

THE REPUTATION OF JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU  
IN ENGLAND FROM 1750 TO 1850

A THESIS

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## INTRODUCTION

This investigation is an attempt to determine what Englishmen thought of Rousseau between 1750 and 1850, as indicated by their comments in essays, letters, diaries, and poetry. The subject of the early reputation of this world-renowned figure should be of interest to all students of literature and to the student of psychology, education, philosophy, and political science as well.

Several writers have produced scholarly works treating various phases of Rousseau's life and influence, but so far as the investigator has been able to determine, no one has heretofore completed a study of his reputation in England. The investigator has, therefore, searched carefully for allusions to Rousseau from 1750 to 1850 in an attempt to make a contribution helpful to students of English and French literature.

Since time and library facilities were limited, the investigation was based on an extensive though not an exhaustive search for material in three Kansas libraries--the library of the University of Kansas, Kellogg Library of the Kansas State Teachers College of Emporia, and the Emporia City Library, of which three the most valuable and extensive collection was that at the University of Kansas. All available volumes of essays, diaries, letters, and poetry published between the dates selected were examined for possible allusions.

After the allusions were all secured, they were first grouped according to the following periods: 1750-1778, 1778-1800, 1800-1832, and 1832-1850. These arbitrary divisions were made because of certain

natural breaks in the history of English opinion regarding Rousseau.

The year 1750 was chosen for the beginning of the study since Rousseau's first Discours brought him sudden literary recognition then. The first period extends to 1778, the year of his death. The second chapter covers the remaining years of the century. In the next division will be found ideas of writers during the Romantic Period, 1800 to 1832. Although few allusions are included in the last period, 1832-1850, a separate division was made since references after 1832 differ appreciably from those of the Romantic Age.

After the allusions had been grouped by periods of years, order within these periods was effected by dividing the quotations into two groups--those dealing with the life and personality of Rousseau and those treating his writings. Within these sections, the allusions in each of the two main groups were classified as favorable and unfavorable to the reputation of Rousseau, the complimentary allusions being placed first in all instances. The general or incidental references also precede the specific references within the favorable and the unfavorable divisions. The writer believes that the ideational arrangement of material for a certain period of years should be more useful than a purely chronological grouping throughout the entire study. All allusions, however, are dated in order to make a study of their chronological relations readily accessible.

At the conclusions of the various periods and in the final conclusion, general observations point out the proportions and relative emphasis of the subject divisions. They designate the periods which offer the greatest number of allusions, those which give most attention

to Rousseau's life and to his writings, and those which display a preponderance of favorable or unfavorable opinions.

While the investigator has attempted to secure all allusions in the poetry, diaries, letters, and essays published between the dates selected, undoubtedly much relevant material has been out of reach. Particularly in the fields of periodical material and prose fiction this must be true. By examining such literature and by extending the time limits of the study, someone should make a scholarly, exhaustive supplement to this work.

## CHAPTER I

### ROUSSEAU'S REPUTATION IN ENGLAND FROM 1760 TO 1778

The material in this chapter has been grouped, first, according to Rousseau's life and personality and, second, according to his writings, their literary qualities, and the doctrines set forth. Discussion of his life will include a brief introductory biography as well as the allusions of Englishmen to this phase of our subject. Likewise, the section dealing with Rousseau's works will present a condensed account of his literary career in preparation for the material which is our principal concern--the allusions to these works.

#### BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

Although Jean Jacques Rousseau, 1712-1788, was born in Geneva, he was of French origin, his family having gone to Geneva because of the religious wars in France. Rousseau had a haphazard upbringing because his mother died when he was born, and his father took refuge at Lyons after he had had a dispute with a fellow-citizen and had been sentenced to prison. Relatives of the mother kept Rousseau under their supervision until he was apprenticed to a notary in 1724. A few months later the master sent him back, but he was apprenticed again, this time in 1725 to an engraver whom he accused of such cruel treatment that he ran away in 1728.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> M. Pierre Larousse, Grand Dictionnaire Universel (Paris: Administration du Grand Dictionnaire Universel, 1875), vol. XIII, p. 1460.

After Rousseau left the engraver's shop, he started a period of wandering and adventures, the only account of which is the material in Les Confessions. In Les Confessions Rousseau tells of being sent by a Catholic group to Madame de Warens, a young widow and a Catholic convert who lived at Annecy.<sup>2</sup> She did not have much influence over him, however; and he soon left her home, starting a series of wanderings which lasted approximately three years. During this period of unrest he served for a time as footman to a Madame de Verceilis. While Rousseau was at this establishment, some ribbon disappeared; and although he was suspected, he accused a girl fellow-servant.<sup>3</sup> Guilty or not, Rousseau return to the home of Madame de Warens, who sent him away to school. When he tired of school and returned to her home, he found her gone and commenced wandering again. However, he met Madame de Warens later, staying at her country house near Chambéry, while serving as amant en titre.<sup>4</sup> Rousseau's health is supposed to have been partly responsible for Madame de Warens' taking the house. In 1738 illness forced him to leave for Montpellier; and when he returned, a person named Vintzenried had taken his official position in the household.<sup>5</sup>

Rousseau had become a tutor but stopped eventually because he did not enjoy the work. Moreover, he was not a good teacher. Although he wrote a paper on the new system of musical notation, the paper was unfavorably received and attracted no pupils.

