



RICE UNIVERSITY

MOLIÈRE'S LES PRÉCIEUSES RIDICULES AND ENGLISH
RESTORATION COMEDY

by

ELMER RICHARD GREGORY, JR.

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

Carroll J. Anderson
Arthur Tullman
Robert L. Myers

Houston, Texas
May, 1961

THIS THESIS
IS DEDICATED TO
MY PARENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE. i-v

I. MOLIERIAN AND JONSONIAN COMEDY DEFINED 1-5

II. PRECIOSITY AND LES PRÉCIEUSES RIDICULES. . . . 6-18

III. FLECKNOE'S DAMOISELLES 19-32

IV. MRS. BEHN'S THE FALSE COUNT. 33-39

V. SHADWELL'S BURY FAIR 40-54

VI. MILLER'S THE MAN OF TASTE. 55-59

VII. CONCLUSION 60-65

FOOTNOTES. 66-71

BIBLIOGRAPHY 72-73

PREFACE

Although borrowings from Molière by the Restoration comic writers have been known and noted since the time of Langbaine and Voltaire, attempts to assess the nature and depth of his influence were not made until the first half of the nineteenth century when John Genest first argued that Molière had been one of the great influences on Restoration comedy. The twentieth century has seen at least two full-length studies of his influence -- D. H. Miles's The Influence of Molière on Restoration Comedy and John Wilcox's The Relation of Molière to Restoration Comedy. Both works are valuable, but neither can be regarded as completely dependable.

Miles's work, published in 1910, is out of date and suffers from a floridly elaborate style. Scholarship was not then as exacting as it is at the present, and many of the plays -- the Damoiselles a la Mode of Richard Flecknoe, for example -- were not available to him. He was, moreover, emphatically a Victorian, and his general attitude toward literature is reflected in this passage:

Not only were the ephemeral playwrights willing to insert passages having no attraction but their indecency, but some of the most sparkling wit of the leaders played around subjects now no longer alluded to in refined society. I need dwell on this notorious characteristic no longer that I have on the delight in amorous intrigues. It is already indelibly stamped on every man's memory. Besides, it has absolutely nothing to do with Molière's influence.¹

Of course, this so-called "notorious characteristic" does indeed have little to do with Molière's influence, but certainly no adequate treatment of Restoration comedy can be trimmed to a pattern of subjects currently "alluded to in refined society." Often, Miles's criteria for identifying borrowings are vague and unconvincing. For example, he cites Congreve's Way of the World as one of the comedies containing an important direct borrowing from Molière, stating that "Waitwell's disguise was suggested by the plot of Les Précieuses Ridicules."² By 1700, however, the disguise element had long been common property, and on no greater similarity than that one cannot consider the example as an unquestionable borrowing. Unlike Mascarille, Waitwell's disguise is not that of the young dandy, but rather one of an older person. Mirabell's reason for having him undertake the disguise is to further his own courtship of Millamant and not to humiliate Lady Wishfort. Earlier he had not hesitated to flatter her to gain the same end. Her humiliation is thus more or less fortuitous, and finally, she is not a précieuse like Magdelon and Cathos. Unfortunately, all too many of Miles's identifications are just as vague as the above one.

Wilcox's work is sound in its premises if not in its conclusions. He states that

a likeness to Molière is accepted as a borrowing when the thought, the wording, the action, the situation, or the dramatic device has, in isola-

tion or in combination, enough points of resemblance or such identifying peculiarities as to bar the likelihood of coincidence in observation or in the use of commonplaces.³

These are good criteria, but he sometimes applies them inadequately. In Dryden's An Evening's Love, for example, Aurelia bears enough resemblances to Magdelon and Cathos in Les Précieuses ridicules "to bar the likelihood of coincidence in observation or in the use of commonplaces." Wilcox describes her as

an exponent of "spiritual and refined language," by which she means such affectations as the over-use of "furious" as an omnibus adjective, the dragging of imaginative euphemisms into common speech, and a fashionable slurring of pronunciation. This seems to be a species of English folly, but the euphemism, "the counsellor of the graces," is an exact translation of Madelon's "le conseiller des grâces" in Les Précieuses ridicules. . . . The probabilities favor the conclusion that Aurelia's affectations are sketched from life, for the enjoyment of such a satire depends upon the existence of the folly ridiculed. But Aurelia reminds the modern reader, and doubtless she also reminded Dryden, of her French cousins, Madelon and Cathos, and he made the specific borrowing of a few words from the play, nothing more.⁴

Thus admitting that Aurelia's usage of words is too close to that of Magdelon and Cathos to be accidental, how can Wilcox then say that the probabilities favor her having been sketched from life? The enjoyment of such a satire may or may not depend upon the existence of the folly ridiculed, but one does not have to be acquainted with these follies first-hand. Women no longer affect preciosity, but we can still enjoy the satire of Magdelon and Cathos.

The present study began as an attempt to focus attention upon a number of borrowings from only one of Molière's plays, Les Précieuses ridicules, and I used a number of works in order to discover all the plays which have been mentioned by scholars of the past as derivative from Les Précieuses. The principal lists employed were found in Miles's book (pp. 223-41); Wilcox's The Relation of Molière (pp. 180-1); and Claude E. Jones's "Molière in England to 1775: a Checklist."⁵ The last work mentioned lists seven English plays as containing borrowings from Les Précieuses ridicules: Flecknoc's Damoiselles a la Mode, 1667; Dryden's An Evening's Love, 1668; Mrs. Aphra Behn's The False Count, 1682; John Crowne's Sir Courtly Nice, 1685; Shadwell's Bury Fair, 1689; James Miller's The Man of Taste, 1735; and an anonymous The Conceited Ladies, 1762. I have not been able to find any further mention of this last play. Sir Courtly Nice has not been discussed, because the borrowing which it contains, though real enough, consists solely of a rendition of Mascarille's song, "Au Voleur."⁶ Since little more can be added to what I have already stated about the borrowing in An Evening's Love, the plays to be treated in some detail will be the following: Flecknoe's Damoiselles; Mrs. Behn's False Count; Shadwell's Bury Fair; and although it properly lies outside the limits of Restoration comedy, James Miller's The Man of Taste. There is enough evidence, either direct or indirect, to prove that the authors of these com-

edies were using Molière's play, and the first purpose of this thesis will be to see whether these borrowings are of material only, that is, of characters or incidents, or whether some effort was made to catch the spirit of Molière's art.

In making the study, I became increasingly aware of another influence at work in the area of Restoration comedy beside the foreign one of Molière -- namely, Jacobean and Caroline English comedy, particularly the work of Ben Jonson. The second purpose of the thesis will be then to see if there is not a Jonsonian element at work in these plays as well as a Molierian one. In order to do this, some distinctions will have to be made at the beginning between the comedy of Jonson and that of Molière. A thorough and complete comparison of their comic methods could itself be the topic of a graduate thesis. Such a comparison lies outside the scope of the present work. If, however, there is a Jonsonian element present in some of the plays to be discussed, some distinctions made at the beginning will be an aid in reading the remainder of the thesis.

CHAPTER ONE

MOLIERIAN AND JONSONIAN COMEDY DEFINED

Let us begin our comparison of Jonson and Molière with a consideration of the following passage from D. H. Miles:

Ben Jonson is somewhat nearer to Molière's comic spirit [than Shakespeare]. Yet even The Alchemist, generally considered Jonson's best performance, is not very much in the style of Les Femmes Savantes. In the handling of Dapper and Druggier and Sir Epicure Mammon we see all too clearly the Plautine conception of comedy, in which no emphasis is laid on the unsocial or insincere elements of character. The comic effect does not come so much from the absurd expectations of those characters as from the supremely witty way in which the expectations are defeated of fulfilment. The play is a contest of the clever with the dull or unsuspecting, and we laugh with those who get the better. The Plautine conception appears in Molière also, but it is modified by a conviction, more profound than appears anywhere in Jonson, even in Bartholomew Fair, that conduct should conform to the demands of society. In his [Molière's] comedy of manners he laughs at the attempt of folly and vice to supplant nature and reason. His gaiety arises from the feeling that the irregularities of ordinary life are in themselves irresistably amusing.¹

Miles thus sees the basic difference between Molière and Jonson as lying in the way they relate their characters to society. Other scholars, including Kathleen Lynch, have concurred: "Generally speaking, then, it may be conceded that Jonson's realism does not include a relation of his characters to social standards. According to his program, adjustments are to be effected within the consciousness of the individual, not in his relations with others. . . ."2

There are exceptions, of course, among Jonson's characters, characters who seem to be very much ruled by a social code. In Epicoene, Mrs. Otter states: "I am the servant of the court and courtiers."³ She and the rest of the ladies collegiates and pretenders of the play all regulate their actions by the standard of what a certain group thinks. These ladies, however, are not major figures in Epicoene, and the more important comic characters in that play are made ridiculous more by their humors than they are by their failure to come up to a standard of social behavior. Morose, for instance, comes to grief because of his aversion to noise and not so much through having violated a particular code of behavior, for the unsocial nature of his treatment of his nephew is largely unexploited. The play thus becomes "a contest of the clever with the dull or unsuspecting, and we laugh with those who get the better." The characters in Molière, by contrast, are placed in a definite social setting, and their behavior is related to the society in which they move. When Magdelon and Cathos renounce the language and manners of their bourgeois world, the folly of their action is brought to their attention in a most humiliating way, and Gorgibus points out to Magdelon and Cathos the justice of the trick their lovers have pulled on them;⁴ Dauphine, after revealing Epicoene's disguise, contents himself with telling Morose: "Now you may go in and rest; and be as private as you will, sir."⁵

Jonson explained his concept of the humor in the Introduction to Every Man Out of His Humour:

As when some peculiar quality
Doth so possess a man, that it doth draw
All his affects, his spirits, and his powers,
In their confluents all to run one way,
This may be said to be a humour.⁶

By definition then a "humorous" character would probably not be too concerned with the opinions of society. In Every Man Out, Brisk states:

Why, do you see, sir, they say I am fantastical;
why, true, I know it, and I pursue my humour still,
in contempt of this censorious age. . . . For my
own part, so I please mine own appetite, I am care-
less what the fusty world speaks of me.⁷

In Ben Jonson and the Language of Prose Comedy, Jonas Barish has shown that the very language which Jonson used -- the illogical word order, the suppression of grammatical elements, the indiscriminate usage of causal conjunctions -- contributed to the development of eccentric, erratic characters.

Jonson's world . . . is not causal, and character does not interact with character. A seeming cause produces no effect; an apparent effect springs from no discoverable cause. The archetypal Jonsonian situation is that in which an individual pursues his humor oblivious of everything else about him. Fungoso, his eyes fixed greedily on Fastidious Brisk's fine suit, makes half-answers to his uncle while privately calculating how much it will cost him to duplicate the suit. Sogliardo, in the same moment, is too engrossed by the prospect of vulgar pleasures in London to notice Fungoso's inattention. Sordido, scarcely aware of the others on the stage, gazes into the sky for signs of the rain that will raise the value of his wheat. The characters remain as isolated, as blocked off from each other, as immobilized in their humors, as the members of an exploded period.⁸

The characters of Molière, though often one-sided, are seldom "humorous." One emotion, such as greed or frankness, may dominate a Molierian character, but seldom if ever to the extent that some Jonsonian characters are dominated by their peculiar qualities. Tartuffe's salient quality, for example, is his hypocrisy, but the overtones to this trait -- his lecherousness, his mercilessness -- make of him a more believable character than Morose or Sir Epicure Mammon. Further, the emphasis of the play, Le Tartuffe, is upon relationships. The effect that Tartuffe's presence has had upon the once happy family of Orgon, and the effect that certain members of Orgon's family -- Elmire, for instance -- have upon Tartuffe are traced out in such a way that one can see that no character in the play is really isolated from any other.

In Chapter Two, we shall see the ways in which Les Précieuses ridicules reveals its author's conviction that "conduct should conform to the demands of society." Les Précieuses is not the only play of Molière's in which this conviction is expressed. In Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme, written near the end of his career, Molière still could hold up M. Jourdain to ridicule for attempting to ape his betters -- the same mistake for which Molière ridiculed Magdelon and Cathos near the beginning of his career.

The language is of great importance in Les Précieuses. The play is a satire on preciosity, and much of the play's

excellence depends upon the almost untranslatable quality of its dialogue. Molière, however, unlike Jonson, does not "make himself a formal connoisseur of verbal foppery, or elaborate it into an entire comic vision. He keeps the temperature of his dialogue at a lower point, allowing it to boil over into outright nonsense only at crucial moments."⁹

CHAPTER TWO

PRECIOSITY AND LES PRÉCIEUSES RIDICULES

Before one can reach any conclusions about the borrowings of Les Précieuses ridicules, certain critical opinions of the play itself should be formed. Since two play-length adaptations will be studied, we must become familiar with the essential excellences of the original to understand whether its adaptations merit praise as such. Familiarity will also help us in studying shorter borrowings, because we shall be able to see more clearly the ways in which Molière was altered to suit the tastes of the Restoration audience.

