Book*, vol. II, p. 1498.
- 33 *Ibid.*
- 34 Quoted in Ashton, *A History of English Lotteries*, p. 283.
- 35 *Ibid.*, pp. 283–4.
- 36 *Ibid.*, p. 284.
- 37 James Montgomery, *The Poetical Works* (London: Brown, Green and Longman, 1850), p. 162. Montgomery's hudibrastics, as per the illustrations decorating many advertising handbills and lottery tickets, personify the Lottery as Fortune:
- She turns th' enchanted axle round;
Forth leaps the 'twenty thousand pound!'
That 'twenty thousand' one has got;
But twenty thousand more have not.
(p. 162)

- 38 Quoted in Ashton, *A History of English Lotteries*, p. 113.
 39 Ibid.
 40 Combe, *The English Dance of Death*, vol. II, p. 231.
 41 Montgomery, *The Age Reviewed*, p. 281.
 42 According to Richard Holmes (Holmes, *Coleridge: Early Visions* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1989), p. 52).
 43 Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Poetical Works*, ed. E. H. Coleridge (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), p. 55.
 44 Lawrence Hanson, *The Life of S. T. Coleridge: The Early Years* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1938), p. 35.
 45 Rosemary Ashton, *The Life of Samuel Taylor Coleridge: A Critical Biography* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), p. 40.
- 46 So like the Nose I sing – my verse shall glow
 Like Phlegethon my verse in waves of fire shall flow! . . .
 I vitrify thy torrid zone beneath,
 Proboscis fierce!
(lines 9–10; lines 37–8)
- 47 Muse that late sang another's poignant pain
 To griefs domestic turn thy coal-black steed!
(lines 1–2)
- 48 S. T. Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*, ed. James Engell and Walter Jackson Bate, 2 vols. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), vol. I, p. 27.
 49 Though his wager did reap some financial recompense in *The Morning Chronicle's* fee of a guinea for 'To Fortune'.
 50 His antipathetic asides in the second of the *Lay Sermons* (1816) excepted.
 51 Griggs, *Collected Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, vol. VI, p. 629.
 52 Hone, *Every-Day Book*, vol. II, p. 1499. These efforts were made in the summer of 1826 because the last draw was originally scheduled for 14 July. It was eventually postponed until 18 October.
 53 The footman's physiognomy and the clarity of the cut's line suggest that this is George Cruikshank's work, though I have been unable to make the attribution certain from works dealing with the artist.
 54 *The Works of Charles and Mary Lamb*, vol. II, pp. 34–5.
 55 Duncan Wu, 'Charles Lamb, *Elia*' in *A Companion to Romanticism*, ed. Duncan Wu (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), p. 279.
 56 *The Works of Charles and Mary Lamb*, vol. II, p. 36.
 57 Ibid.
 58 Ibid., vol. II, p. 37.
 59 Ibid.
 60 Ibid., vol. VI, p. 325.
 61 Ibid., vol. I, p. 260.

- 62 Ibid., vol. I, p. 259.
- 63 Ibid., vol. VI, p. 406.
- 64 Hood, 'The Art of Advertizing Made Easy', p. 246.
- 65 Nevett, *Advertising in Britain*, p. 62.
- 66 Claude A. Prance, *A Companion to Charles Lamb: A Guide to People and Places 1760–1847* (London: Mansell, 1983), p. 345.
- 67 Nevett, *Advertising in Britain*, p. 63.
- 68 Quoted in *ibid.*
- 69 Wu, 'Charles Lamb, *Elia*', p. 280.
- 70 *The Works of Charles and Mary Lamb*, vol. I, p. 259.
- 71 Ibid.
- 72 Ibid., vol. I, pp. 261–2.
- 73 Ibid., vol. I, pp. 262–3.
- 74 Ibid., vol. I, pp. 259–60.
- 75 Ibid., vol. I, p. 260.
- 76 Ibid.
- 77 Ibid., vol. I, p. 262.
- 78 *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, vol. 66 (December 1849), p. 672.
- 79 Quoted in Hone, *Every-Day Book*, vol. II, p. 285.
- 80 Quoted in Ashton, *A History of English Lotteries*, p. 275.
- 81 Ibid.
- 82 Quoted in *ibid.*
- 83 Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 282.
- 84 *Complete Poetical Works of Thomas Hood*, p. 422. Despite the loss of his core business, Thomas Bish did not fall into insolvency, given that he had prudently developed, to use the modern business terminology, a diverse income stream. Bish had a profitable sideline as a wine merchant and shortly before the abolition of the Lottery purchased the noted London pleasure resort Vauxhall Gardens.
- 85 Ibid.
- 86 Ibid., p. 423.
- 87 Ibid.
- 88 *The Spirit of the Public Journals for the Year 1825*, p. 51.
- 89 Ibid.
- 90 Ibid., p. 52.
- 91 Ibid., p. 51.