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<sup>2</sup> Larousse, loc. cit.

<sup>3</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 1461.

<sup>5</sup> Loc. cit.

For eighteen months he served as secretary to the ambassador to Venice, returning to Paris in 1745. As was his usual custom after the termination of an employment, he told strange stories and made complaints of his employer. After going back to Paris, Rousseau wrote an opera, Les muses galantes, copied music for money, and was secretary to a Madame Dupin. During this time his mistress was Thérèse le Vasseur, a servant in an inn, whom he met in 1743. Thérèse and Rousseau were the parents of five children, all of whom were sent to a foundling hospital.<sup>6</sup> Rousseau met Diderot in 1741 and some time between 1740 and 1750 wrote articles on music and political economy for the Encyclopédie.<sup>7</sup>

In 1750, Rousseau's Discours sur les sciences et les arts, his first published work, won a prize offered by the Dijon Academy. Two years later he published a successful operetta, the Devin du village. After the publication of the operetta, he ignored a command to appear at court, where he would probably have been pensioned. His second essay, Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité parmi les hommes, was published in 1755 and a few years later was the subject of much discussion although the first Discours was the writing which made him immediately famous.<sup>8</sup>

From 1756 until 1762 Rousseau lived at the "Hermitage," a cottage provided for him by Madame d'Epinau, in the forest of Montmorency, near Paris. There he had a love affair with Madame d'Houdetot, sister-

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<sup>6</sup> William A. Nitze and E. Preston Dargan, A History of French Literature (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1922), p. 483.

<sup>7</sup> Larousse, loc. cit.

<sup>8</sup> Loc. cit.

in-law of his benefactor. A triangular quarrel between Diderot, Rousseau, and Frederick Melchior Grimm terminated Rousseau's stay at the "Hermitage" in the winter of 1757-1758. He then went to Montlouis in the same neighborhood.<sup>9</sup>

In 1758 Rousseau had published the Lettre à d'Alembert contre les spectacles.<sup>10</sup> This letter was a three-fold attack upon Voltaire, who was giving theatrical representations at Les Delicés; d'Alembert, who had condemned the prejudice against the stage in the Encyclopédie; and acting, one of the popular amusements of the time. In spite of his tactlessness, Rousseau had no lack of patrons although he quarreled with all eventually.

While Rousseau lived in the forest of Montmorency, he wrote La Nouvelle Héloïse, Le Contrat social, and Emile.<sup>11</sup> Emile was condemned by the parlement of Paris, June 11, 1762; and Rousseau, fearing arrest, fled to Motiers in the state of Neuchâtel, Switzerland. In Switzerland, when the Council of Geneva condemned the Emile, Rousseau in Letters de la Montagne, 1763, attacked the council and the Geneva constitution.<sup>12</sup>

Persecution in Switzerland was so great that late in 1765 David Hume offered Rousseau refuge in England.<sup>13</sup> Instead of going directly

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<sup>9</sup> Larousse, loc. cit.

<sup>10</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>11</sup> Nitze, op. cit., p. 484.

<sup>12</sup> Larousse, loc. cit.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 1462.

to England, however, he went first to Paris, where he met Hume, finally arriving in England, January 13, 1766. After spending some time in London, Rousseau grew tired of life there and allowed Hume to establish him at the home of Mr. Davenport at Wootton in Derbyshire. There he started writing Les Confessions.<sup>14</sup>

The severing of friendly relations between Hume and Rousseau was an important event and provided a subject for many comments during this period. One incident which led to the quarrel was the delay of George III in granting a pension to Rousseau. Although Rousseau's foolish actions are supposed to have been responsible for the postponement, Rousseau blamed Hume entirely.<sup>15</sup> In May, 1767, Rousseau left England for France.

On returning to France, Rousseau was received by the marquis de Mirabeau, father of the great Mirabeau, and by the Prince de Conti. For a time he wandered, still writing Les Confessions. In 1770 he settled in Paris and resumed music copying. He finished Les Confessions, which were published between 1781 and 1788, wrote Dialogues, and began Réveries du promeneur solitaire, which he intended as a sequel and completion to Les Confessions. Rousseau lived in the Rue Platière until suspicions of his secret enemies grew so strong that he was glad to accept the offer of M. de Girardin, a rich financier, and live in a cottage at Ermenonville where he died in 1778.<sup>16</sup> Near the end of his

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<sup>14</sup> Leslie Stephen and Sidney Lee, editors, Dictionary of National Biography (London: Smith, Elder, and Company, 1908), vol. X, p. 222.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., pp. 222-223.

<sup>16</sup> Larousse, loc. cit.

life, Rousseau's unhappiness was increased by Thérèse's alleged affections for one of the stable boys. Thus, his life seems to have ended in as tempestuous manner as it began.

#### ALLUSIONS TO ROUSSEAU'S LIFE AND CHARACTER

We can best learn of Rousseau's reputation in England during this period by knowing what Englishmen, most of whom had actually met him either on the Continent or in England, said concerning his life and his writings. These writers expressed both favorable and unfavorable opinions. For a convenient and effective method of arrangement, it has been planned to bring together in one group all of the favorable references and then to draw up against those the unfavorable ones. Further order within these groups will be achieved by proceeding from general estimates of his life and character to references making specific allusions to incidents and character traits.