The terms, préciosité and précieuse, have been used in so many different contexts that some definitions might be in order at this point. The préciosité satirized in Les Précieuses ridicules was a social and literary movement which took place in France roughly during the first half of the seventeenth century. The characteristics of this préciosité were a refinement of language and manners, and by extension, of feelings and insights. The movement was associated in its early period with a coterie which clustered around Madame de Rambouillet, "l'incomparable Arthénice," and met in her famous Blue Room. Her coterie and those who came under its influence were, in their attempts to speak and behave elegantly, reacting against the gross-

ness of manners and speech which had prevailed even in higher court circles during the earlier part of the century. The word, préciosité, apparently did not come into wide usage until after Madame de Rambouillet had largely disbanded her salon. In 1655, the abbé de Pure wrote in his Précieuse: "Ce mot est si nouveau et si répandu dans les Ruelles." A précieuse, however, was more than just a female practitioner of préciosité. She was, to quote Pure, "un extrait de l'esprit, un précis de raison."² D'Aubignac and his circle of friends, however, produced a large body of anti-précieuse literature between 1655 and 1659, Les Précieuses ridicules being performed in the latter year. In these works, the précieuse was painted less admirably than in Pure and was accused, among other things, of prudery and an unnecessary scorn of men.

The influence of preciosity was widespread, and the legacy which it left to French classicism contained much good. Refinement of speech and manners led naturally to an emphasis upon refinement of emotion and keenness of perception as qualities of the well-bred person, the honnête homme. Much of the subtlety of the French classic drama, particularly the work of Racine and Molière, can thus be considered an inheritance from preciosity.

Racinian drama and Molière's comedies of character -- for example, Le Misanthrope and Tartuffe -- share certain characteristics -- the banishing of physical action from the stage and the extensive usage of dialogue in which the

speakers discuss their emotions and their relations with other characters. These characteristics reflect the interests of the mondains and the mondaines who made up the best-paying and most influential section of the Parisian audience. Novels and courtesy books of the period reveal that these persons had cultivated the habit of watching gestures and facial expressions, and of listening for significant tones of voice in order to penetrate the secret thoughts, feelings, and motives of the people with whom they conversed. A well-known teacher of politesse, the Chevalier de Méré, considered penetration as the mark of the honnête homme:

Il faut observer que tout parle à sa mode, un nuage espais fait sentir l'orage avant que le tonnerre gronde, et rien ne se passe dans le coeur ni dans l'esprit qu'il n'en apparaisse quelque marque sur le visage ou dans le ton de la voix, ou dans les actions, et quand on s'accoutume à ce langage, il n'y a rien de si caché ni de si brouillé qu'on ne découvre et qu'on ne desmesle. . . .

Il faut observer tout ce qui se passe dans le coeur et dans l'esprit des personnes qu'on entretient, et s'accoutumer de bonne heure à connoître les sentimens et les pensées par des signes presque imperceptibles. Cette connoissance qui se trouve obscure et difficile pour ceux qui n'y sont pas faits, s'éclaircit et se rend aisée à la longue. C'est une science qui s'apprend comme une langue étrangère, où d'abord on ne comprend que peu de chose. Mais quand on l'aime et qu'on étudie, on y fait incontinent quelque progrès.

Boileau, who admired Molière as the greatest of the comic poets, described this same penetration as the essential part of the comic poet's art:

Que la nature soit votre étude unique,
Auteurs qui prétendez aux honneurs de comique.

Quiconque voit bien l'homme, et d'un esprit profond,
 De tant de coeurs cachés a pénétré le fond;
 Qui sait bien ce que c'est qu'un prodigue, un avare,
 Un honnête homme, un fat, un jaloux, un bizarre,
 Sur une scène heureuse il peut les étaler,
 Et les faire à nos yeux vivre, agir, et parler.
 Présentez-en par-tout les images naïves;
 Que chacun y soit peint des couleurs les plus vives.
 La nature, féconde en bizarres portraits,
 Dans chaque âme est marquée à de différents traits;
 Un geste la découvre, un rien la fait paraître:
 Mais tout esprit n'a pas des yeux pour la connaître.⁴

The good qualities of preciosity notwithstanding, one of its outgrowths -- an extreme nicety of speech and manners, associated particularly with the heroes and heroines of Mlle. de Scudéry's novels -- had become excessive and ridiculous by the late 1650's. As a distinct social and literary movement, preciosity was on the wane and the success which Les Précieuses ridicules enjoyed showed that many were becoming aware of the difficulties involved in a too elegant approach to everyday living.

In form, Les Précieuses ridicules is a one-act farce divided into seventeen scenes and designed to be given after the performance of a longer play, thus filling a position analogous to that of the Greek satyr play. This position was one which farce had frequently filled in the Parisian theater earlier in the century, but it was regarded as a fresh innovation when Molière and his troop, newly returned from the provinces, re-introduced the custom in 1658. The play was first given as an afterpiece to Corneille's Cinna on November 18, 1659, at the Théâtre du Petit-Bourbon by Molière's company, "la Troupe de Monsieur, frère unique du

Roi," with Molière as Mascarille and his friend, Madeleine Béjart, as Magdelon.⁵

Les Précieuses was a milestone both in Molière's own career and in the development of the French comic genre. Much discussed, admired, and attacked from the very beginning, Les Précieuses soon got into trouble with the authorities who forbid its performance. Les Précieuses soon reappeared, however, in (one supposes) altered form, and was performed forty-four times in the eleven months following its first production, an unparalleled success for the time. The forbidding of the play's performance apparently stemmed from the fact that some of the précieuses non-ridicules had taken offense at the play, and it was perhaps in an effort to pacify this group that Molière asserted in the Preface to the published edition of the play that he had not intended to offend the true précieuses by his play.⁶ His statement has been taken at face value by a number of scholars including Roederer and Victor Cousin. Antoine Adam, however, in "La Genèse des 'Précieuses ridicules'",⁷ argues that the play was attached to the polemic by d'Aubignac against the précieuses. He deduces this partly from evidence that the text of Les Précieuses which we have is not in its original form. Included in this evidence is the Récit de la Farce des Précieuses of Mlle, des Jardins, a summary of the play written soon after its first performance, for the Récit seemingly describes a play somewhat different from the one which

we now have. M. Adam thus hypothesizes that Les Précieuses, as originally presented, was much more offensive to the précieuses, that Magdelon and Cathos were not originally presented as provincials, and that the caricature was much more cruel. M. Adam finds additional support for his theory in the fact that many of those persons, such as Mlle. des Jardins, who were earliest in praising the play were friends of d'Aubignac.

Slight as the plot of the play is, it was probably not entirely original with Molière. Earlier plays which contain similar disguise incidents include Scarron's Héritier Ridicule, which contains the rejected lover's valet disguising himself and making love to the lady, and Chappuzeau's Cercle des Femmes, published in 1656 at Lyons and possibly performed by Molière's troupe while there. In the last scene of Chappuzeau's play, a false noble pays homage to the heroine, Emilie, before the police come in and arrest him for some old debts.⁸

The action of Les Précieuses ridicules begins with La Grange and Du Croisy bent upon avenging themselves for the scornful treatment they have received from Magdelon and Cathos. They realize that the girls' attitude toward them comes from their cultural and social aspirations, but the dialogue betrays no hint that the men wish to teach the girls a helpful lesson for their own good or improve them in any way. La Grange states quite succinctly, ". . . je

veux me venger de cette impertinence . . . " (Molière, p. 195)⁹. This seems to be the limit of their aim, although their plan is only intimated here at the beginning. La Grange has "un certain valet, nommé Mascarille, qui passe, au sentiment de beaucoup de gens, pour une manière de bel esprit. . . . Mais sortons d'ici auparavant." (p. 196)

The questions of Gorgibus, the "bon bourgeois" father of Magdelon and uncle of Cathos, are not answered by the departing suitors who refer him to the girls.

Gorgibus. Quel est le résultat de cette visite?
La Grange. C'est une chose que vous pourrez mieux apprendre d'elles que de nous.

Magdelon and Cathos inform Gorgibus that La Grange and Du Croisy have been so gauche as to begin their courtship with a proposal of marriage.

Magdelon. Quoi? débiter d'abord par le mariage!
 (p. 197)

In Gorgibus' retort there is an incredulous note which is characteristic of him throughout the play:

Et par où veux-tu donc qu'ils débutent? par le concubinage?

His praises of the sacredness of marriage and the honorable intentions of the young men, however, strike Magdelon as "du dernier bourgeois," and she and her cousin proceed to treat Gorgibus and the audience to an expose of "l'amour à la Mlle. de Scudéry" which derives its humor from the girls' having confused the romances they read with life as it is lived.

Mon Dieu [Magdelon cries to Gorgibus] que, si tout le monde vous ressemblait, un roman serait bientôt fini! La belle chose que ce serait si d'abord Cyrus épousait Mandane, et qu'Aronce de plain-pied fût marié à Clélie! (p. 198)¹⁰

Magdelon has carefully worked out the whole sequence which love must follow. She has derived her ideas of the natural progression of an affair from the novels she has read, and life must be lived accordingly:

Premièrement, il doit voir au temple, ou à la promenade, ou dans quelque cérémonie publique, la personne dont il devient amoureux; ou bien être conduit fatalement chez elle par un parent ou un ami, et sortir de là tout rêveur et mélancolique. Il cache un temps sa passion, à l'objet aimé, et cependant lui rend plusieurs visites, où l'on ne manque jamais de mettre sur le tapis une question galante qui exerce les esprits de l'assemblée. Le jour de la déclaration arrive, qui se doit faire ordinairement dans une allée de quelque jardin, tandis que la compagnie s'est un peu éloignée; et cette déclaration est suivie d'un prompt courroux, qui paraît à notre rougeur, et qui, pour un temps bannit l'amant de notre présence. Ensuite il trouve moyen de nous apaiser, de nous accoutumer insensiblement au discours de sa passion, et de tirer de nous cet aveu qui fait tant de peine. Après cela viennent les aventures, les rivaux qui se jettent à la traverse d'une inclination établie, les persécutions des pères, les jalousies conçues sur de fausses apparences, les plaintes, les désespoirs, les enlèvements, et ce qui s'ensuit.

Small wonder that poor Gorgibus is completely bedazzled -- "Quel diable de jargon entends-je ici? Voici bien du haut style." (p. 199)

Unfortunately for Magdelon and Cathos, they are only too eager to make the acquaintance of the marvelous young men they have read so much about. Mascarille soon makes his entrance, announcing himself as the Marquis de Mascarille,

and Magdelon and Cathos are soon agreeing completely with his increasingly outrageous statements: "Les gens de qualité, savent tout sans avoir jamais rien appris." (p. 208)

Magdelon replies, "Assurément, ma chère."

After the arrival of the vicomte de Jodelet, also a disguised servant, the play reaches a crescendo of farce. Even in the midst of the farce, the girls retain the prudishness which is so characteristic of them.

Mascarille, mettant la main sur le bouton de son haut-de-chausses. Je vais vous montrer une furieuse plaie.

Magdelon. Il n'est pas nécessaire: nous le croyons sans y regarder.

Mascarille. Ce sont des marques honorables qui font voir ce qu'on est.

Cathos. Nous ne doutons point de ce que vous êtes.
(p. 215)

La Grange and Du Croisy re-appear, unmask their servants, and humiliate the girls. There is no indication the young men feel the slightest remorse for the trick or have any intention of renewing their suit. Magdelon and Cathos have been cut to the quick by the experience, and they cannot ignore the fact that their own actions and pretensions have contributed to their downfall. Gorgibus points out the justice of the action to them:

Oui, c'est une pièce sanglante, mais qui est un effet de votre impertinence, infâmes! Ils se sont ressentis du traitement que vous leur avez fait; et cependant, malheureux que je suis, il faut que je boive l'affront.