‘BARBER OR PERFUMER’: INCOMPARABLE
OILS AND CRINICULTURAL SATIRE

- 1 Quoted in Venetia Murray, *High Society in the Regency Period 1788–1830* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1999), p. 257.
- 2 Some of the fashion for short, non-ornate hairstyles among radicals consciously evoked the French Jacobins' short crops.

- 3 Quoted in Bill Severn, *Hair: The Long and Short of It* (New York; David McKay, 1971), p. 66.
- 4 Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 67.
- 5 Thomas Wright, *Caricature History of the Georges, or, Annals of the House of Hanover Compiled from the Squibs, Broadsides, Window Pictures, Lampoons and Pictorial Caricatures of the Time* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1867), p. 499.
- 6 Advertised in gender-specific terms in 1839 in the seventeenth ‘Nickleby Advertiser’:

TO THE ESPECIAL NOTICE OF THE LADIES

The peculiar virtues of this preparation completely remove the difficulty experienced by Ladies in preserving their ringlets after exercise; its use so invigorates the Hair, that tresses, previously the straightest and most destitute of curl, rapidly acquire a vigour, which maintains in permanent ringlets the head-dress of the most persevering votary of the Ball-room, the Ride, or the Promenade. After the Minerals and Vegetables of the Old World have been compounded in all imaginable ways in fruitless attempts to discover so important a desideratum, we are indebted to the Western Hemisphere for furnishing the basis of OLDRIDGE’S BALM OF COLUMBIA, the efficacy of which in preserving, strengthening, and renewing the Hair, has become a matter of notoriety among all civilised nations. Its restorative virtues are indeed a proverb, and the most satisfactory attestations to its infallibility in reproducing Hair upon persons otherwise hopelessly bald, may be examined at the Office of the Proprietors, No. 1, Wellington-street, Strand, where the Balm is sold; and by all respectable Perfumers.

- 7 George Cruikshank *et al.*, *Comic Almanack*, p. 209.
- 8 Hayward, ‘The Advertising System’, p. 11.
- 9 Crabbe, *The Poetical Works*, vol. II, pp. 133–4.
- 10 Quoted in M. Phillips and W. S. Tomkinson, *English Women in Life and Letters* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1927), p. 123. The advertisement also features useful instructions for its application and removal (which involves more expense, in the recommended purchase of the Blossom Milk of Circassia):

Take a piece of cotton, into which drop a little of the *Liquid Bloom*, and rub it upon the cheeks, disposing it according to nature, to the best of your judgment. – You may heighten or lower the bloom at pleasure, so as to make it appear exactly to your wish . . . It is perfectly innocent, but it will be proper, nevertheless, to wash it off with the BLOSSOM MILK of Circassia . . . at least every night and morning, otherwise it will not appear so fresh and beautiful, from the unavoidable allay of dust and smoke.