A favorable general allusion to the life and personality of Rousseau is found in Goldsmith's Enquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning in Europe. Discussing some Frenchmen whom he considered famous, Goldsmith described Rousseau in the following manner:

There are, therefore, many among the French who do honour to the present age, and whose writings will be transmitted to posterity with an ample share of fame. Some of the most celebrated are as follows:

.....  
 Rousseau of Geneva, a professed man-hater, or, more properly speaking, a philosopher enraged with one half of mankind, because they unavoidably make the other half unhappy.

Such sentiments are generally the result of much good-nature and little experience.<sup>17</sup>

(1759)

Another favorable general reference is found in Frances Burney's Diary in an entry for June 3, 1771. Since Miss Burney mentioned the fact that her father had received a letter from the "great" Rousseau, she undoubtedly admired him.

My father has been honoured with letters from the great Rousseau, M. Diderot, and Padre Martini, three as eminent men, as the age has produced, I believe, upon his book.<sup>18</sup>

(1771)

In his Autobiography, Gibbon mentioned Rousseau's expulsion from the forest of Montmorency. Since he spoke of "men of genius," we may consider the allusion generally favorable although it, like Miss Burney's, offers no definite clue to the author's reaction.

Of the men of genius of the age, Montesquieu and Fontenelle were no more; Voltaire resided on his own estate near Geneva; Rousseau in the preceding year had been driven from his hermitage of Montmorency; and I blush at my having neglected to seek, in this journey, the acquaintance of Buffon.<sup>19</sup>

A very vague general reference describing the character of Rousseau is found in James Boswell's Life of Johnson. In 1769, Boswell said:

On the 30th of September we dined together at the Mitre. I attempted to argue for the superior happiness of the savage life, upon the usual fanciful topics. JOHNSON: "Sir, there can be

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Oliver Goldsmith, Works (London: George Bell and Sons, 1885), vol. III, p. 494.

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Frances Burney, Early Diary, 1768-1778 (Annie Raine Ellis, editor, London: George Bell and Sons, 1907), vol. I, pp. 123-124.

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Edward Gibbon, Autobiography (Oliphant Smeaton, editor, New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1911), p. 115.

nothing more false. The savages have no bodily advantages beyond those of civilized men. They have not better health; and as to care or mental uneasiness, they are not above it, but below it, like bears. No, Sir; you are not to talk such paradox; let me have no more on't. It cannot entertain, far less can it instruct. Lord Menbeddo, one of your Scotch Judges, talked a great deal of such nonsense. I suffered him; but I will not suffer you." BOSWELL: "But, Sir, does not Rousseau talk such nonsense?" JOHNSON: "True, Sir; but Rousseau knows he is talking nonsense, and laughs at the world for staring at him." BOSWELL: "How so, Sir?" JOHNSON: "Why, Sir, a man who talks nonsense so well, must know that he is talking nonsense. But I am afraid, (chuckling and laughing) Menbeddo does not know that he is talking nonsense. 20 (1769)

Instead of quoting Dr. Johnson, Boswell expressed his own decidedly favorable opinion of Rousseau when writing from Berlin to Andrew Mitchell, August 28, 1764. Not long after this time, he did meet Rousseau, who was then at Motiers.

In the mean time I see little advantage to be had at Berlin. I shall, however, remain here a fortnight, after which I intend passing by Mannheim and one or two more of the German courts, to Geneva. I am there at the point from whence I may either steer to Italy or to France. I shall see Voltaire. I shall also see Switzerland and Rousseau. These two men are to me greater objects than most statues or pictures.<sup>21</sup> (1864)

Concerning the meeting with Rousseau, Boswell said little, merely mentioning in 1773 the fact that he had dined with Rousseau in the wilds of Neuchâtel.

April 11, being Easter-Sunday, after having attended Divine Service at St. Paul's, I repaired to Dr. Johnson's. I had gratified my curiosity much in dining with JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU, while

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<sup>20</sup> James Boswell, Life of Johnson (George Birkbeck Hill, editor, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1934), vol. II, p. 74.

<sup>21</sup> James Boswell, Letters (Chauncey Brewster Tinker, editor, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924), vol. I, p. 57.

he lived in the wilds of Neuchâtel; I had as great a curiosity to dine with DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON, in the dusky recess of a court in Fleet-street. I supposed we should scarcely have knives and forks, and only some strange, uncouth, ill-drest dish; but I found every thing in very good order.<sup>22</sup>

(1775)

Then at another time Boswell commented that he had just come from the Continent and had been pleased with Rousseau's society. Since he had anticipated meeting him, his saying so little after the visit seems rather strange. Boswell does not mention meeting Rousseau in England although he must have done so. Boswell was given the task of accompanying Therese le Vasseur, Rousseau's mistress, to England after Rousseau had gone ahead with Hume in 1766.

JOHNSON: "...Rousseau, Sir, is a very bad man. I would sooner sign a sentence for his transportation, than that of any felon who has gone from the Old Bailey these many years...."