Magdelon. Ah! je jure que nous en serons vengés, ou que je mourrai en la peine. (p. 220)

For the modern scholar, the farce takes on added signi-

ficance in the light of the theories advanced in recent years, notably by Bray and Mornet, that there was a rather decisive change of direction in French literature around 1660 with the newer generation attacking the affectation and the critical precepts of the older one.¹¹ Considered in this light, the play becomes the harbinger, so to speak, of a new era. In the following passage, Percy Chapman describes the usage of the unities in Les Précieuses and the verisimilitude of the play's action:

Molière's little comedy certainly heralds a revolution, or at least a very marked evolution, in taste. Yet it applies to comedy in a very large measure the identical technique which had already shown itself the best for serious plays. This first comic play to be an overwhelming success is also that which comes nearest in many respects to obeying the "rules," as they had developed in the 'thirties and 'forties. The unities of time, place, and action are better observed here than had ever been the case before in comedy. The "salle basse" of the Précieuses is for comedy what the "palais à volonté" was for tragedy, a single place in which the entire action naturally occurs; and the action itself moves gleefully forward in exactly the time it takes to play it, without extraneous episodes and with steadily mounting effect. The multiplicity and fantasy, the ever-renewed schemes and increasing improbabilities that make of the Étourdi rather a series of farces than a single play, the interplay of impossible quiproquos of the Dépit, are totally absent here, and if the trick of the young men in the beginning and the bastonnade of the end be excepted, the main body of the play moves forward in as verisimilar a fashion as the tragedy of Racine.¹²

One finds some support for Adam's view that Les Précieuses is an attack upon the prudishness of the précieuses in the text itself, for much of the artistic merit of the

play lies in the insight Molière gives us into the nature of the affected prude and in the wealth of specific details he employs to convey this insight to the audience. His acute perception is evident in the comment he has Cathos make about marriage:

. . . je trouve le mariage une chose tout à fait choquante. Comment est-ce qu'on peut souffrir la pensée de coucher contre un homme vraiment nu?
(p. 200)

His ability to invent supporting details is reflected in his satire on the jargon of preciosity. Consider the following exchange between the servant woman, Marotte, and Magdelon:

Marotte. Voilà un laquais qui demande si vous êtes au logis, et dit que son maître vous veut venir voir.
Magdelon. Apprenez, sotté, à vous énoncer moins vulgairement. Dites: "Voilà un nécessaire qui demande si vous êtes en commodité d'être visibles."
(p. 201)

In this exchange, one sees in opposition the plain versus the précieuse manner of speaking. Lackeys were called "nécessaires" in the language of the précieuse, because, in the words of Furetière, "on en a toujours besoin."¹³ Then Marotte's simple words are contrasted with Magdelon's stilted phrase, ". . . si vous êtes en commodité d'être visible," and Marotte's next lines emphasize the point of the exchange: "Dame! je n'entends point le latin, et je n'ai pas appris, comme vous, la filofie dans le Grand Cyre."

The best of the dialogue is very difficult to translate, but it "boil[s] over into outright nonsense only at cru-

cial moments." In scenes v and vi, for instance, Magdelon and Cathos speak with each other in a perfectly routine manner, if one except their tendency to overuse the expression, "ma chère." But when speaking to Marotte, they instantly become more précieuse. In a naive effort to impress her servant, Magdelon uses expressions she knows Marotte will not understand. Undaunted by Marotte's insolence, Magdelon orders her to bring in a mirror: "Vite, venez nous tendre ici dedans le conseiller des grâces." And in the same manner as before, Marotte retorts: "Par ma foi, je ne sais point quelle bête c'est là: il faut parler chrétien, si vous voulez que je vous entende." Cathos then delivers the essential part of the message in plain words: "Apportez-nous le miroir. . . ." One sees this alteration of sense and nonsense throughout the play, and while one may not consider Magdelon's exchanges with Marotte as crucial moments, they do emphasize the fact that Magdelon's préciosité is an assumed way of speaking. When Marotte tells her that the caller is the "marquis de Mascarille," Magdelon is so excited that she forgets herself and says: "Oui, allez dire qu'on nous peut voir . . . ," and not "Oui, allez dire que nous sommes en commodité d'être visibles." Both Magdelon and Cathos can and do speak quite plainly at times.

In concluding our study of Les Précieuses ridicules, we may note that Magdelon and Cathos are very responsive to a social code. In the earlier part of their conversa-

tion with Mascarille (scene ix), they reveal how pitifully eager they are to know the right people and do the right thing.

Magdelon. Hélas! nous ne sommes pas encore connues; mais nous sommes en passe de l'être, et nous avons une amie particulière qui nous a promis d'amener ici tous ces Messieurs du Recueil des pièces choisies.

Cathos. Et certains autres qu'on nous a nommés aussi pour être les arbitres souverains des belles choses. (p. 205)

Mascarille's promise that he will introduce them to his elegant friends is one of the ways in which he impresses the girls:

C'est moi qui ferai votre affaire mieux que personne: ils me rendent tous visite; et je puis dire que je ne me lève jamais sans une demi-douzaine de beaux esprits.

In the end, Magdelon and Cathos have their eyes opened to their own folly in a very unpleasant way. Angry though they are, they can no longer be ignorant of the fact that they are, indeed, précieuses ridicules, and the very violence of Magdelon's reaction indicates that her folly has not isolated her from the other characters in the play.

CHAPTER THREE

FLECKNOE'S DAMOISELLES

The only full-length modern work on Flecknoe finds him a "literary scapegoat" whose works show occasional flashes of genius, but admits that he cannot "live very regally in his own right."¹ And yet the literary historian of Restoration drama cannot entirely afford to ignore Flecknoe. Langbaine said of him that his acquaintance with the nobility was greater than with the muses,² and it is certain that he listed such highly placed persons as the Duke and Duchess of Newcastle (to whom the Damoiselles a la Mode is dedicated) and the Duchess of Lorraine among his patrons and patronesses. He was furthermore a literary innovator whose works must be studied if one wishes to trace the development of certain trends or genres, such as dramatic criticism or adaptations from Molière, throughout the Restoration period. In the words of Doney:

When a man or his work cannot be commended without too many qualifications, it is well to ask whether he was not rather making experiments than attempting a finished product. From the standpoint of motives, Flecknoe must sometimes stand condemned. He tried to say both the first and the last word on too many subjects. In the field of drama, where his work can be most appreciated, he qualifies for mention on the strength of priority. In his Love's Dominion, he is one of the earliest to adopt into his plays the pseudo-operatic devices which D'Avenant had introduced. In connection with the re-issue of his play as Love's Kingdom, his importance is yet greater. In the Short Discourse of the

English Stage which he appends to this play, he is engaging, to use the phrase of Spingarn, in the first formal piece of theatrical criticism in our language. It is not impossible that this work may have influenced both Dryden and Jeremy Collier in their most famous critical impressions . . . 3

And with regard to the play now under consideration, "in 1667, Flecknoe becomes one of the earliest imitators of Molière on the English stage."⁴

The history of the Damoiselles a la Mode has been obscure from its inception down to the present age. That the play was even acted -- and Restoration authorities are agreed that the Ladies a la Mode performed on September 14, 1668 is the play in question -- has been attributed to the influence of the Duke and Duchess of Newcastle, to whom the play is dedicated. Montague Summers suggests that the rather complete failure of the play was the reason why the Theatre Royal subsequently refused to put on any of the other plays of Flecknoe.⁵ Langbaine did not know that the play had been performed, and modern scholars of Restoration drama, including authorities on Flecknoe, have virtually ignored the play, apparently because copies of it are quite rare. Lohr in his work on Flecknoe and Miles in his work both gave the Damoiselles exceedingly thin treatment. Wilcox considers the play an "illustrative adaptation of Molière,"⁶ and devotes about two pages to it. He rejects as unconvincing the similarities to Sganarelle, Le Médecin malgré lui, and Le Misanthrope, cited in an earlier study by Gillet,⁷ and

confines his treatment largely to showing how Flecknoe's work is an amalgamation of the basic plot of two of Molière's plays -- Les Précieuses ridicules and L'École des Femmes -- with some details taken from a third Molière piece -- L'École des Maris. Wilcox does not, however, mention the most obvious reason for rejecting as sources the plays mentioned by Gillet -- namely, that Flecknoe does not mention them in his Preface to the Damoiselles in which he quite frankly acknowledges his borrowings from the last three plays mentioned:

This Comedy is taken out of several Excellent Pieces of Moliere. The main plot of the Damoiselles out of his Précieuse's Ridiculous's; the Counterplot of Sganarelle, out of his Escole des Femmes, and out of the Escole des Marys, the two Naturals; all which like so many Précieuse stones, I have brought out of France; and as a Lapidary set in one Jewel to adorn our English Stage: And I hope my setting them, and giving them an English foyle has nothing diminished of their native luster. And I have not only done like one who makes a posie out of divers flowers in which he has nothing of his own, (besides the collection, and ordering them) but like the Bee, have extracted the spirit of them into a certain Quintessence of mine own.⁸

What has Flecknoe actually done in his play? He has used "matter high in Molière's art,"⁹ plays which have usually been considered among Molière's best, and reduced them to an incoherent jumble in which a plethora of action sweeps across the stage in haphazard fashion. And before proceeding to an examination of the play, we may as well sort out which characters are taken from which play of Molière's. The two précieuses, the Damoiselles à la mode, are Mary and

Anne; their suitors, the counterparts of La Grange and Du Croisy, are Du Buisson and La Fleur. The two lackeys of Du Buisson and La Fleur maintain almost the same names that they have in Les Précieuses -- Mascarillio and Jodelet. Gorgibus appears as Bonhomme, but Bonhomme is also partially drawn from Ariste in L'École des maris. Taken in their entirety from L'École des maris are Sganarelle, Isabella, described in the cast of characters as a "witty damoiselle," Isabella's lover, Valerio, his valet, Ergasto, and the servant girl, Lisette. The two "natural fools" who keep house for Sganarelle are taken from Alain and Georgette in L'École des Femmes.

The play opens with a debate, taken from L'École des maris, between Sganarelle and Bonhomme on the subject of the proper way to bring up girls. Bonhomme has given his daughters complete freedom to do as they like, while Sganarelle keeps his ward, Isabella, under lock and key. Valerio, who is in love with Isabella, tries to make the acquaintance of Sganarelle and is rebuffed. Isabella then tells Sganarelle of the attentions she has received from Valerio, pretending to be disgusted by them. She is thus able to send a message by Sganarelle to Valerio in which she tells him that his attentions are unwelcome to her, the message being worded so that Valerio will know she is trying to encourage rather than discourage him.

With II.i, we arrive at the opening scene of Les

Précieuses. Chagrined by the treatment which Mary and Anne have meted to them, Du Buisson and La Fleur determine to have a little revenge upon the girls. Mascarillio arrives (II.v), but the action then switches to the low comedy of the natural fools, and the remainder of the act, scenes viii-xi, traces further developments in the Isabella-Valerio plot.

The third act opens with a switch back to Mascarillio, and Jodelet appears. The rest of the act, however, is given over to advancing the play's other plot. Between scenes in which the two natural fools appear, Isabella tells Sganarelle she has heard that Valerio has become quite violent and plans to take her away by force. Sganarelle is thus persuaded to deliver the message to Valerio that will crystallize the action, for the "rumors" which Sganarelle tells Valerio he has heard -- that Valerio plans to carry Isabella away by force -- serve as a means of telling Valerio what Isabella wishes him to do.

A ball scene opens the fourth act, but Du Buisson and La Fleur enter with cudgels, drive their servants out, and reveal their identity to the girls. The girls immediately become very contrite, and Mary says: "I am so confounded and ashamed I know not what to say nor what to do." (p. 84) If Flecknoe had given any indication earlier in the play that Mary or Anne ^{were} possessed even in incipient form of so admirable a quality as humility, their reaction would not seem quite so contrived. The sudden and unmotivated quality of

their reaction makes it seem suspicious, and as if to make meaningless the entire business they have initiated, La Fleur and Du Buisson then deny that they have had any part in the affair. This portion of the play's action as it stands revealed thus seems a forced effort to bring about the usual happy ending in which the heroes and heroines will pair off and get married. In scene vii, Sganarelle at last delivers to Valerio the message which instructs him how to get Isabella. Then in viii, Du Buisson and La Fleur converse with Bonhomme about the damoiselles, giving a rather crude exposition of the reasons why they tried to humiliate the girls. The gentlemen loved the girls but could not endure them so proud as they were before. The girls, moreover, had been too extravagant, and "all our whole Estates in a year or two, wou'd be set flying after the mode and fashions." (p. 92) Bonhomme assures them that the girls are quite transformed, but he advises them to be a little more fashionable in their dress and manners, for "women's affections follow their eyes." (p. 93) The next scene switches back again to Sganarelle, Valerio, and Ergasto. Isabella feigns anger with Sganarelle who has brought Valerio into his house in order to convince him that Isabella really does dislike him. She carries on her double talk, telling Valerio that she loves one of the two men present (Valerio and Sganarelle) and hates the other. This statement Sganarelle interprets, of course, as meaning that it is he that

she loves and Valerio that she hates. Valerio in turn promises to rid her of the sight of the one she hates, i.e., Sganarelle. Sganarelle is so pleased with what he thinks is the gist of the conversation that he promises to wed Isabella the next day.