- 11 Quoted in Hayward, 'The Advertising System', p. 10.
- 12 Byron, *The Complete Poetical Works*, vol. V, p. 14.
- 13 According to E. S. Turner, Rowland's Macassar 'first appeared about 1793' (Turner, *The Shocking History of Advertising!*), p. 57.
- 14 While Rowland's Kalydor ('a never-failing specific for all cutaneous deformities') was the market leader among skin tonics, other skin-care brands had their devotees in the period, most notably John Gowland's Lotion for 'cutaneous eruptions' (which is discussed above at pp. 58–60). Rowland's Kalydor was still available during the Second World War.
- 15 Alsana Extract was also 'an Excellent Stomachic, in cases of Flatulency, Spasmodic Affections, & c.'.
- 16 See Andrew Wynter's article, 'Advertisements', *Quarterly Review*, vol. 97 (June 1855), pp. 183–225.
- 17 For Rowland as an author, see pp. 58–9 above.
- 18 Hayward, 'The Advertising System', p. 9.
- 19 Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 9.
- 20 'Thomas Sternhold', *The Daily Advertiser, in Metre*, p. 23.
- 21 Stones and Strachan, *Parodies of the Romantic Age*, vol. I, p. 123.
- 22 Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 123.
- 23 Turner, *The Shocking History of Advertising!*, p. 35.
- 24 This is Alexander Ross's premises, he of the 'GRECIAN VOLUTE HEAD-DRESS' (see p. 30 above). Ross was also an advertising author, and published in 1795 a *Treatise on Bear's Grease, with Observations, to Prove how Indispensable the Use of that Incomparable Substance, to Preserve the Head of Hair, in that State of Perfection which can alone render it the Delight of all Beholders*. I am grateful to John Barrell for this information.
- 25 Turner, *The Shocking History of Advertising!*, p. 35.
- 26 *The Spirit of the Public Journals for the Year 1824: Being an Impartial Selection of the Most Exquisite Essays, Jeux d'esprit, and Tales of Humour. Prose and Verse. With Explanatory Notes* (London: Sherwood, Jones and Co., 1825), p. 438.
- 27 *Ibid.*
- 28 *Ibid.*
- 29 See p. 229 of this book for an example of Macalpine's belligerent copy.
- 30 *The Spirit of the Public Journals for the Year 1824*, p. 440.
- 31 Charles Dickens, *Master Humphrey's Clock* (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), pp. 91–2.
- 32 Misty's explanation as to the disappearance of barrel-organ monkeys is as follows:

He regretted to add that a similar, and no less lamentable, change had taken place with reference to monkeys. These delightful

animals had formerly been almost as plentiful as the organs on the tops of which they were accustomed to sit; the proportion in the year 1829 (it appeared by the parliamentary return) being as one monkey to three organs. Owing, however, to an altered taste in musical instruments, and the substitution, in a great measure, of narrow boxes of music for organs, which left the monkeys nothing to sit upon, this source of public amusement was wholly dried up. (Charles Dickens, *The Mudfog Papers* (London: Richard Bentley and Son, 1880), p. 106)

33 *Ibid.*, p. 108.

34 The ‘Correspondent’ makes his own helpful suggestion as to how to replenish the stock of dancing bears:

The author submitted that it could be most fully and satisfactorily accomplished, if Her Majesty’s Government would cause to be brought over to England, and maintained at the public expense, and for the public amusement, such a number of bears as would enable every quarter of the town to be visited – say at least by three bears a week. No difficulty whatever need be experienced in providing a fitting place for the reception of these animals, as a commodious bear-garden could be erected in the immediate neighbourhood of both Houses of Parliament; obviously the most proper and eligible spot for such an establishment. (*Ibid.*, p. 109)

35 *Ibid.*, pp. 109–10.

36 Lewis Carroll, *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There*, ed. Roger Lancelyn Green (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 1971, p. 220. One is reminded of Deacon’s Pedlar, in *Warreniana’s Excursion* parody, ‘Old Cumberland Pedlar’ (see pp. 2–3 above), a retired agent for Warren’s blacking who inscribes Lake District rocks with tributes to his *quondam* employer.

37 ‘The Poor Barber’s Lamentation’ (London: T. Spence, c. 1795). Another broadsheet ballad, the anonymous ‘The Hair-Powder Plot’, puns on the fact that the tax was not progressive: ‘Mr Pitt . . . a poll-tax has laid on us all.’

38 ‘An Address to the insulted Swinish Multitude on Account of the Hair Powder Tax’ (London: T. Spence, c. 1795).