BOSWELL: "Sir, do you think him as bad a man as Voltaire?"

JOHNSON: "Why, Sir, it is difficult to settle the proportion of iniquity between them."

This violence seemed very strange to me, who had read many of Rousseau's animated writings with great pleasure, and even edification; had been much pleased with his society, and was just come from the Continent, where he was very generally admired. Nor can I yet allow that he deserves the very severe censure which Johnson pronounced upon him. His absurd preference of savage to civilized life, and other singularities, are proofs rather of a defect in his understanding, than of any depravity in his heart.<sup>23</sup>

(1766)

An early reference to Hume's first meeting with Rousseau is found in a letter which Hume wrote to Dr. Blair from Paris on December 20, 1765. Unlike Boswell, he expressed freely his admiration for

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<sup>22</sup> Boswell, op. cit., p. 215.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., pp. 11-13.

Rousseau. That Rousseau should be privileged to live happily in England was his wish at this time. The favorable sentiment of this letter contrasts sharply with the unfavorable sentiment of letters after the quarrel.

It is impossible to express or imagine the enthusiasm of this nation in his favour....People may talk of ancient Greece as they please; but no nation was ever so fond of genius as this, and no person ever so much engaged their attention as Rousseau. Voltaire and everybody else are quite eclipsed by him....M. Rousseau is of a small stature, and would be ugly, had he not the finest physiognomy in the world: I mean the most expressive countenance....I am well assured that at times he believes he has inspirations from an immediate communication with the Divinity. He falls sometimes into ecstasies, which retain him in the same posture for hours together. Does not this example solve the difficulty of Socrates' genius, and of his ecstasies? I think Rousseau in many things very much resembles Socrates. The philosopher of Geneva seems only to have more genius than he of Athens, who never wrote any thing, and less sociableness and temper. Both of them were of very amorous complexions; but a comparison in this particular, turns out much to the advantage of my friend. I call him such, for I hear, from all hands, that his judgment and affections are as strongly biased in my favour as mine are in his. I shall much regret leaving him in England; but even if a pardon could be procured for him here, he is resolved, as he tells me, never to return; because he never will live unmolested in England. I dread the bigotry and barbarism which prevail there.<sup>24</sup>

(1765)

January 16, 1766, three days after Hume and Rousseau had arrived in England, Hume told Madame de Boufflers of being with Rousseau and of having encouraged him to write his memoirs. This is the first mention of Rousseau's arrival in England. Passages from this letter describe the personality of the French writer as extremely pleasing. Again Hume expressed unreservedly his liking when he said, "I love

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<sup>24</sup> David Hume, Life and Correspondence (John Hill Burton, editor, Edinburgh: William Tait, 1846), vol. II, p. 299.

him much and hope that I have some share in his affections."

My companion is very amiable, always polite, gay often, commonly sociable. He does not know himself when he thinks he is made for entire solitude. I exhorted him on the road to write his memoirs. He told me, that he had already done it with an intention of publishing them.

His wearing the Armenian dress is a pure whim; which, however, he is resolved never to abandon. He has an excellent warm heart; and, in conversation, kindles often to a degree of heat which looks like inspiration. I love him much, and hope that I have some share in his affections.<sup>25</sup>

On March 25, 1766, less than three months after Rousseau had come to England, Hume told Dr. Blair that he had questioned Rousseau concerning the story of La Nouvelle Heloise and had also advised him to learn English. At this time he praised Rousseau's ability to criticize his own works rationally.

I had asked M. Rousseau the question you propose to me; He answered, that the story of his Heloise had some general and distant resemblance to reality; such as was sufficient to warm his imagination and assist his invention; but that all the chief circumstances were fictitious....I think this work his masterpiece; though he himself told me, that he valued most his Contrat social; which is a preposterous a judgment as that of Milton, who preferred the Paradise Regained to all his other performances....When we were on the road, I recommended to him the learning of English, without which, I told him, he would never enjoy entire liberty, not be fully independent, and at his own disposal. He was sensible I was in the right, and said, that he heard there were two English translations of his Emile or Treatise on Education, he would get them as soon as he arrived in London; and as soon as he knew the subject, he would have no other trouble, than to learn or guess the words: this would save him some pains in consulting the dictionary; and as he improved, it would amuse him to compare the translations and judge which was the best. Accordingly, soon after our arrival, I procured him the books, but he returned them in a few days, saying that they could be of no use to him. "What is the matter?" replied I. "I cannot endure them," said he, "they are my own work; and ever since I delivered my books to the press,

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid., pp. 303-304.

I never could open them, or read a page of them without disgust..." "But," rejoined I, "it is impossible but the style, and eloquence, and ornaments must please you." "To tell the truth," said he, "I am not displeas'd with myself in that particular: but I still dread, that my writings are good for nothing at the bottom, and that all my theories are full of extravagance." You see that this is judging of himself with the utmost severity, and censuring his writings on the side where they are most exposed to criticism. No feign'd modesty is ever capable of this courage.<sup>26</sup>

(1766)

To this point, all allusions to the life of Rousseau have been favorable in either a general or a specific manner. Allusions included in the next section of this chapter are unfavorable, the general allusions being placed first as has been done in the preceding section of the chapter.