At the beginning of Act Five, Isabella makes her escape from Sganarelle's household by pretending she is her cousin, Mary. She has told Sganarelle that Mary is in love with Valerio and is seeking a clandestine meeting with him. This supposed behavior of Mary's pleases Sganarelle very much, for it indicates that he has been right in his arguments with his brother as to the correct method of rearing girls. Bonhomme comes in, and Sganarelle gloats over his supposed misfortune. Isabella, however, comes back on with Valerio, who unveils her to the great astonishment of her guardian. The rest of the cast then appears. Mary enters reading a romance, and Anne comes in with a "gally pot" in her hand, which makes their transformation, previously alluded to in Act Four by Bonhomme, look rather suspicious. The girls state, however, that they have given up their old ways and are going to enter a nunnery. It turns out that they have two complaints: they resent the fact that La Fleur and Du Buisson have tricked them, and they do not like the new clothes and manners the gentlemen have adopted to please them. But then, without further ado, the girls renounce their affectation and the play ends happily for

all concerned except Sganarelle.

No writer has given the Damoiselles a really thorough critical treatment. Summers writes:

In some slip-slop fashion he [Flecknoe] has, as he so naively plumes himself, lumped together I know not how a paltry version of Les Précieuses Ridicules and excerpts from L'École des Maris, adding a crude travesty of Alain and Georgette from L'École des Femmes, his "two Naturals," to make the thing slab.¹⁰

Wilcox notes that the "assignment of the action of two characters from Molière to a single person in the combined play works havoc with all characterization,"¹¹ and he is certainly correct. I do not mean to imply that characters from different plays cannot be effectively united to make more complex ones, and it is difficult to say whether Wilcox implies this. He does state, however, that the choice in the present case of the two characters to be combined was an unfortunate one. Bonhomme is supposed to fill the shoes not only of the practical minded Gorgibus but also of the genial Ariste; the two do not mix well. One cannot be a sophisticated man of the world and an unpolished bourgeois at the same time. Even the virtues of the two characters -- the kindness of Ariste and the practicality of Gorgibus -- are not so absent from the other character as to make necessary a blending of some traits from each in the creation of a more complex character.

In the first act, Bonhomme advocates freedom as a merit in the bringing up of his girls, but if the point of L'École

des Maris even in its here adapted form is to come through in any manner, he must have some reason to maintain throughout the play that his method is superior to that of Sganarelle, who has lorded it over his ward, Isabella, in tyrannic fashion. For if Bonhomme maintains only through foolish blindness that freedom and kindness are proper virtues in the bringing up of girls, the audience may justifiably infer that there is no significance in his disagreements with Sganarelle over the proper methods of bringing up girls. Not only do Bonhomme's daughters behave disgracefully, but he specifically states in Act Two that the girls have become quite spoiled since their Mother's death. (p. 26) Yet Sganarelle stands condemned at the end of the play for his harsh treatment of Isabella.

The exposition of motives with regard to La Fleur and Du Buisson is also blurred. Molière, like any good dramatist, can reveal his characters through dialogue; Flecknoe puts much "revealing" dialogue in the mouths of his, but one does not know what to call the result. The result could be labelled faulty motivation, but this does not begin to describe the mysterious way in which the characters move about. A romantic ending is achieved by making all the major characters behave inconsistently and, I think, incoherently. What, for example, is gained by planning and executing a trick so humiliating as the one acted out in the play and then denying it? And Flecknoe never explains

how the girls found out about their lovers' tricks or why they should marry men whose affectations they dislike. A happy ending has been achieved, it is true, but it is a strictly fortuitous one. If Bonhomme has come out more happily than Sganarelle, he owes it not to his daughters having turned out better (since they have not) but to the stupidity (for there is little else one can call their actions) of La Fleur and Du Buisson.

A comparison of the function of the two natural fools with that of their originals, Alain and Georgette, can show the depths to which Flecknoe's incompetence can sink. Alain and Georgette, although they are low characters who behave on the whole rather stupidly, are nevertheless drawn with good detail, and capable of showing much perception in places. In the following conversation, for instance, the explanation of jealousy which Alain makes to Georgette helps to bring out the essentially unreasonable quality of Arnolphe's desire to possess Agnes completely:

Georgette. Mon Dieu! qu'il est terrible!
 Ses regards m'ont fait peur, mais une peur horrible;
 Et jamais je ne vis un plus hideux chrétien.
Alain. Ce Monsieur l'a fâché: je te le disais bien.
Georgette. Mais que diantre est-ce là, qu'avec tant
 de rudesse
 Il nous fait au logis garder notre maîtresse?
 D'où vient qu'à tout le monde il veut tant la cacher.
 Et qu'il ne saurait voir personne en approcher?
Alain. C'est que cette action le met en jalousie.
Georgette. Mais d'où vient qu'il est pris de cette
 fantaisie?
Alain. Cela vient ... cela vient de ce qu'il est
 jaloux.
Georgette. Oui; mais pourquoi l'est-il? et pourquoi
 ce courroux?

Alain. C'est que la jalousie... entends-tu bien,
Georgette,
Est une chose... là... qui fait qu'on s'inquiète...
Et qui chasse les gens d'autour d'une maison.
Je m'en vais te bailler une comparaison,
Afin de concevoir la chose davantage.
Dis-moi, n'est-il pas vrai, quand tu tiens ton
potage,
Que si quelque affamé venait pour en manger,
Tu serais en colere, et voudrais le charger?
Georgette. Oui, je comprends cela.
Alain. C'est justement tout comme:
La femme est en effet le potage de l'homme;
Et quand un homme voit d'autres hommes parfois
Qui veulent dans sa soupe aller tremper leurs doigts,
Il en montre aussitôt une colere extrême.
Georgette. Oui; mais pourquoi chacun n'en fait-il
pas de même,
Et que nous en voyons qui paraissent joyeux
Lorsque leurs femmes sont avec les biaux Monsieux.
Alain. C'est que chacun n'a pas cette amitié goulue
Qui n'en veut que pour soi. (Moliere, pp. 424-5)

The characters, then, are simple, but they, particularly Alain, have a clear insight into one of the basic problems of the play -- the greedy quality of Arnolphe's love for Agnes. If, on the other hand, Flecknoe had not specifically stated in the preface that he had got the two Naturals from Molière, one would never recognize the originals from the crude caricatures which emerge from his pen. They serve no function save to interrupt the main actions in a confusing and repetitious manner and depend for their humor largely upon slapstick only faintly suggested in the original. The following scene, II.vi, is neither better nor worse than any other in which the Naturals appear; no other scene can qualify as better on either psychological or literary grounds.

Enter the Two Naturals

1. Come, now let's Play a little 'till Master comes.
2. Content; Hi, hi, hi, hi, hi.

They play a many fools Gambols

1. No, but I'll teach you a fine Play -- See saw, see saw

2. Nay now you play foul play, so you do.

1. Foul play! what's that?

2. Why 'tis -- to play foul play.

1. Oh now I understand.

2. Now stand you there, and I'll stand here -- and I'll lay you a wager I'll meet you before you shall meet me.

1. Come on then:

2. Lo you there now.

1. Nay I met you first

2. But you did not.

1. But I did

Sganarelle knocks within

Sgan. who's within there? open the door here.

1. 'Uds so! 'tis Master knocks; Go you and let him in.

2. Go you and you will

1. I won't

2. and I wont neither

Sgan. Will no body come there! are ye all deaf? Ile make you hear.

Knocks

1. 'Uds so, Master's angry. I'll go and open the door.

2. Nay, I'll go.

1. But you shan't

2. But I will

They strive and open it betwixt them. (pp. 37-8)

In his "Short Discourse on the British Stage," published in 1664, Flecknoe had written:

There are few of our English Playes (excepting onely some few of Johnsons) without some faults or other; and if the French have fewer then our English, 'tis because they confine themselves to narrower limits, and consequently have less liberty to erre.

The chief faults of ours are our huddling too much matter together, and making them too long and intricate; we imagining we never have intrigue enough till we lose our selves and Auditors, who shu'd be led in a Maze, but not a Mist; and through turning and winding wayes, but so still as they may finde their way at last.¹²

The desire of the English audiences for much action on the stage was widely noted by writers both in England and on the continent. In 1663, the author of Love a la Mode had written that "the French are commonly content in their Comedies with one single Humour and Rime," as opposed to the English who delighted in complexity, and in 1741, Luigi Riccoboni in An Historical and Critical Account of the Theatres of Europe observed that in adaptations of the French dramas English "Authors have doubled the Intrigue."¹³ Shadwell, as we shall see later, also held the belief that the English theatre preferred more action than the French.

It is not enough to dismiss the Damoiselles as a bad play or Flecknoe as a bad writer. If he was too incompetent to please his audience, he was nevertheless constructing his work upon an estimate of that audience's taste which others shared. The results of combining material from several plays could be amusing when handled by a competent playwright such as Dryden or Wycherley. Thus it becomes interesting that as a critic Flecknoe could recognize the dangers of the method, but as a practising playwright, was not capable of avoiding them.

Flecknoe stated in his Epigrams that the King liked the play.¹⁴ This is hard to believe, but it is equally hard to believe that a woman such as the Duchess of Newcastle, who was probably the most famous learned lady of her day and had also lived in France, could have admired

the play and allowed herself to be associated with it.

Yet she probably did.

CHAPTER FOUR

MRS. BEHN'S THE FALSE COUNT

Aphra Behn's The False Count, first performed in September, 1682, contains a borrowing essentially different from the kind found in Flecknoe's Damoiselles. Flecknoe's play had been an avowed attempt to bring Moliere to England, and despite his belief that "like the Bee," he had "extracted the spirit of them [Molière's plays] into a certain Quintessence" of his own, most of his play can be identified as derivative from his French sources. Although the concensus has been that Mrs. Behn did indeed turn to Molière for the disguise incident as well as perhaps for the shipboard episode, the borrowings are at best episodic ones embedded in a play full of incidents and characters owing little or nothing to Molière. Mrs. Behn borrowed incidents and situations from Molière, rather than characters or complete plots, as Flecknoe had done. Such borrowings were common in the Restoration whenever the need for well-tested incidents arose. Since the Restoration audience liked much action, the need for such borrowings often did arise.

Unlike Flecknoe, Mrs. Behn was not at all bothered about diminishing "the native luster" of her sources; she gives no credit at all to Molière in either the Prologue or the Epilogue. She does, however, make the boast in the Epilogue that the play was the easy product of five days'

time:

'Tis a slight Farce, five Days brought forth
 with ease,
 So very foolish that it needs must please.¹

The time factor, if true, probably explains some of the muddle in the action. In III.1, for example, she apparently intended for Francisco and his party to be seized as they were returning home by sea, but at the end of the act, their trip is presented as an excursion on a yacht. (pp. 97-8)

The False Count has two plots which advance simultaneously. One concerns itself with the attempts of Don Carlos, Governor of Cadiz, to seduce the very willing Julia, wife of the old and foolish Francisco; the other, with the vain and pretentious Isabella, daughter of Francisco, who is eventually tricked into marriage with the chimney-sweep, Gulliom, who masquerades as a false count.

In Act One, we have the exposition of the loves of the various characters -- Carlos for Julia, and Antonio for Clara -- and of the plot to humiliate Isabella. Francisco, in approved comic fashion, is assiduously bent upon keeping himself from cuckoldry, little realizing that his actions themselves not only make his wife the more determined to deceive him but actually aid her in the attempt. Carlos, in order to get closer to Julia, pays court to her sister, Clara, who is in love with Antonio. Although Antonio is engaged to Isabella, he returns Clara's love and is deter-

mined to avoid marriage with Isabella if at all possible. Carlos's ruse fails -- for Francisco suspects his true motives -- but Guzman, the servant of Carlos, is able to give Julia a letter at the same time that Francisco is railing at the tricks Carlos is using to try to get into the house. Isabella enters and by the contemptuous rudeness she shows toward Antonio alienates the sympathy of the reader at the beginning of the play.

Guiliom is introduced in Act Two. Carlos is to use the chimney-sweep as a means of ingress into Francisco's house by himself posing as one of Guiliom's servants. Guiliom's disguise will also aid Antonio in humiliating Isabella. A tryst between Julia and Carlos is depicted, and Antonio also enters Francisco's house to see Clara. Francisco discovers Carlos, though not with Julia, and he has to leave. Antonio, however, gets trapped in the house when Francisco locks up and is forced to spend the night in Clara's room, but the two lovers pass the night chastely.

There are two scenes in Act Three. In III.i, Carlos and Antonio agree to put into operation a plan of Guzman's. The plan is that a supposedly Turkish galley will attack a ship on which Francisco and his family will be boarded. Then the Turks, actually Guzman and his friends, will take Francisco, Julia, and the rest to Antonio's seashore villa where Carlos can sport with Julia "as Adam did with Eve." (p. 132) In III.ii, Guiliom, disguised as the Viscount

de Chimeny Sweperio, introduces himself into the household of Francisco and courts Isabella. Declaring that he wishes to marry Isabella, Guillom has no difficulty in persuading Francisco to break off her engagement to Antonio.