39 ‘An Address to Mr Pitt, Accompanied by a Crop of Human Hair’, broadside (London: T. Spence, c. 1795).

40 ‘A Chapter on Cats’, Willis Gaylord Clark’s splendid piece of facetiousness, is worth extracting in this context:

Feline quadrupeds are justly celebrated for their claims to admiration in respect of whiskers. In the conformation of his mandibular appendages, Nature has been generous with the cat.

Not only do they stand out from his face like the elongated mustaches of old Shah Abbas of Persia, but there is within them a sleepless spirit, a shrewd and far reaching sense, which puts to shame the similar ornaments on the faces of bipeds of the *genus homo*. They, indeed, can make their whiskers look well, by baptizing them with eau de Cologne, and Rowland's Macassar Oil, or peradventure, the unctuous matter won from the 'tried reins' of defunct bears; but where is the intelligence, the discernment, of their rivals? (*The Literary Remains of the Late Willis Gaylord Clark, Including the Ollapodiana Papers, The Spirit of Life, and a Selection from His Various Prose and Poetical Writings*, ed. Lewis Gaylord Clark (New York: Burgess, Stringer & Co., 1844), p. 263)

- 41 Honoré de Balzac, *The Rise and Fall of César Birotteau* (1837), translated by Katharine Prescott Wormeley (New York: Kessinger Press, 2004), p. 52.
- 42 *Ibid.*, p. 14.
- 43 *Ibid.*, p. 9.
- 44 *Ibid.*, pp. 8–9.
- 45 *Ibid.*, p. 14.
- 46 *Ibid.*, p. 51.
- 47 *Ibid.*
- 48 *Ibid.*, p. 74.
- 49 *Ibid.*, p. 52.
- 50 *The Complete Works of William Hazlitt*, vol. XX, p. 147. Hazlitt also protested against the silver-fork novel's use of contemporary brand names as part of its *mise en scène*. Where literature used to elevate the mind and the imagination, now it has become indistinguishable from the advertising columns:

It was formerly understood to be the business of literature to enlarge the bounds of knowledge and feeling; to direct the mind's eye beyond the present moment and the present object; to plunge us in the world of romance, to connect different languages, manners, times together; to wean us from the grossness of sense, the illusions of self-love; – by the aid of imagination, to place us in the situations of others and enable us to feel an interest in all that strikes them; and to make books the faithful witnesses and interpreters of nature and the human heart. Of late, instead of this liberal and useful tendency, it has taken a narrower and more superficial tone. All that we learn from it is the servility, egotism, and upstart pretensions of the writers. Instead of transporting you to faery-land or into the middle ages, you take a turn down Bond street or go through the mazes of the dance at Almack's. You have no new inlet to thought or feeling opened to you; but the passing object, the topic of the day (however insipid or repulsive) is served

up to you with a self-sufficient air, as if you had not already had enough of it. You dip into an Essay or a Novel, and may fancy yourself reading a collection of quack or fashionable advertisements: – Macassar Oil, Eau de Cologne, Hock and Seltzer Water, Otto of Roses, Pomade Divine, glance through the page in inextricable confusion, and make your head giddy. (*Ibid.*, vol. XX, p. 144)

51 Warren, *Ten Thousand A-Year*, vol. II, p. 101.

52 *Ibid.*, vol. II, p. 102.

53 *Ibid.*, vol. II, p. 110.

54 *Ibid.*, vol. II, p. 101.

55 *Ibid.*

56 *Ibid.*, vol. II, p. 102.

57 This is perhaps not such an improbability as it seems. *The Times* for 2 January 1819 contains the following advertisement:

HAIR, EYEBROWS, or WHISKERS, changed from Red or Grey, to Brown or Black by the GRECIAN WATER, which produces the desired effect by one application; it neither stains the skin nor linen and is entirely free from that purple shade that renders the user the subject of ridicule; if not approved after trial, the money returned.

58 Warren, *Ten Thousand A-Year*, vol. II, pp. 110–111.

59 *Ibid.*, vol. II, p. 111.

60 Thomas Carlyle, *Past and Present*, ed. A. M. D. Hughes (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1918), p. 128.