Unfavorable general comments concerning Rousseau's life include Gray's letter to Walpole. Gray, writing of Rousseau's letters dealing with the injustice of the State of Geneva in burning the Emile, concluded that the book deserved burning.

Rousseau's letters I am reading heavily, heavily! he justifies himself, till he convinces me, that he deserved to be burnt, at least that his book did. I am not got thro' him, and you never will.<sup>27</sup>

(1764)

Although Horace Walpole was more forceful in his denunciation of Rousseau than was Gray, he too criticized rather vaguely when he wrote to David Hume, July 26, 1766. Perhaps he remembered Rousseau's reaction to the spiteful letter which he had written to Rousseau in the name of the king of Prussia.

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<sup>26</sup>

Ibid., pp. 312-316

<sup>27</sup>

Thomas Gray and others, Correspondence (Paget Townbee, editor, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1915), vol. II, p. 235

You are at full liberty, dear Sir, to make use of what I say in your justification either to Rousseau or anybody else. I should be very sorry to have you blamed on my account; I have a hearty contempt of Rousseau, and am perfectly indifferent what the litterati of Paris think of the matter.<sup>28</sup>

(1766)

Then, writing to Gray on February 13, 1768, Walpole mentioned Boswell's tiring of Rousseau. He said nothing of his own attitude.

Pray read the new account of Corsica.... The author, Boswell, is a strange being, and, like Cambridge, has a rage of knowing any body that was ever talked of. He forced himself upon me at Paris in spite of my teeth and my doors, and I see has given a foolish account of all he could pick up from me about King Theodore. He then took an antipathy to me on Rousseau's account, abused me in the newspapers, and exhorted Rousseau to do so too; but as he came to see me no more, I forgave all the rest. I see he is now a little sick of Rousseau himself, but I hope it will not cure him of his anger to me. However, his book will I am sure entertain you.<sup>29</sup>

(1768)

Boswell, who later admired and wanted to meet Rousseau, when writing to William Johnson Temple, July 23, 1763, praised the "solid sense and vigorous reasoning of Johnson" and made light of the sophistry of Rousseau.<sup>30</sup> The meeting of Rousseau and Boswell in Switzerland slightly more than a year from this time has already been mentioned.

Another general reference which is unfavorable is found in Boswell's Life of Johnson.

<sup>28</sup> Horace Walpole, Letters (W. S. Lewis, editor, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1926), vol. I, p. 179.

<sup>29</sup> Gray, op. cit., pp. 274-275.

<sup>30</sup> Boswell, Letters, op. cit., p. 27.

Our next meeting at the Mitre was on Saturday the 15th of February, when I presented to him my old and most intimate friend, the Reverend Mr. Temple, then of Cambridge. I having mentioned that I had passed some time with Rousseau in his wild retreat, and having quoted some remark made by Mr. Wilkes, with whom I had spent many pleasant hours in Italy, Johnson said (sarcastically), "It seems, Sir, you have kept very good company abroad, Rousseau and Wilkes!" Thinking it enough to defend one at a time, I said nothing as to my gay friend, but answered with a smile, "My dear Sir, you don't call Rousseau bad company. Do you really think him a bad man?" JOHNSON: "Sir, if you are talking jestingly of this, I don't talk with you. If you mean to be serious, I think him one of the worst of men; a rascal who ought to be hunted out of society as he has been. Three or four nations have expelled him; and it is a shame that he is protected in this country."<sup>51</sup>

(1766)

The remaining allusions to the life and personality of Rousseau are definitely unfavorable. Five of the six unfavorable allusions are Hume's. When examining this part of the study, the reader should remember that before Rousseau began to suffer from the delusion that many Englishmen, particularly Hume, were trying to ruin him, Hume and Rousseau were apparently good friends but that after the quarrel concerning the pension Hume was scarcely civil when he mentioned Rousseau.

The difficulty of obtaining a pension for Rousseau and the ingratitude of Rousseau when George III finally granted it Hume discussed in a letter to Dr. Blair, July 15, 1766.

Through many difficulties I obtained a pension for Rousseau. The application was made with his consent and knowledge. I write him, that all is happily completed, and that he need only draw for the money. He answers me, that I am a rogue and a rascal; and have brought him into England merely to dishonour him. I demand the reason of this strange language; and Mr. Davenport, the gentleman with whom he lives, tells him that he must necessarily satisfy me.

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<sup>51</sup> Boswell, Life of Johnson, op. cit., pp. 11-12.

Today I received a letter from him, which is perfect frenzy. It would make a good eighteen-penny pamphlet; and I fancy he intends to publish it. He there tells me, that d'Alembert, Horace Walpole, and I, had, from the first, entered into a combination to ruin him, and had ruined him.<sup>32</sup>

(1766)

That the quarrel blinded Hume to any good qualities which Rousseau may have had is indicated by a letter which he wrote to Dr. Blair, July 1, 1766. Perhaps Hume's great enthusiasm for Rousseau at the beginning of their acquaintance foreshadowed the bitter animosity which finally developed. When he said, "My only comfort is, that the matter will be so clear as not to leave to any mortal the smallest possibility of doubt," he was probably thinking of the pension problem.