In Act Four, the ship is attacked by Guzman and his "Turkish" associates, who bring the persons aboard -- Guillom, Isabella, Francisco, Julia, Antonio, and Clara -- to Antonio's villa. There, Don Carlos disguised as the Great Turk surveys the captive women to determine which one he will lie with. Clara wins his approval by a straightforward profession of her love for Antonio, and he sets her and her lover free. Isabella, on the lookout for a chance to advance herself, acts very coquettishly toward the Great Turk, but he spurns her. He turns, naturally enough, to Julia with whom he plays a cat-and-mouse game for the benefit of Francisco. Julia swears that she loves no one but her husband and will never be untrue to him. Francisco rages over the Great Turk's attentions to his wife, but he is powerless.

Act Five brings both strands of action to their ironical conclusions. Francisco is forced to plmp for his wife, and the marriage between Guillom and Isabella is consummated.

What is there of Molière in The False Count? The idea of the disgruntled suitor disguising a servant in order to humiliate a girl for her pretensions parallels the plot of Les Précieuses, and various details in the courtship scene

(III.ii) indicate that Mrs. Behn had in mind Les Précieuses. For example, in the following passage the newly arrived Guilliom starts to reveal one of his wounds: "Why, I'll tell you, Sir, what an odd sort of a Wound I received in a Duel the other day, -- nay, Ladies, I'll shew it you; in a very odd place -- in my back parts." He starts to untuck his Breeches, and the Ladies squeak. (p. 142) There is, however, relatively little of the précieuse in *Isabella*. One would expect that a play written in so ^{a time} brief/as this one would show a rather unsubtle assimilation of its literary sources. The most evident influence here is that of Jonson. The comic butts of the play, *Isabella* and *Francisco*, reflect the Jonsonian humors tradition rather than the influence of Molière. *Isabella*, for instance, is so obsessed with the idea of rank that her every action, almost every word, reveals this obsession. *Cathos* and *Magdelon*, by contrast, are naively impressed with rank, but they are much more interested in balls, makeup, eloquent love jargon, and all the pleasures of the beau monde. *Francisco* likewise has a dominant passion -- the fear of being a cuckold. As *Isabella's* father, though, he is the logical character to counter her snobbery with common sense:

Francisco. . . . why, what Husband do you expect?
Isabella. A Cavalier at least, if not a Nobleman.
Francisco. A Nobleman, marry come up, your Father, Huswife, meaning my self, was a Leather-seller at first, till, growing rich, I set up for a Merchant, and left that mechanick Trade; and since turned Gentleman; and Heav'n blest my Endeavours so as I

have an Estate for a Spanish Grandee; and, are you so proud, forsooth, that a Merchant won't down with you, but you must be gaping after a Cap and Feather, a Silver Sword with a more dreadful Ribbon at the hilt? (p. 115)

His behavior as Isabella's father is that of the sensible bon bourgeois, such as Gorgibus. The lines he speaks in this capacity are not at all well integrated with his speeches in the role of cuckold. One character seems to be playing two parts. In the same scene in which Francisco reminds Isabella of his own humble beginnings, he speaks hardly a single line prior to Isabella's entrance which does not in some way reflect his jealousy. He is completely incapable of controlling himself. When Julia's father, Balthasar, cautions him that his jealousy will make him odious to his wife, Francisco resolves to hide his feeling:

". . . then I will hide it as much as I can in words, I can dissemble too upon occasion." (p. 108) But when Julia enters and asks him if she may visit her aunt, his jealousy immediately asserts itself.

Francisco. Hum -- perhaps the Governor's there too?
Julia. What if he be? we ought to make him a visit too, who so kindly sent for us to Cadiz.
Francisco. How! Make a visit to the Governor?
 What have I to do with the Governor, or what have you to do with the Governor? you are no Soldier, Love. (p. 110)

The other characters consider Francisco's behavior a humor. Consider Antonio's description of Francisco at the beginning of the play: "Why, her Father, old Francisco, was in his youth an English . . . Shoemaker, which he im-

prov'd in time to a Merchant; and the Devil and his Knavery helping him to a considerable Estate, he set up for Gentleman; and . . . in the Humour of Jealousy even outdoing the most rigid of us Spaniards, he came over into Spain to settle with his whole Family. . . ." (pp. 103-4)

It has been suggested that the shipboard incident was developed from a hint in Molière's Les Fourberies de Scapin.² The hint is an untrue story which Scapin tells to Geronte (II.vii) in order to get some money from him -- namely, that Scapin and Geronte's son, Léandre, boarded a Turkish galley in the harbor, which then put out to sea, the Turks thus making a captive of Léandre. Otway's adaptation, The Cheats of Scapin, calls the ship an "English Renegade that was entertained in the Dutch Service."³ If Mrs. Behn had any literary source for the Turkish galley, then, the source was probably Molière, though the possible debt is negligible.

What Mrs. Behn has done with her sources is rather clear. The action of The False Count is if anything more involved than the summary given would indicate. "When she [Mrs. Behn] rose at all above the rank of a pandarress to the taste for indecency, it was merely into the level of 'uncommon ingenuity in the contrivance of stage-situations'"⁴ She was using Molière only as a source for plot situations and incidents with which to fill out the action of her own play.

CHAPTER FIVE

SHADWELL'S BURY FAIR

The main element to be considered as a borrowing from Molière in Thomas Shadwell's Bury Fair⁽¹⁶⁸⁹⁾ is that of the disguise. Other elements or influences have been noted and discussed, but this seems to be the main piece he took from Molière.

As a writer, Shadwell was tarred with the same brush that Flecknoe was, and with, it seems, less justice. In comparison with the two plays previously examined, Bury Fair stands on a considerably higher plane and is probably the best of the comedies to be examined in the present study. It is far from dull, shows some amount of conscientious artistry in its disposition of characters, and has scenes of genuine mirth. In comparison with Mrs. Behn's play, Bury Fair is relatively pure. Neither of the principal comic butts of the play -- Lady Fantast and her daughter, Mistress Fantast -- are put in any compromising positions. Wildish, the gallant who initiated the disguise trick, is a more humane type than Antonio. He states at the play's conclusion that he never thought the affair would come to a bad end: ". . . I put him [La Roch] upon this Frolick, thinking to make Sport in the time of the Fair; but never thought it wou'd have come to Earnest."¹ Compare this with the callous way in which Antonio allows Isabella to lose

her maidenhead to the chimney sweep: "By Heaven, I'm so proud I cannot think my revenge sufficient for Affronts, nor does her Birth, her Breeding and her Vanity -- deserve a better Fortune. . . . "2

Lady Fantast and Mrs. Fantast are patterned in a general way after Magdelon and Cathos; the barber, La Roch, after Mascarille. The fairly close imitation of circumstances -- La Roch's references to his army experiences, his having Lady Fantast and her daughter try the scent of his powdered peruke, and his being cudgeled -- show that this is indeed a borrowing from Les Précieuses. The dialogue, however, never approaches paraphrase, and there are other sources and other influences to be considered, including another play of Molière's, Les Femmes savantes, and Ben Jonson, always a force to be reckoned with in analyzing Shadwell's work.

In his discussion of the play, Langbaine notes the borrowing from Les Précieuses ridicules and gives much pertinent information concerning Bury Fair. Langbaine was more enthusiastic in his praises of Shadwell than of Dryden. Being an admirer of Shadwell, Langbaine was probably careful in noting the sources of his plays, although he was too laudatory in his judgment:

Bury Fair, a Comedy acted by his present Majesties Servants, printed 4^o. Lond. 1689. and dedicated to the Rt. Honourable Charles, Earl of Dorset and Middlesex, the present Lord Chamberlain of his Majesty's Houshold. How difficult it is for Poets

to find a continual Supply of new Humour, this Poet has sufficiently shew'd in his Prologue; and therefore he ought to be excus'd, if Old Wit, and Sir Humphry Noddy have some resemblance with Justice Spoil Wit, and Sir John Noddy; in the Triumphant Widow. Skilfull Poets resemble excellent Cooks, whose Art enables them to dress one Dish of Meat several ways; and by the Assistance of proper Sawces, to give each a different Relish, and yet all grateful to the Palate. Thus the Character of La Roche, tho' first drawn by Molière, in Les Précieuses ridicules . . . yet in this Play has a more taking Air than in any other Play; and there is something in his Jargon, more diverting than in the original it self.³

In Les Précieuses, Mascarille and Jodelet converse about their army experiences, making comic blunders in their usage of military terminology and making allusions to their real profession -- that of the servant.

Mascarille. Ne vous étonnez pas de voir le Vicomte de la sorte; il ne fait que sortir d'une maladie qui lui a rendu le visage pâle comme vous le voyez.⁴

Jodelet. Ce sont fruits de veilles de la cour et des fatigues de la guerre.

Mascarille. Savez-vous, Mesdames, que vous voyez dans le Vicomte un des plus vaillants hommes du siècle? C'est un brave à trois poils.

Jodelet. Vous ne m'en devez rien, Marquis; et nous savons ce que vous savez faire aussi.

Mascarille. Il est vrai que nous nous sommes vus tous deux dans l'occasion.

Jodelet. Et dans des lieux où il faisait fort chaud.⁵

Mascarille, les regardant toutes deux. Oui; mais pas si chaud qu'ici. Hai, hai, hai!

.
Mascarille. Te souvient-il, Vicomte, de cette demi-lune que nous emportâmes sur les ennemis au siège d'Arras?

Jodelet. Que veux-tu dire avec ta demi-lune? C'était bien une lune toute entière. (Molière, pp. 213-5)⁶

Shadwell seems to feel that wit can be created from

these army experiences by emphasizing the cruelty of the supposed count:

Count. Madame, I have no time to consider; de grand Monarch, my Maitre, wantè me for a Lieutenant General, to makè de War again Holland and Flandre, to burna de House, and to killè de Man, Voman, and Shilde, as de great Monarch does, for his Glory. And I vill speakè one proud Vord for my self; he has not one Officier in his Armee dat burn, makè de Ravage, and killè de Man, Voman and Shilde, better den my self; no indeed. Mrs. Fantast. Eh, non Dieu! that is Sanglant cruelle.

Count. Pardon mee, Madam, is de Discipline of War to puttè de Village and de House in flame, and vid de Pistolet to shoot de Voman paph in de Eare vid big Bellees, and de oder vid de Shilde in dere Arm paph paph, ver dum, ver dum, paph, paph, and to puttè de Pike an aif Pike into de littel Suck Shilde and dey sprawl, sprawl, vid deir Arm and deir Leg, and make de ver pretty Shight; and take de littel Boy and de Garle, so high, soe high, soe high, and stickè, and stickè de Rapier into de Bodee. Madam. (IV, 341)

The comic in Molière's scene lies in the audience's own recognition of its/superiority to all the characters. Even the old joke about the half-moon is freshened by Mascarille's immediate acquiescence to Jodelet's blunder: "Je pense que tu as raison." (p. 214) The audience also catches the ambiguity, lost to Magdelon and Cathos, of Jodelet's exchange with Mascarille about the warm places in which they have seen each other. The suggestion has been made that the cruelty of La Roch's remarks about war might have been a means through which Shadwell could attack the French.⁷ Whatever Shadwell's intention, the end result is not funny. La Roch's references to his army experiences are too realistic. His remarks about shooting pregnant women and stick-

ing pikes into sick children are so brutal that they distract the reader's attention from the inherently comic situation of the disguise.

Rather than having La Roch make oblique references to his position as a servant, Shadwell has him make blunders which almost give him away. La Roch thus emerges as a mentally less agile character than Mascarille. Consider, for example, the scene in which the Count takes off his peruke in order to allow Lady Fantast and her daughter to smell it:

Count. Ah, Madam! take my Peruke, and smellè de Pulvilio: here, Madam. He plucks his Peruke off, and gives it; she smells to it.

Mrs. Fantast. Mon Dieu! Obligeant! Here is Breeding, to divest himself of his chiefest Ornament, to gratifie my sense! 'tis very fine!

.....
Count. Is de ver fine Haire, Ladee: I have a great deal of de best in England or France, in my Shop.

Gertrude. How? in your Shop! Do you keep Shop, Monsieur? How do you sell it?

Count. Morbleu, vat is dis? Begar, I vill bite my Tongue. Shop! Shop! I no understand English, Shop! Vat you call de place de Jentilman puttè his Peruke? Oh, his Cabinet, his Closet. (IV, 342-3)

Not only does La Roch's blunder furnish a comparison with the hidden allusions Mascarille and Jodelet make but it also reminds one of the scene in which Mascarille shows off his costume to Magdelon and Cathos.

Mascarille. Attachez un peu sur ces gants la réflexion de votre odorat.

Magdelon. Ils sentent terriblement bon.