‘THE POETRY OF HAIR-CUTTING’:

J. R. D. HUGGINS, THE EMPEROR OF BARBERS

- 1 For the history of early American advertising, see Presbrey, *The History and Development of Advertising*, and Charles Goodrum and Helen Dalrymple’s *Advertising in America: The First Two Hundred Years* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1990).
- 2 *Historical Magazine; and Notes Concerning the Antiquities, History and Biography of America*, vol. I (1857), p. 248.
- 3 See Arthur Hornblow’s discussion of the early New York stage in *A History of the Theatre in America*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia and London: J. B. Lippincott, 1919), vol. I, pp. 41–65.
- 4 Evert A. Duyckinck and George L. Duyckinck, *Cyclopædia of American Literature; Embracing Personal and Critical Notices of Authors, and Selections from Their Writings. From the Earliest Period to the Present Day with Portraits, Autographs, and Other Illustrations*, 2 vols. (New York: Charles Scribner, 1856), vol. I, p. 501.

- 5 Van Wyck Brooks, *The World of Washington Irving* (New York: Dutton, 1944), pp. 201–2.
- 6 Moore's visit to the United States in 1803–4 took place after Huggins began his work, and before the poet of the *Thomas Little* lyrics began his satirical career, and the diehard Federalist Huggins would have found the Jeffersonian politics evident in the apostate Barlow's later work hard to stomach.
- 7 Quoted in John Richard Desborus Huggins, *Hugginiana; or, Huggins' Fantasy, being a Collection of the Most Esteemed Modern Literary Productions. Exposing the Art of Making a Noise in the World, without Beating a Drum, or Crying Oysters; and Shewing How, like Whittington of Old, who Rose from Nothing to be Lord Mayor of London, a Mere Barber may Become an Emperor, if He Has Spirit Enough to Assume, and Talents Enough to Support the Title* (New York: H. C. Southwick, 1808), pp. 10–11.
- 8 *Ibid.*, p. 118.
- 9 Quoted in Hood, 'The Art of Advertizing Made Easy', p. 251.
- 10 *Ibid.*
- 11 Quoted in Larwood and Hotten, *The History of Signboards*, p. 95.
- 12 Sir Richard Steele, *The Tatler*, ed. Donald F. Bond, 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), vol. III, p. 253.
- 13 The original of Strap was the barber Hugh Hewson, who died as late as 1809, and who festooned his premises in St Martin-in-the-Fields with Latin quotations. See *Notes and Queries*, first series, vol. 3, no. 68 (15 February 1851), p. 123.
- 14 *Harper's Magazine*, November 1866, p. 788.
- 15 See McKendrick, 'George Packwood and the Commercialisation of Shaving', pp. 146–94.
- 16 Huggins, *Hugginiana*, p. 251.
- 17 Biscarolaza replies that 'Don Emanuel amused himself for a short time after his arrival from the Spanish court, in the shop of the knight of the comb merely to keep his hand in: but was careful to avoid contracting any bad habits, of which he will be happy to convince any person who will do him the honor of calling at his dressing office No. 72, Wall-street' (Huggins, *Hugginiana*, p. 43).
- 18 Huggins, *Hugginiana*, p. 42.
- 19 Woodworth's *Poems, Odes, Songs, and Other Metrical Effusions* (New York: Abraham Asten and Matthias Lopez, 1818) includes a poetic eulogy to Huggins, 'Cupid's Lamentation, or the Puff Allegorical'.

20

From Barber's shops what benefits we trace?
 How great their 'vantage to the human race?
 That source of civil culture unpossess'd,

What wonder reason slowly fills the breast?
 Thou knight renown'd! possess'd of equal skill
 The comb to flourish, or to ply the quill,
 Whose bright effusions, wond'ring, oft I see,
 And own myself in message beat by thee.
 (Richard Alsop and Theodore Dwight, *The Echo*
 (New York: Porcupine Press, 1807), p. 173)