You will be surprised, dear Doctor, when I desire you most earnestly never in your life to show to any mortal creature the letters I wrote you with regard to Rousseau. He is surely the blackest and most atrocious villain, beyond comparison, that now exists in the world, and I am heartily ashamed of any thing I ever wrote in his favour. I know you will pity me when I tell you that I am afraid I must publish this to the world in a pamphlet, which must contain an account of the whole transaction between us. My only comfort is, that the matter will be so clear as not to leave to any mortal the smallest possibility of doubt. You know how dangerous any controversy on a disputable point would be with a man of his talents. I know not where the miscreant will now retire to, in order to hide his head from this infamy.<sup>33</sup>

(1766)

Writing to Adam Smith in a letter which was not dated, Hume again mentioned the account of the quarrel and his correspondence with Rousseau.

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<sup>32</sup> Hume, op. cit., p. 345.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., pp. 344-345.

You may see in M. d'Alembert's hands, the whole narrative of my affair with Rousseau, along with the whole train of correspondence. Pray, is it not a nice problem, whether he be not an arrant villain, or an arrant madman, or both. The last is my opinion, but the villain seems to me to predominate most in his character.<sup>34</sup>

On April 31, 1767, after Rousseau had left the home of Mr. Davenport, Hume once more mentioned the belief of Rousseau that Hume had attempted to ruin him and expressed doubt as to Rousseau's sanity.

You may, perhaps, have heard that Rousseau has eloped from Mr. Davenport without giving any warning; leaving all his baggage except Mademoiselle, about thirty pounds in Davenport's hands, and a letter on the table, abusing him in the most violent terms, insinuating that he was in a conspiracy with me to ruin him....He is plainly mad, though I believe not more than he has been all his life.<sup>35</sup>

(1767)

On October 8, 1767, about six months after Rousseau had left England, Hume discussed in a letter to Adam Smith his flight. He also attempted to analyze his character. Hume had completely changed his attitude from the original favorable one, for he was at this time entirely uncomplimentary.

Thus, you see, he is a composition of whim, affectation, wickedness, vanity, and inquietude, with a very small if any ingredient of madness....He was tired in England; where he was neither persecuted nor caressed; and where, he was sensible, he had exposed himself. He resolved, therefore, to leave it; and having no pretence, he is obliged to contrive all those absurdities, which he himself, extravagant as he is, gives no credit to. At least, this is the only key I can devise to his character. The ruling qualities above-mentioned, together with ingratitude,

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid., pp. 348-349.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p. 366.

ferocity, and lying,--I need not mention eloquence and invention,--  
form the whole of the composition.<sup>36</sup>

(1767)

Even though Hume wrote much about the quarrel with Rousseau, Boswell, who wrote less, is supposed to have had trouble with him also. On February 1, 1767, he told the Reverend William Temple about a quarrel which he had had with Rousseau the preceding summer, mentioning also Hume's troubles. Evidently if the difficulties of Boswell and Rousseau were as serious as those of Hume and Rousseau, Boswell at least wrote less about them and was not so specific as was Hume. Never were his comments very definite.

David Hume, you know, is gone back to be a minister of state, being appointed secretary to Mr. Conway. I fancy he will hardly write any more....His quarrel with Rousseau is a literary tragi-comedy....You must know Rousseau quarrelled with me, too, and wrote me last summer a peevish letter with strong marks of frenzy in it. For he has never yet told me the cause of his offense. As you will observe, how different is our friendship.<sup>37</sup>  
(1767)

According to the allusions which have been cited, most opinions concerning the life and personality of Rousseau were unfavorable. Boswell and Hume, who admired him at first, changed their attitudes when they really knew him. The first evidence of a definitely unfavorable reaction is found in a letter of Hume to Dr. Blair, July 1, 1766. Boswell, more than six months later, mentioned a quarrel with Rousseau in the summer of 1766. Most of the allusions, both favorable and unfavorable, are of a specific nature.

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 377.

<sup>37</sup> Boswell, Letters, op. cit., p. 103.

## ALLUSIONS TO ROUSSEAU'S WRITINGS

Fewer comments concerning the writings of Rousseau seem to have been made although several definite criticisms were found. Judging by the number and the kind of allusions to Rousseau's life and to his writings, we wonder whether people in England during this period were not more interested in Rousseau's personality than in his writings.

Rousseau's writings are of two principal types, the intellectual or theoretical and the purely literary. In the intellectual or theoretical group are the two Discours, Le Contrat social, and Emile. Although the Emile does have a literary element, it is primarily theoretical. Les Confessions and La Nouvelle Héloïse are the only writings of Rousseau which are purely literary in type.

Although Les Confessions, the story of Rousseau's life to the time he went to England, was not published until 1781-1788,<sup>38</sup> Gibbon made one brief reference to it. He had evidently seen the original manuscript. The two Discours were published in 1750 and 1755, La Nouvelle Héloïse in 1761, Le Contrat social and Emile in 1762.