Cathos. Je n'ai jamais respiré une odeur mieux conditionnée. (p. 211)

A comparison of another incident -- the cudgelling of

the servant -- will serve to show that Molière and Shadwell are not very close. In Molière, the incident is handled thus:

La Grange. Ah! ah! coquins, que faites-vous ici? Il y a trois heures que nous vous cherchons.

Mascarille, se sentant battre. Ahy! ahy! ahy! vous ne m'aviez pas dit que les coups en seraient aussi.

Jodelet. Ahy! ahy! ahy!

La Grange. C'est bien à vous, infâme que vous êtes, à vouloir faire l'homme d'importance.

Du Croisy. Voilà qui vous apprendra à vous connaître.

.....
Mascarille. Mon Dieu, je n'ai pas voulu faire semblant de rien; car je suis violent, et je me serais emporté.

Magdelon. Endurer un affront comme celui-là, en notre présence!

Mascarille. Ce n'est rien: ne laissons pas d'achever. Nous nous connaissons il y a longtemps; et entre amis, on ne va pas se piquer pour si peu de chose. (pp. 217-8)

Let us now look at the incident as it is handled in Shadwell.

Enter Trim

Wildish. Now is your time, Count, to put an affront upon that Coward.

Count. Lette me alone for dat. Begar, I am amaze, dat de Coward dare show his Face any where: Begar, I vill plucke you by de Nose, because you no dare meeta me.

Trim. And I will make that return which becometh a man of Honour to do in like cases. He cudgels him. The Ladies shriek, and run away.

Count. Jerny, vat is dis! vat you do? You Canè de Count! Begar, you show de Breeding. Hold, hold: vat you do? Monsieur Vildish, my Lor, stand by me. He draws, and Trim lays him on: He runs away, and meets Sir Humphry on the other side of the Stage, who cudgels him too. Etc.

(IV, 354)

Trim, a country gallant, is the person who takes the lead in attacking La Roch, rather than Wildish who was the insti-

gator of the trick. In Molière, the suitors imply in their statements that the reason why they are cudgelling the servants is because of the servants' own pretensions:

La Grange. C'est bien à vous, infâme que vous êtes, à vouloir faire l'homme d'importance.
Du Croisy. Voilà qui vous apprendra à vous connaître.

Trim, by contrast, has been incited to his action by the Count's insinuating his way into the affections of Mrs. Fantast⁸ and by Wildish's playing the two men off against each other. La Roch and Mascarille both express surprise at the cudgelling, but Mascarille continues to make excuses for his actions whereas La Roch does not.

The incidents in Bury Fair reminiscent of ones in Les Précieuses are enough to make rather slim the possibility that Shadwell did not take the idea of the disguise from Molière, but one can see Shadwell was using his source very freely.

Summers states that from Cathos and Magdelon "are derived ex traduce Mrs. Fantast and her lady mother, and I suppose it would be said that Oldwit's jobation is not without some sense of the remarks launched by that 'bon bourgeois' Gorgibus." (IV, 288) John Wilcox, however, has seen evidence in the two Fantasts that Shadwell was consciously rejecting the précieuse type. He suggests that their affectation is reminiscent of the affectation of Philaminte and Armande in Les Femmes savantes, blended in

Shadwell's mind with memories of the group about the Duchess of Newcastle with which he had been associated in his earlier years.⁹ Wilcox might find support for his statement that the two Fantasts are "figures more realistically allied to British follies" in the fact that their obsession is a general Gallomania, an indiscriminate admiration for all things French, rather than a specific striving to be précieuse. He does not choose to follow this line of reasoning, however.

There is preciosity present in Bury Fair. In their conversations, Trim and Mrs. Fantast address each other as Dorinda and Eugenius, and it was once held quite positively that this derived from Les Précieuses.¹⁰ The following passage is illustrative of their conversation:

Trim. Not all the Clouds assembled in the Firmament, can hide, or can eclipse so muffle the Sun, but we poor Mortals know it shines, and feel the warm effects. Why shou'd Dorinda think to blunt her pointed Glories, or conceal the Radiant Lustre of her conquering Beams?

Mrs. Fantast. I see, to the quick-sighted Eugenius, nothing is obscure. Nor cou'd Eugenius in the Dark be hid: that golden Tongue, and that sweet Eloquence woud soon reveal him; as the Proscrib'd Senator was by his Perfumes betray'd.

Trim. How does the bright Dorinda make me blush, when she commends my eloquence; and in that very Act so much exceeds me! (p. 318)

One may legitimately question whether this passage reflects Les Précieuses, but it is certainly as close to Les Précieuses as any relation Wilcox posits to Les Femmes savantes or to Shadwell's memories of the Duchess of Newcastle and her coterie.

Wilcox's treatment of the borrowings in Bury Fair is

brief, general rather than specific, and vague. He states that Gertrude in Bury Fair bears a rather definite resemblance to Henriette in Les Femmes savantes, but he does not develop their points of resemblance other than to suggest that both characters are perhaps introduced for contrast.¹¹ Gertrude and Henriette resemble each other only in that they are both sensible young women who uphold the criterion of common sense against the affected behavior of their mother and sister. The resemblance is not close enough to say that one is drawn from the other. The fact that Gertrude furnishes a contrast with Lady Fantast and Mrs. Fantast, however, leads Wilcox to state that Molière influenced the balance of characters in Bury Fair:

Molière did not invent, but he certainly exploited with conspicuous success the dramaturgic device of contrasts in character types. In Bury Fair, this device is used, more effectively, and more nearly in the manner of Molière than in any other English play of the century. The intelligent, sober Lord Bellamy and the gradually reforming Mr. Wildish balance the silly old-fashioned wits, Sir Humphrey Noddy and Mr. Oldwit. Lady Fantast and Mrs. Fantast are similarly faced by the sincere Gertrude and romantic Philadelphia. Perhaps the antics of La Roch balance the follies of Trim, although, it must be admitted, in a different way. Here surely is an important influence, and a rare one, on dramatic form.¹²

The balance of characters is indeed an outstanding artistic feature of Bury Fair. If Wilcox could prove that this balance was attributable to Molière, the case for all who have held that Molière was a prime factor in the shaping of Restoration comedy would be greatly strengthened, for Shadwell

was emphatically not an admirer of Molière. A thorough check of the Prologues, Epilogues, and Prefaces of Shadwell's plays shows that he was not in the habit of praising either Molière or the French. In his Preface to The Miser, an adaptation of Molière's L'Avare, Shadwell had written:

The Foundation of this Play, I took from one of Moliere's call'd L'Avare; but that having too few Persons, and too little Action for an English Theater, I added to both so much, that I may call more than half of this Play my own; And I think I may say without vanity, that Moliere's part of it has not suffer'd in my hands, nor did I ever know a French Comedy made use of by the worst of our Poets, that was not better'd by 'em. 'Tis not Barrenness of wit or invention, that makes us borrow from the French, but laziness; and this was the occasion of my making use of L'Avare. (II, 16)

And he repeats his scorn of the French in the Prologue to the play:

French Plays, in which true wit's as rarely found
As Mines of Silver are in English ground. (II, 17)

It would be difficult under the best of circumstances to puzzle out how such an influence as Wilcox suggests could have been effected. Considering Shadwell's usual attitude toward Molière, the taking of so subtle a dramatic characteristic from him would have been unusual indeed. And there is no further evidence that he did.

In the Preface to The Sullen Lovers, Shadwell acknowledged his debt to Molière in the following off-handed fashion:

The first hint I receiv'd was from the report of a Play of Molieres of three Acts, called Les Facheux, upon which I wrote a great part of this before I read that; And after it came to my hands, I found so little for my use (having before upon that hint design'd the fittest Characters I could for my purpose) that I have made use of but two short Scenes afterwards (viz) the first Scene in the Second Act between Stanford and Roger, and Molieres story of Piquette, which I have translated into Back-gammon, both of them so vary'd you would not know them. (I, 9-10)

A few lines later, Shadwell indulged in two paragraphs of digression on Jonson:

I have endeavour'd to represent variety of Humours (most of the persons of the Play differing in their Characters from one another) which was the practice of Ben Johnson, whom I think all Dramatick Poets ought to imitate, though none are like to come near; he being the onely person that appears to me to have made perfect Representations of Humane Life, most other Authors that I ever read, either have wilde Romantick Tales wherein they strein Love and Honour to that Ridiculous height, that it becomes Burlesque; or in their lower Comedies content themselves with one or two Humours at most, and those not near so perfect Characters as the admirable Johnson alwayes made, who never wrote Comedy without seven or eight excellent Humours. I never saw one, except that of Falstaffe that was in my judgment comparable to any of Johnson's considerable Humours: You will pardon this digression when I tell you he is the man, of all the World, I most passionately admire for his Excellency in Dramatick-Poetry. . . . (I, 10-1)

This is high praise indeed, but it does not begin to touch the tone of the panegyric to Jonson which forms the Epilogue to The Humorists:

The Mighty Prince of Poets, Learned BEN,
Who alone div'd into the Minds of Men:
Saw all their wandrings, all their follies knew,
And all their vain fantastick passions drew,
In Images so lively and so true;

That there each Humorist himself might view,

 'Twas he alone true Humors understood,
 And with great Wit and Judgment made them good.
 A Humor is the Byas of the Mind,
 By which with violence 'tis one way inclin'd:
 It makes our Actions lean on one side still,
 And in all Changes that way bends the Will.
 This --
 He only knew and represented right.
 Thus none but Mighty Johnson e'r could write.
 Expect not then, since that most flourishing Age,
 Of BEN, to see true Humor on the Stage.
 All that have since been writ, if they be scan'd,
 Are but faint Copies from that Master's Hand.
 Our Poet now, amongst those petty things,
 Alas, his too weak trifling humors brings.
 As much beneath the worst in Johnson's Plays.
 As his great Merit is about our praise.
 For could he imitate that great Author right,
 He would with ease all Poets else out-write.
 But to out-go all other men, would be
 O Noble BEN! less than to follow thee. (I, 254)

In his Preface to The Humorists, Shadwell stated:

the Humors are new . . . and all the words and
 Actions of the Persons in the Play, are always
 sutable to the Characters I have given of them;
 and, in all the Play, I have gone according to
 that definition of humor, which I have given you
 in my Epilogue, in these words:

A Humor is the Biasse of the Mind,
By which, with violence, 'tis one way
inclin'd.
It makes our actions lean on one side
still;
And, in all Changes, that way bends the
Will.
 (I, 189)

Insofar then as an author is an adequate explicator of his
 work, one may be sure that Shadwell was attempting to create
 characters as nearly as possible like the "humorous" ones of
 the Jonson he so passionately admired. Although there is a
 possibility that Shadwell might have modified his dramatic

theory in the years which separate The Sullen Lovers and The Humorists from Bury Fair, one still finds evidence in Bury Fair of a humors influence.

Barish has pointed out that most of the comic characters in Bury Fair, like those in The Sullen Lovers, never come to a recognition of their folly:

Of the five chief fools in Bury Fair, only two -- Lady Fantast and Mistress Fantast -- are really unmasked; they storm out, however, rather more with the rage of the tragic villainess than with the crestfallen mien of the chastened fool. In the cases of Trim and Oldwit, a steady enfeeblement of decorum relieves the author of the need to inflict on them the consequences of their own folly: the former, pointlessly made valiant, takes the lead in exposing the cowardice of [La Roch] . . . the latter, having been correctly defined as "an arrant ass" in the opening scene, ends as the sensible, benevolent father in the final one.¹³

If Lady Fantast and Mrs. Fantast did storm out "with the rage of the tragic villainess," it would be an indication of Molière's influence at work, recalling the rage of Magdelon and Cathos at the end of Les Précieuses. They do not really storm out, however.

Mrs. Fantast. I'll run away, and never see the Face of Man again. Exit.

Lady Fantast. Mr. Oldwit, farewell; Let me have my Coach, I'll never see Bury, or you, after this Hour.

Oldwit. Who waits there? Bring the Coach and six Horses to the Door; and, Grooms, be ready instantly.

Lady Fantast. Farewel for ever.

Oldwit. We'll Kiss at parting, faith. They kiss: she goes out in haste. (IV, 366)

Gertrude, by contrasting with the Fantasts, emphasizes

their blindness throughout Bury Fair. Even before the French count has made his entrance, she is intruding her reasonable questions into their dream world.

Gertrude. How do you know but this French Count may be an errant Coxcomb?

Mrs. Fantast. Oh, Madam, Madam, I beseech you betray not your ill Breeding. A French Count a Coxcomb! Mon dieu. (IV, 319)

True précieuses might have recognized the blunders Mascarille and Jodelet make, but Mascarille at least gives a credible imitation of précieuse speech. ("Attachez un peu sur ces gants la réflexion de votre odorat.") That La Roch is an imposter, however, is clear from the beginning to Gertrude, who has seen little more of the world than the Fantasts.