- 21 In *The Old Merchants of New York City* (1865), Joseph Alfred Scoville describes Huggins as 'one of the most extraordinary characters of his day', a figure who contributed to papers such as the *Commercial Advertiser* and the *Daily Post*: 'In all of these papers did Mr. Huggins flourish, both in poetry and prose.' Scoville says that Huggins also 'had the cleverest writers of the day to aid him', and, appropriately, 'paid them like an emperor' (*The Old Merchants of New York City* (New York: Carleton, 1865), p. 64).
- 22 Huggins, *Hugginiana*, pp. 94–5.
- 23 *Ibid.*, pp. 248–9.
- 24 *Ibid.*, pp. 177–8.
- 25 Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 201.
- 26 Huggins, *Hugginiana*, pp. 201–2.
- 27 *Ibid.*, p. 202.
- 28 *Ibid.*, p. 43.
- 29 Quirk published the following squib in the *Commercial Advertiser* on 28 July 1806:

Reader! didst ever hear of little Jack,
 The puffer Barber friseur quack?
 At whose sign, come in who may
 At number ninety-two Broadway;
 And strives by every art to lug in
 All who've heard of Jacky Hug-in?

Huggins republished this lampoon with the following parodic lines added:

This right hand, rudest, doggrel club in
 Shall give the knave a dreadful drubbing:
 Ere long I'll write some lines sonorous,
 And quack, quack, quack, shall be my chorus.
 (Huggins, *Hugginiana*, p. 135).

- 30 Huggins, *Hugginiana*, p. 137.
- 31 *Ibid.*, pp. 141–2.
- 32 *Ibid.*, pp. 68–9.
- 33 *Ibid.*, p. 69.

- 34 Ibid.
- 35 Ibid., p. 70.
- 36 *The Satires of William Gifford*, ed. John Strachan, vol. IV of Strachan, *British Satire 1785–1840*, p. 47.
- 37 Ibid., p. 29.
- 38 Quoted in Huggins, *Hugginiana*, p. 11.
- 39 Huggins, *Hugginiana*, pp. 98–9.
- 40 Ibid., p. 110.
- 41 The barber, as we have seen, was celebrated by Federalist wits, and, according to Joseph Alfred Scoville, also had personal connections with the party: the Federalist eminence ‘Jonathan Burrell was a great patron of . . . John R. Huggins’ (Scoville, *The Old Merchants of New York City*, p. 63). Burrell was Chief Cashier of the Bank of the United States, established by Alexander Hamilton in the 1790s and bitterly opposed by Jefferson.
- 42 Huggins, *Hugginiana*, p. 128.
- 43 Attributed to Theodore Dwight in Vernon Louis Parrington, *The Colonial Mind 1620–1800* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1927), p. 360.
- 44 Huggins, *Hugginiana*, pp. 114–15.
- 45 Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 12.
- 46 Huggins, *Hugginiana*, p. 116.
- 47 Ibid., p. 12.
- 48 Gary Dyer, *British Satire and the Politics of Style 1789–1832* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p. 99.
- 49 Gary Kelly, *English Fiction of the Romantic Period* (London: Longman, 1989), p. 253. Kelly’s concept is something of a catch-all, designed as it is to categorise a number of Romantic period works that defy categorisation as ‘novels’.
- 50 Huggins, *Hugginiana*, p. 21.
- 51 Ibid.
- 52 Ibid., p. 98.
- 53 Ibid., p. 103.
- 54 Ibid., p. 108.

CONCLUSION: ‘THOUGHTS ON PUFFS, PATRONS AND
OTHER MATTERS’: COMMODYFING THE BOOK

- 1 Montgomery, *The Age Reviewed*, p. 167.
- 2 ‘If it please any . . . man . . . to bye . . . late him come to Westminster . . . and he shall have them good chepe’ (from a flyer for William Caxton quoted in Simon Winchester, *The Meaning of Everything: The Story of the Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 13).