Rousseau's Discours sur les sciences et les arts, published in 1750, was an essay on the effect of the progress of civilization on morals. Rousseau, in this essay, asserted the superiority of life in a primitive state. His second essay, Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité parmi les hommes, stressed the inequality

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<sup>38</sup> Nitze, op. cit., p. 484.

of men. Rousseau believed that only a general uprising would end inequality. Concerning the second Discours, Nitze said, "The power and daring of this Discours, in spite of its many mistakes, made it figure along with Le Contrat social in the propaganda of the Revolution."<sup>39</sup>

The Contrat social is a treatise on government, and the Emile is a treatise on education. The general underlying principle of the Emile is that "Everything is good as it comes from the hands of the Author of Nature; but everything degenerates in the hands of man." La Nouvelle Héloïse, a pioneer romantic novel in letter form, had two sources, Richardson's Clarissa Harlowe and the personal adventures of Rousseau.<sup>40</sup>

La Nouvelle Héloïse received three of the eight criticisms during this period, and Les Confessions received one. Two references are to the Emile, one is to the second Discours, and one is a general reference which concerns no particular writing.

Of two general allusions, one, Gibben's reference to Les Confessions, is favorable in a rather indirect way. All Gibben said in the Autobiography was, "The confessions of St. Austin and Rousseau disclose the secrets of the human heart."<sup>41</sup> "St. Austin" was St. Augustine, a versatile and important early Church Father who died in 430.

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p. 490.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 487.

<sup>41</sup> Gibben, op. cit., pp. 4-5.

The only criticism which even approximates a definitely favorable viewpoint is that which Hume made when writing to Dr. Blair, March 25, 1766. Since he considered La Nouvelle Héloïse Rousseau's masterpiece, he thought Rousseau foolish for liking better Le Contrat social.<sup>42</sup>

Gray, writing to Walpole in December, 1760, criticized unfavorably Rousseau's characters and style without mentioning a specific character or literary product.

Rousseau's people do not interest me; there is but one character and one style in them all, I do not know their faces asunder. I have no esteem for their persons or conduct, am not touched with their passions; and as to their story, I do not believe a word of it--not because it is improbable, but because it is absurd.<sup>43</sup>

(1760)

One unfavorable criticism of La Nouvelle Héloïse is Boswell's. Speaking of the novel, he said, "I don't deny, Sir, but that his novel may, perhaps, do harm; but I cannot think that his intention was bad."<sup>44</sup> Boswell, more than other English writers, attempted excusing the actions of Rousseau.

(1766)

Frances Burney, recording in her Diary on March 30, 1774, a conversation between a Mr. Twiss, her father, and herself, showed Dr. Burney's decidedly unfavorable reaction to La Nouvelle Héloïse. The idea that the novel might harm impressionable readers was similar to

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<sup>42</sup> Hume, op. cit., p. 312.

<sup>43</sup> Gray, op. cit., p. 208.

<sup>44</sup> Boswell, Life of Johnson, op. cit., p. 13.

to Boswell's belief.

"Have you read Miss Aiken's Poems? Dr. Burney, they have been much admired. There is one poem in them, Come here, fond youth, that describes the symptoms of love, which all the ladies I meet with have by heart. Have not you, Ma'am?" "Me? No, Sir."

"But, Dr. Burney, of all the books upon this subject, none was ever equal to [Rousseau's] Eloise! what feeling! what language! what fire! have you read it, Ma'am?" "No, Sir." "O, it's a book that is alone." "And it ought to be alone." said my father, very gravely.

Mr. Twiss perceived that he was [now] angry, and with great eagerness he replied, "Why, I assure you I gave it to my sister, who is but seventeen, and just going to be married." "Well," returned my father, "I hope she read the Preface, and then flung it away." "No, upon my honour; she read the Preface first, and then the book...."<sup>45</sup>

(1774)

In volume II of the Life, Boswell gave Dr. Johnson's ideas of Rousseau's primitive life theory. By "Rousseau's treatise on the inequality of mankind," he meant Rousseau's second Discours.

Rousseau's treatise on the inequality of mankind was at this time a fashionable topic. It gave rise to an observation by Mr. Dempster, that the advantages of fortune and rank were nothing to a wise man, who ought to value only merit. JOHNSON: "If man were a savage, living in the woods by himself, this might be true; but in civilized society we all depend upon each other, and our happiness is very much owing to the good opinion of mankind. Now, Sir, in civilized society, external advantages make us more respected....Money, to be sure, of itself is of no use; for its only use is to part with it. Rousseau, and all those who deal in paradoxes, are led away by a childish desire of novelty."<sup>46</sup>

(1763)

Because Rousseau in Emile had scorned the use of fables as teaching devices, Gibbon made the following unfavorable comment:

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<sup>45</sup> Burney, op. cit., pp. 299-300.

<sup>46</sup> Boswell, Life of Johnson, vol. I, pp. 339-341.

The use of fables or apologues has been approved in every age from ancient India to modern Europe. They convey in familiar images the truth of morality and prudence; and the most childish understanding (I advert to the scruples of Rousseau) will not suppose either that beasts do speak, or that men may be.<sup>47</sup>

That the Emile had deserved burning was Gray's opinion after he had read Rousseau's letters of protest regarding the action of the Swiss government.<sup>48</sup> His comment, although unfavorable like Gibben's, was more specific.