Enter the French Count, with his Equipage . . .
The Count stares about him, munching of Pears.

Mrs. Fantast. His Person is Charmant, Tuant his Air, victorious his Meen: Mon pauvre Coeur!

Gertrude. A most Charmant, Tuant Meen, in eating Burgamies: he outcraunches a School-boy on a Holyday. I'll lay my life, he is an errant Coxcomb. (IV, 324)

The "humor" of the two Fantasts makes of them throughout Bury Fair more isolated characters than their French counterparts. They never desert their passion for all things French. Long after La Roch has been cudgelled and humiliated, at which corresponding point in Les Précieuses Magdelon and Cathos become aware of their folly,¹⁴ the two Fantasts refuse to admit their error, and persisting in their

blindness, carry the play through another act of intrigue before they are finally forced to admit to themselves that La Roch is not a count. Even then, Mrs. Fantast continues to use French wording:

Gertrude. Cou'd you mistake in Quality and
Breeding!

Mrs. Fantast. Oh, Impertinante! (IV, 365)

Their being unmasked itself probably comes as a natural consequence of the plot Shadwell was using. After Lady Fantast and Mrs. Fantast leave Bury, Oldwit expresses relief that they are gone and implies that they will continue to act as they have done in the past: "Heav'n be prais'd, for this great Deliverance; no more shall I be plagu'd with their damn'd Wit and Breeding." Thus, in transforming Magdelon and Cathos into the ladies Fantast, Shadwell made them more "humorous" and used them in such a way as to emphasize their isolation from the other characters in the play.

CHAPTER SIX

MILLER'S MAN OF TASTE

James Miller's The Man of Taste was first produced at Drury Lane in March, 1735.¹ Properly speaking, it lies outside of a study of Restoration comedies. Since, however, it is the last important borrowing from Les Précieuses, a brief discussion of it seems germane at this point, especially since the borrowing shows to some extent the growing emphasis on middle-class virtue which was influencing the theater in the early eighteenth century.

In The Man of Taste, the characters are more related to their social milieu than were the characters in the three Restoration comedies which have already been discussed. Francisco (in The False Count) might brag of his merchant origins to Isabella, but his merchant qualities were scorned by the wits of the play -- Antonio and Carlos. A number of characters from Magdelon to Monsieur Jourdain are ridiculed in Molière's plays for trying to ape their betters; similarly in The Man of Taste we have Lady Henpeck, Maria, and Dorothea. Sir Humphrey Henpeck, in contrast with the female members of his family, is made attractive, because he balks at leaving his merchant world. At the beginning of the play, Maria, daughter to Lady Henpeck, and Dorothea, Lady Henpeck's niece, alienate their suitors, Harcourt and Horatio by their arrogant pretensions.

Harcourt comments on the falsity of the girls' social claims in the following lines: "It was pleasant enough to hear 'em tell one another what Visits they ow'd: My Lady such-a-one, and the Dutchess of such a Place; when the arrogant Sluts, till within these Six Weeks, never knew what a House was without a counter in't. (p. 2)² In order to humiliate the girls, Harcourt and Horatio get two menservants --- Martin and Reynard --- to masquerade as men of quality. Martin takes the name of Lord Apemode; Reynard, the name of Colonel Cockade. The Henpeck women are, of course, completely duped by these servants and are consequently made ridiculous in the end. Throughout the play, Sir Humphrey is both amazed and angered by his wife, daughter, and niece. In Act One, he says to his daughter:

I must leave off my Business, which brought me in at least a Thousand a Year, because getting Money was low and servile. Then I must quit my own House, and pay the Duce and all here, because this, it seems, is the Region of Wit and Politeness. And what is worse than all, [I] must throw away, at least, 500 Guineas to get my self knighted, that her Ladyship might be in a Rank above the Vulgar, forsooth. The Family of the Henpecks had great Occasion to be thus dignify'd and distinguished, indeed. (p. 10)

At the end, Sir Humphrey states that he will get unknighthed and return to his house in the City, a plan which seems eminently sensible in view of the catastrophic results of his family's sojourn in "the Region of Wit and Politeness."

Unlike Shadwell, Miller was an admirer of Molière. He did a complete translation of him (1748) and speaks of him

in the Prologue to The Man of Taste in the following lines:

Molière, the Classick of the Gallick Stage,
 First dared to modernize the sacred Page;
 Skilful, the one Thing wanting to supply,
 HUMOUR, that Soul of comic Poesy.

Miller took the plots of Les Précieuses and L'École des maris and united them with perhaps a touch from Les Femmes savantes to form The Man of Taste. The connection between the plot of Les Précieuses and that of L'École des Maris is Harcourt, who is brother to Dorinda and Angelica. Dorinda and Angelica are the wards respectively of Sir Positive Bubble and his brother, Freelove. Sir Positive and Freelove are modeled after Sganarelle and Ariste; their wards, after Isabelle and Leonor. Lady Henpeck is similar in several respects to Philaminte of Les Femmes savantes; both characters take pride in their erudition and culture and encourage their daughters in their foolish behavior. Sir Humphrey is comparable to both Chrysale and Gorgibus, a combination of parts not quite so fatal to characterization as the combining of Gorgibus and Ariste observed in the Damoiselles a la Mode, since Chrysale and Gorgibus are much the same type, the "bon bourgeois."

If Nicoll and Whincop are right in their ascription, Miller's first play was entitled The Humours of Oxford. Produced in January, 1730, "the long descriptions of the dramatis personae and the presence of such figures as . . . Lady Science, a 'great Pretender to Learning and

Philosophy,' indicate at once the influence of Shadwell."³ Straight humors plays had not been in vogue since the 1680's, however. Also, Miller was following Molière more closely than his predecessors. He evidently knew Molière quite well.

Despite the combination of parts and plots, Miller does manage to stay surprisingly close to his sources. He is also rather slovenly in places. At one point, for example, he forgets that Maria's maid is supposed to be named Lisetta and retains the name, Almanzor, used in Les Précieuses:

"Almanzor, tell my Lord's Servants to go and bring some of our Neighbors here to people the Ball." (p. 63)⁴ However, his verbal closeness in key scenes, such as the one in which the servants are unmasked, is undoubtedly a factor in his keeping as much of the spirit of Molière as he does.

Miller stated in his dedication that The Man of Taste was a success:

The Town, indeed, by the unusual Favours it has conferred upon this Piece, has stamp'd a Share of real Value upon it, and it would be therefore high Impertinence in me to tax it with having thrown away Applause on a Trifle.

In places, Miller made the language of the play coarser and more extreme than the language of Molière. (Remember Harcourt's reference to Maria and Dorothea as "arrogant Sluts.") An example of his expansion of language may be found by comparing the last speech of Sganarelle and the last one of Sir Positive.

Sganarelle. Non, je ne puis sortir de mon étonnement;

Cette déloyauté confond mon jugement;
 Et je ne pense pas que Satan en personne
 Puisse être si méchant qu'une telle friponne.
 J'aurais pour elle au feu mis la main que voilà:
 Malheureux qui se fie à femme après cela!
 La meilleure est toujours en malice féconde;
 C'est un sexe engendré pour damner tout le monde.
 J'y renonce à jamais, à ce sexe trompeur,
 Et je le donne tout au diable de bon coeur.
 (p. 360)

Sir Positive Bubble. No, I cannot get rid of my Amazement. This infernal Trick quite confounds me. Oh, the Sorceress! I could not have thought it had been in her. That I, who am in Years, and know the World; who, like a wise Philosopher, have for half a Century been contemplating the Misfortunes of Husbands, in order to guard against 'em myself, should at last be made such an egregious Gully of by a raw Girl, and a rattle-headed Fop. Oh, I burst! I rave! how I could buffet myself; -- I wish I had a glass here, only to see how like an Owl and a Buzzard I must look, after gulling myself in such a lovely Manner. (pp. 84-5)

Nevertheless, the play by virtue of its emphasis on social relationships and its translation is as adequate a rendering of Molière as has been studied in the present work.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION

In a passage which looked forward almost prophetically to the Restoration, Aston Cokaine wrote the following lines in 1653:

Then we shall still have Playes! and though we may
Not them in their full Glories yet display;
Yet we may please our selves by reading them,
Till a more Noble Act this Act condemne.

.
Then shall Learn'd Johnson reassume his Seat,
Revive the Phoenix by a second heat.
Create the Globe anew, and people it,
By those that flock to surfet on his Wit.
Judicious Beaumont, and th' Ingenious Soule
Of Fletcher too may move without controule.
Shakespeare (most rich in Humours) entertaine
The crowded Theaters with his happy veine.
Davenant and Massinger, and Sherley, then
Shall be cry'd up againe for Famous men.
And the Dramatick Muse no longer prove
The peoples Malice, but the peoples Love.¹

The process of dramatic creation did not start afresh with the Restoration. There were many playwrights such as Shirley, William Cavendish, later Duke of Newcastle, Sir Robert Stapylton, Abraham Cowley, Sir William Lower, Sir William Killigrew, Sir William Berkeley, Lodowick Carliell, John Tatham, Thomas Killigrew, and of course, Sir William Davenant, whose careers spanned the interregnum.² Many of the actors and other persons intimately connected with the pre-Restoration stage were still quite alive and active. Nor should it be forgotten that some of the factors which impressed themselves to so marked a degree upon Restoration

comedy -- the plethora of action and intrigue in comic plots and the interest in eccentric types -- had already appeared and made themselves felt in the period before 1641. In the first years of the Restoration, the new plays produced did not do so well, but the plays of Middleton, Shirley, Brome, Fletcher, and particularly Jonson did, according to Allardyce Nicoll, quite well.³

Indeed Montague Summers has commented that "for a couple of decades after the King's coming-in the hall-mark of your top-wit, your "high-brow" modern cant would name him, was not so much a Gallomania, as a particular veneration for 'the greatest man of the last age, Ben. Jonson.'"⁴ And there is no doubt that the reputation of Jonson stood very high in England during the Restoration period. Though some writers such as Dryden and Mrs. Behn professed a greater love for the work of Shakespeare than for him, yet he was forgotten by very few Restoration writers.⁵

It will be recalled that Flecknoe said that Jonson had written the most faultless of English plays.⁶ Of the writers studied in the present work, Mrs. Behn was probably less of a Jonson admirer than any of the others. Yet even her quarrel with Jonson probably resulted more from the extravagances of the Jonson clique than from a real dislike of Jonson's writing. One can tell this from her Preface to The Dutch Lover:

We all well know that the immortal Shakespeare's

Plays (who was not guilty of much more of this education) than often falls to women's share have better pleas'd the World than Johnson's works, though by the way 'tis said that Benjamin was no such Rabbi neither, for I am inform'd that his Learning was but Grammar high . . . and it hath been observ'd that they are apt to admire him most confoundedly, who have just such a scantling of it as he had; and I have seen a man the most severe of Johnson's Sect, sit with his Hat remov'd less than a hair's breadth from one sullen posture for almost three hours at The Alchymist; who at that excellent play of Harry the Fourth . . . hath very hardly kept his Doublet whole; but affectation hath always had a greater share both in the action and discourse of men than truth and judgment have; and for our Modern ones, except our most unimitable Laureat, I dare to say I know of none that write at such a formidable rate, but that a woman may well hope to reach their greatest heights.⁷

And if Mrs. Behn was not an admirer of Jonson, neither was she an admirer of the French. She acknowledged her debt to a French play, Arlequin Empereur dans la Lune, in the following words: "A very barren and thin hint of the Plot I had from the Italian, and which, even as it was, was acted in France eighty odd times without intermission. 'Tis now much alter'd, and adapted to our English Theatre and Genius, who cannot find an Entertainment at so cheap a Rate as the French will, who are content with almost any Incoherences, howsoever shuffled together under the Name of a Farce. . . ."⁸

Miller's The Man of Taste comes closer to Les Précieuses than any other play studied in the present work, and it was not written until the 1730's. Even in The Man of Taste, however, the plot of the précieuses is enjambed with other

material from Molière, and the dialogue shows some signs of slovenliness in his use of his source.