- 3 For whom, see William Zachs, *The First John Murray and the Late Eighteenth-Century London Book Trade With a Checklist of his Publications* (Oxford: published for the British Academy by Oxford University Press, 1998).
- 4 Montgomery, *The Age Reviewed*, p. 131.
- 5 In 1830, he merged his business with one of his principal rivals, Richard Bentley, who, after learning his trade with his uncle John Nichols, had set up on his own in 1819, in a career most notable for publishing early work by Dickens, for his important and highly successful magazine *Bentley's Miscellany*, which he established in 1837 with Dickens as founding editor, and for the Bentley's Standard Novels series.
- 6 See Leonidas M. Jones, *The Life of John Hamilton Reynolds* (Hanover, NH: University of Vermont; University Press of New England, 1984), p. 256.
- 7 *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, vol. 90 (February 1863), p. 203.
- 8 Michael Sadleir, *XIX Century Fiction: A Bibliographical Record Based on His Own Collection*, 2 vols. (London: Constable; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1951), vol. II, p. 14.
- 9 Hood, 'The Art of Advertizing Made Easy', p. 247.
- 10 *The Halliford Edition of the Works of Thomas Love Peacock*, vol. IV, section 2, pp. 166–7.
- 11 *Ibid.*, p. 167.
- 12 Daniel, *The Modern Dunciad*, p. 228.
- 13 *Ibid.*, p. 227.
- 14 *Ibid.*, p. 226.
- 15 Montgomery, *The Age Reviewed*, p. 33.
- 16 *Ibid.*, p. 177.
- 17 *Ibid.*, p. 33.
- 18 *Ibid.*, p. 131.
- 19 *Ibid.*, p. 33.
- 20 *Ibid.*, pp. 288–9. Montgomery is no admirer of the quality of Charles Wright's champagne:
- That drug-compounded mess of gooseberry juice,
Corked into froth, and coloured for our use; –
Must the pale drunkards of the midnight hour,
Buy off the stale, the rotten, and the sour,
Each lot too rancid for the day's broad sale,
With all the mess of porter and of ale?
(*Ibid.*, p. 289)
- 21 *Ibid.*, p. 165.
- 22 *Ibid.*, p. 131.

- 23 The supposedly ‘catchpenny’ nature of Disraeli’s substandard novel is also derided in *The Age Reviewed*’s parodic advertisement for Henry Colburn:

Novels in the Press.

PUBLICATION. By Henry Colburn, Esq.

Catchpenny Hall. By the author of Vivian Grey.

Gullibility. By the author of Almacks.

Pickles. By the author of Tor Hill.

Blue Devils. By the author of Frankenstein.

Something. By the author of Nothing.

De Puff, or, The Man of Dependence. By W. Jerdan, Esq.

London: Published by Henry Humbug, at Cozen-all-Corner.

‘We understand, from good authority, that some of Mr Humbug’s novels for the season, will create no small stir’. *John Bull*. (Ibid., p. 168)

- 24 Ibid., p. 131.
- 25 Ibid., p. 166.
- 26 *Athenæum*, 17 July 1830, p. 440.
- 27 Ibid. Three years later, the journal made a similar comparison between the manufacturers of books and the manufacturers of blacking, and not to the former’s advantage. The marketing of books is disingenuous when compared to the advertising of shoe polish; the deceptions of puffery ‘mask . . . self-praise in a way that a blacking man would scorn’. Blacking puffs are at least more direct than those of the publishers, with their puffs collateral and so on: ‘When Robert Warren tells you the story of the cat and the boot, he directs you in the same paragraph to the house where the wonderful liquid is to be bought’ (*Athenæum*, 13 July 1833, p. 459).
- 28 *Athenæum*, 17 July 1830.
- 29 Gerald Griffin, *The Poetical Works of Gerald Griffin, Esq.* (London: Simpkin and Marshall, 1843), p. 264.
- 30 Ibid., p. 265. Colburn’s name scans in the dashed word.
- 31 Ibid.
- 32 Ibid., p. 266.
- 33 Thomas Babington Macaulay, ‘1. *The Omnipresence of the Deity: a Poem*. By Robert Montgomery. Eleventh Edition. London. 1830. 2. *Satan: a Poem*. By Robert Montgomery. Second Edition. London. 1830’, *Edinburgh Review*, vol. 51 (April 1830), pp. 198–9.
- 34 Ibid., p. 196.
- 35 *The Halliford Edition of the Works of Thomas Love Peacock*, vol. IV, section 2, pp. 166–7.