Basically the taste of the Restoration was not, as far as the present study indicates, greatly altered by the fact that a large percentage of the Restoration audience had spent a long sojourn in France. The same tastes and trends that were underway before the closing of the theatres in 1641 continued after the Restoration. It was often advantageous for comic writers to rely on Molière for both action and character. They usually augmented their borrowings by creating additional characters or plots of their own, by exploiting other sources, or by borrowing from more than one Molière play at a time. In this study we have seen that Flecknoe's Damoiselles, an attempt to catch Molière's spirit, failed to do so. Such a play, however, was itself the exception rather than the rule, for most of the borrowings can be very adequately explained as importations of material only. Allardyce Nicoll has written:

It has been seen that in taking over the French comedies the English playwrights found it necessary to amalgamate into one single play a number of diverse incidents taken from two or more continental pieces. Instead, therefore, of having a delicate three act cameo, unified and harmonious, they made their plays almost as chaotic with plots and underplots as the Elizabethans had made theirs. Even the classicising tendencies of the time could not check the truly English tastes of the audience. What the spectators at the King's or at the Duke's wanted to see was plenty of bustling incident, not these harmonious cameos of delicate art. The whole structure of the Molière comedy was by them thus destroyed.⁹

One finds support for Nicoll's generalizations in the already quoted remark of Shadwell's on The Miser: "The foundation of this Play, I took from one of Moliere's call'd L'Avare; but that having too few Persons, and too little Action for an English Theater, I added to both so much, that I may call more than half of this Play my own. . . ." (Shadwell, II.16)

Molière was not the only French writer utilized by the Restoration comic playwrights. Thomas and Pierre Corneille, Scarron, Quinault, and others were all used at some time by the English. Material from Spanish writers such as Calderon and Lope de Vega and from the Italian commedia dell'arte was also known and employed by these English writers, but in terms of the number of plays which have been suggested by scholars as derivative from him, Molière is far the most important foreign writer for the student of Restoration comedy and Les Précieuses ridicules was one of his most frequently exploited plays.

In view of the borrowings from Les Précieuses ridicules, the opinion of Miles and others that Molière's art was the great shaping influence on Restoration comedy must be sharply questioned. Even Wilcox, who considered Molière much less of an influence than Miles did, vaguely attributes to Molière's influence various features of Restoration comedies. Exemplary of Wilcox's method is his statement that the balance of characters in Bury Fair is due to Molière, a state-

ment which he does not attempt to corroborate by an examination of this feature in both plays. Since Les Précieuses ridicules was first performed in 1659 and was Molière's first great success, it was a logical choice as the Molière play of the present study, for one could view its usage in comedies throughout the entire Restoration. There were two kinds of plays to consider: (1) plays, such as Flecknoe's Damoiselles à la Mode, which contain an adaptation of the basic plot of Molière's play; (2) plays, such as Mrs. Behn's The False Count, which have slighter borrowings or echoes from Molière. In none of the plays studied does one find Molière adequately rendered.

FOOTNOTES

PREFACE

1. Dudley Howe Miles, The Influence of Molière on Restoration Comedy (New York, 1910), pp. 161-2.
2. Influence, p. 240.
3. John Wilcox, The Relation of Molière to Restoration Comedy (New York, 1938), pp. 28-9.
4. Relation, pp. 109-10.
5. Notes and Queries, CCII (1957), pp. 383-8.
6. V.ii, Montague Summers, Restoration Comedies (London, 1921), pp. 354-5.

CHAPTER ONE

1. Influence, pp. 25-6.
2. The Social Mode of Restoration Comedy (New York, 1926), pp. 18-9.
3. III.ii, Herford and Simpson, Ben Jonson (Oxford, 1925-52), V, 202.
4. Robert Jouanny, Théâtre Complet de Molière (Paris, n.d.), 220. All citations from Molière in my text are to this edition which will be cited hereafter as Molière.
5. Jonson, V, 269.
6. Jonson, III, 432.
7. Jonson, III, 506-7.
8. (Cambridge, Mass., 1960), p. 79.
9. Language of Prose Comedy, p. 292.

CHAPTER TWO

1. La Précieuse, II, 464, quoted in Antoine Adam, "La Genèse des 'Précieuses ridicules,'" Revue d'Histoire de la Philosophie et d'Histoire Générale de la Civilisation, s. 2, VII, 1939, p. 15.
2. Pure, I, 168, quoted in Adam, p. 16.
3. Quoted in Katherine E. Wheatley, Racine and English Classicism (Austin, 1956), p. 337. The concluding pages of Professor Wheatley's book, 336-7, contain an excellent summary of the ways in which French classical drama reflected the psychological curiosity of its age.
4. Oeuvres de Boileau (Paris, 1824), II, 88.
5. Percy A. Chapman, The Spirit of Molière (Princeton, 1940), pp. 63-6.
6. Molière, p. 194. He states: "les véritables précieuses auraient tort de se piquer, lorsqu'on joue les ridicules qui les imitent mal."
7. pp. 14-47.
8. The Spirit of Molière, pp. 78-80.
9. References to the text of the play will be included in the text. Where there are more than one consecutive quotations from the same page, a page reference will be given only after the first quotation.
10. Cyrus and Mandane appeared in Mlle. de Scudéry's Le Grand Cyrus; Aronce and Clélie, in that same author's Clélie.
11. This theory is advanced by Bray in his book, La Formation de la Doctrine Classique en France (Paris, 1931) and by Mornet in Histoire de la littérature française classique (Paris, 1950), 4th. ed.
12. The Spirit of Molière, pp. 77-8.
13. Molière, 1744.

CHAPTER THREE

1. Paul Henry Doney, The Life and Works of Richard Flecknoe, Summaries of Theses (Cambridge, Mass., 1931), p. 127.
2. An Account of the English Dramatick Poets (Oxford, 1691), p. 199.
3. p. 128.
4. Doney, p. 128. Only two plays -- D'Avenant's Playhouse to Be Let, 1663, adapted from Sganarelle, and Dryden's Sir Martin Mar-All, 1667 -- among those which have been cited in the past as certain or possible borrowings from Moliere are earlier than this play. The Jones check-list, already mentioned, and Wilcox's table, pp. 180-1, The Relation of Moliere, have been my sources for this information. The Damoiselles a la Mode was performed in 1668.
5. The Playhouse of Pepys (London, 1935), p. 212.
6. The play is discussed in Chapter Three, "Illustrative Adaptations of Moliere." Wilcox states that the plays studied in the chapter were selected "because they offer a suitable variety of methods of adaptation and of results." (p. 35)
7. J. E. Gillet, Moliere en Angleterre, 1660-1670 (Brussels, 1913), pp. 43-4.
8. Three Centuries of Drama: English 1642-1700, Readex Microprint (New York, 1956), from a copy in the Henry E. Huntington Library, Preface, A3.1.
9. The Relation of Moliere, p. 48.
10. Playhouse, p. 211.
11. The Relation of Moliere, p. 47.
12. J. E. Spingarn, Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century (Oxford, 1908), II, 92-3.
13. Quoted in Allardyce Nicoll, A History of English Drama (Cambridge, 1952), I, 189.
14. Epigrams, 1670 (p. 74), quoted in Summers, Playhouse, p. 211.

CHAPTER FOUR

1. Montague Summers, The Works of Aphra Behn (London 1915), III, 175. Where no volume number is given, it will be understood that the reference is to vol. III.

2. Behn, p. 97 and George Woodcock, The Incomparable Aphra (London, 1948), p. 159.

3. Montague Summers, The Complete Works of Thomas Otway (London, 1926), I, 199.

4. Wilcox, Relation, p. 146, quoting A. W. Ward, A History of English Dramatic Literature (London, 1899), III, 453.

CHAPTER FIVE

1. Montague Summers, The Complete Works of Thomas Shadwell (London, 1927), IV, 363.

2. Behn, p. 167.

3. Langbaine, p. 445.

4. A reference to the white clown makeup which Jodelet wore. Jodelet was also in bad health at the time and died about four months after the first performance of Les Précieuses.

5. A reference to the kitchen.

6. Jokes of this type were probably common in the days of the half-moon. A similar remark was attributed to the marquis de Nesle. (Molière, p. 1747)

7. Carroll Camden, in private conversation. The suggestion is apt when one recalls that the play was first performed in 1689. The Epilogue reflects the uncertain state of public affairs:

But could he [the author] Write with never so
much Wit,

He must despair of seeing a full Pit:

Most of our constant Friends have left the Town,
Bravely to serve their King and Country gone. (IV, 369)

However, as we shall see later, anti-French remarks were common to Shadwell.

8. In III.i, for example, Trim says, "Ha! must I be Sacrific'd to that Kickshaw of a Frenchman? It shall not be long e're he receive a Chartel from me. (IV, 330) In IV.i, he says, "How ever the unfortunate arrival of this Count, who has prodigiously insinuated himself into my Mistresses affections, may have ruffled and disorder'd the wonted serenity of my Temper; yet in all occasions that may occur . . . you shall ever find me Rational and Civil. (IV, 344)

9. Relation, p. 124.

10. Influence, p. 135.

11. Relation, p. 125.

12. Relation, p. 125.

13. Language of Prose Comedy, p. 288.

14. Magdelon, in particular, is angry at Mascarille and Jodelet for allowing themselves to be cudgelled. "Endurer un affront comme celui-là, en notre présence." (Molière, p. 218)

CHAPTER SIX

1. Summers, Shadwell, IV, 287.

2. The Man of Taste (London, 1735).

3. Nicoll, A History of English Drama, II, 177.

4. In Molière, the lines read: "Almanzor, dites aux gens de Monsieur qu'ils aillent querir des violons, et nous faites venir ces Messieurs et ces Dames d'ici près, pour peupler la solitude de notre bal." (p. 215)

CHAPTER SEVEN

1. A Praeludium to Mr. Richard Bromes Playes, quoted in Summers, Playhouse, p. 1.
2. Playhouse, p. 2.
3. Nicoll, 1st edn., I, 178-9.
4. Playhouse, p. 277.
5. John Dryden, Essay on Dramatick Poesy, Eighteenth Century Poetry and Prose, eds. Bredvold, McKillop, and Whitney (New York, 1956), p. 113.
6. J. E. Spingarn, Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century (Oxford, 1908), II, 92-3.
7. Works of Aphra Behn, I, 224.
8. Works, III, 391.
9. 1st edn., I, 168-9.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adam, Antoine. "La Genèse des 'Précieuses ridicules,'" Revue d'Histoire de la Philosophie et d'Histoire Générale de la Civilisation, ser. 2, nos. 25-28 (January-March, 1939), 14-46.
- Barish, Jonas. Ben Jonson and the Language of Prose Comedy. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960.
- Behn, Aphra. The Works, ed. Montague Summers, 6 vols. London: William Heineman, 1915.
- Boileau, Oeuvres, ed. M. Amar, 4 vols. Paris: Libraire Lefèvre, 1824.
- Chapman, Percy A. The Spirit of Moliere. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1940.
- Crowne, John. Sir Courtly Nice, ed. Montague Summers. Restoration Comedies. London: Jonathan Cape, 1921.
- Doney, Paul Henry. "The Life and Works of Richard Flecknoe," Summaries of Ph. D. Theses (1931). Harvard University.
- Dryden, John. Essay on Dramatic Poetry. eds. Bredvold, McKillop, and Whitney, Eighteenth Century Poetry and Prose, 2nd edn. New York: Ronald Press, 1956.
- Flecknoe, Richard. The Damoiselles a la Mode. New York: Readex Microprint, 1956.
- Gillet, J. E. "Molière en Angleterre: 1660-1670," Mémoires de l'Académie Royale de Belgique, IX, part 3 (1913). Brussels: Académie Royale de Belgique.
- Jones, Claude E. "Molière in England to 1775: A Checklist," Notes and Queries, CCII (September, 1957), 383-388.
- Jonson, Ben. The Works, eds. C. H. Herford and Percy Simpson, 10 vols. Oxford at the Clarendon Press.
- Langbaine, Gerard. An Account of the English Dramatick Poets. Oxford: L. L. for George West, and Henry Clements, 1691.
- Lynch, Kathleen. The Social Mode of Restoration Comedy. New York: MacMillan Company, 1926.

- Miles, Dudley Howe. The Influence of Molière on Restoration Comedy. New York: Columbia University Press, 1910.
- Miller, James. The Man of Taste. London: J. Watts, 1735.
- Molière, Théâtre Complet, ed. Robert Jouanny, Paris: Éditions Garnier Frères, n.d.
- Nicoll, Allardyce. A History of English Drama, 6 vols. Cambridge at the University Press, 1925-59, 1st and 4th edns.
- Otway, Thomas. The Complete Works, ed. Montague Summers, 3 vols. Bloomsbury: The Nonesuch Press, 1926.
- Shadwell, Thomas. The Complete Works, ed. Montague Summers, 5 vols. London: The Fortune Press, 1927.
- Spingarn, J. E. Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century, vol. II. Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1908.
- Summers, Montague. The Playhouse of Pepys. London: Kegan Paul, French, Trubner & Co., 1935.
- Ward, Adolphus William. A History of English Dramatic Literature to the Death of Queen Anne, 5 vols. London: MacMillan and Company, 1899.
- Wheatley, Katherine E. Racine and English Classicism. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1956.
- Wilcox, John. The Relation of Molière to Restoration Comedy. New York: Columbia University Press, 1938.
- Woodcock, George. The Incomparable Aphra. London: T. V. Boardman and Co. Ltd., 1948.