- 36 John Clare, *The Early Poems*, ed. Eric Robinson, David Powell and Margaret Grainger, 2 vols. (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1989), vol. II, pp. 607–8.
- 37 *European Magazine*, new series, vol. 1 (November 1825), p. 303.
- 38 Macaulay, ‘*The Omnipresence of the Deity: a Poem*. By Robert Montgomery’, p. 200.
- 39 *Ibid.*, p. 210.
- 40 *Ibid.*, p. 195.
- 41 *Ibid.*
- 42 *Ibid.*, p. 196. Macaulay’s argument is exactly that found in Thomas Moore’s satire, ‘Thoughts on Patrons, Puffs and Other Matters’:

No, no, my friend – it can’t be blink’d –
 The patron is a race extinct;
 As dead as any Megatherion
 That ever Buckland built a theory on.
 Instead of bartering, in this age,
 Our praise for pence and patronage,
 We authors, now, more prosperous,
 Have learn’d to patronise ourselves;
 And since all-potent Puffing’s made
 The life of song, the soul of trade,
 More frugal of our praises grown,
 We puff no merits but our own.
 (Strachan, *British Satire, 1785–1840*,
 vol. V, pp. 407–8)

- 43 Macaulay, ‘*The Omnipresence of the Deity: a Poem*. By Robert Montgomery’, p. 196.
- 44 *Ibid.*, p. 197.
- 45 *Ibid.*, p. 198.
- 46 *Ibid.*
- 47 *Ibid.*
- 48 *Ibid.*, p. 196.
- 49 *Ibid.*, p. 194.
- 50 *Ibid.*, pp. 200–1.
- 51 *Ibid.*, p. 201. Macaulay’s systematic (and hilarious) demolition of *The Omnipresence of the Deity* demands representative extraction:

Mr Montgomery apostrophises the

Immortal beacons, – spirits of the just, –

and describes their employments in another world, which are to be, it seems, bathing in light, hearing fiery streams flow, and riding on living cars of lightning. The deathbed of the sceptic is described with what we suppose is meant for energy ... We then have the

deathbed of a Christian made as ridiculous as false imagery and false English can make it. But this is not enough: – The Day of Judgment is to be described, and a roaring cataract of nonsense is poured forth upon this tremendous subject. Earth, we are told, is dashed into Eternity. Furnace blazes wheel round the horizon, and burst into bright wizard phantoms. Racing hurricanes unroll and whirl quivering fire-clouds. The white waves gallop. Shadowy worlds career around. The red and raging eye of Imagination is then forbidden to pry further. But further Mr Robert Montgomery persists in prying. The stars bound through the airy roar. The unbosomed deep yawns on the ruin. The billows of Eternity then begin to advance. The world glares in fiery slumber. A car comes forward driven by living thunder,

Creation shudders with sublime dismay,
And in a blazing tempest whirls away.

And this is fine poetry! This is what ranks its writer with the master-spirits of the age! This is what has been described, over and over again, in terms which would require some qualification if used respecting *Paradise Lost*! It is too much that this patchwork, made by stitching together old odds and ends of what, when new, was, for the most part, but tawdry frippery, is to be picked off the dunghill on which it ought to rot, and to be held up to admiration as an inestimable specimen of art. (Macaulay, '*The Omnipresence of the Deity: a Poem. By Robert Montgomery*', p. 208)

52 Ibid.

53 Ibid., p. 196.

54 Quoted in Daniel Griffin, *The Life of Gerald Griffin by his Brother, Dr Daniel Griffin* (Dublin: Duffy, 1857), p. 143.

55 William and Dorothy Wordsworth, *The Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth: The Middle Years Part II 1812–1820*, second edition, ed. Ernest de Selincourt, revised by Mary Moorman and Alan G. Hill (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), p. 299.

56 Macaulay, '*The Omnipresence of the Deity. A Poem. By Robert Montgomery*', p. 209.

57 Stones and Strachan, *Parodies of the Romantic Age*, vol. IV, p. 1.

58 Ibid., vol. IV, p. 13.

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