#### CONCLUSIONS

That Englishmen from 1750 to 1778 were apparently more interested in Rousseau's life and personality than in his writings is indicated by the number of references to each phase of the subject. In contrast to the eight allusions to the writings, we find twenty-one allusions to his life and personality. However, two Englishmen, Hume and Boswell, both of whom evidently knew him well, were more concerned with his life and personality than were other Englishmen, as the data secured indicates. Boswell and Hume mentioned his life seven and eight times, respectively. Walpole spoke of incidents in his life twice, and Goldsmith, Gibbon, Gray, and Frances Burney once each.

After July 1, 1766, less than six months from the time Rousseau came to England, Hume made no favorable comments about him. Boswell, in February, 1767, mentioned the fact that he too had quarreled with

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<sup>47</sup> Gibbon, op. cit., p. 27.

<sup>48</sup> Gray, op. cit., p. 235.

Rousseau during the preceding summer. That Hume and Boswell championed Rousseau at first and then quarreled rather suddenly with him is an interesting and perhaps an important point. The pension difficulty and Rousseau's quarrelsome disposition seem to have led first to marked unfriendliness and then to complete severing of friendly relations.

Hume and Boswell, who referred favorably to Rousseau's life and personality five times, were the only writers of the period who made conflicting comments about his life and personality, favorable at one time and unfavorable later on. That other commentators took only a general interest in Rousseau's life seems to show the relatively slight concern of Englishmen.

The eight references to Rousseau's writings are those of Boswell, Hume, Burney, Gray, and Gibbon. Boswell, Gibbon, and Gray each alluded to his writings twice. La Nouvelle Héloïse received three criticisms, two of which were unfavorable. Incidentally, Hume's reference to the novel is the only specific favorable criticism of any of the writings. Most of the unfavorable allusions to the writings are of a specific nature, however.

Five of the six definitely favorable references to Rousseau are criticisms of his life. The only favorable criticism of his writings concerns La Nouvelle Héloïse. All of the emphatically favorable allusions to his life and to his writings are those of Boswell and Hume.

Of the twenty-nine allusions to his life and writings, eighteen are those of Boswell and Hume. Other writers who referred to his life

or writings only once or twice are Walpole, Goldsmith, Gibbon, Gray, and Frances Burney. That Englishmen in general were rather indifferent to Rousseau during this period and that their principal interest was in his life and personality is indicated by the limited data gathered here.

## CHAPTER II

### ROUSSEAU'S REPUTATION IN ENGLAND FROM 1778 TO 1800

In the literature of the period 1778 to 1800 two reactions of English writers toward Rousseau are noticeable. First, very few writers in England mentioned Rousseau according to works examined by the investigator, and all writers who did not ignore him commented unfavorably about his life and his personality. Moreover, only one reference to his writings is at all commendatory, and even it is very general in nature. The three writings to which allusions were found are the dialogues, Rousseau juge Jean-Jacques; Les Confessions; and La Nouvelle Héloïse. Apparently writers were not particularly interested in the Discours, Emile, and Le Contrat social, Rousseau's philosophical and political writings.

#### ALLUSIONS TO ROUSSEAU'S LIFE AND PERSONALITY

In the period immediately following Rousseau's death, Edmund Burke and Horace Walpole contented themselves primarily with pointing out outstanding personality traits, vanity and suspicion, instead of reminiscing at length about incidents in his life. Incidentally, these two writers, who were specific in their criticisms, appear to have been the only writers of the period interested enough in Rousseau to discuss his life and personality.

Burke, like Hume, stated emphatically his opinions of Rousseau although, unlike Hume, he was always uncomplimentary. Ten of the

seventeen allusions in this chapter are either from Burke's letters or from his pamphlet, "Reflections on the Revolution in France." Since he often expressed in the same work his ideas concerning both Rousseau's life and his writings, material from the same writing has, therefore, been separated and placed in the proper divisions of this chapter.

Writing to a member of the French National Assembly, Burke mentioned Rousseau's visit to England and described him as the "great professor and founder of the school of vanity." Vanity he considered Rousseau's principal characteristic.

We have had the great professor and founder of the philosophy of vanity in England. As I had good opportunities of knowing his proceedings almost from day to day, he left no doubt on my mind that he entertained no principle either to influence his heart or guide his understanding, but vanity. With this vice he was possessed to a degree little short of madness.<sup>1</sup>

(1791)

Walpole, telling the Rev. William Mason about the dialogues, Rousseau juge Jean-Jacques, added to vanity, the trait often mentioned by Burke, suspicion. In discussing Rousseau's idea that everyone plotted against him, he said:

He asserts that there is a universal plot against him, composed of the philosophes, clergy, his own friends and everybody else, headed by the French government, and supported at great expense; and that the whole world is sworn to keep a profound secret from him all that is said against him, though by somebody's perjury he knows it all; and moreover the plot is proved by one of the interlocutors of the Dialogue allowing it to be true.<sup>2</sup>

(1780)

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<sup>1</sup> Edmund Burke, Works (London: John C. Nimmo, 1899), vol. IV, p. 26.

<sup>2</sup> Horace Walpole, Letters (Paget Townbee, editor, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1903-1905), vol. XI, pp. 181-182.

Since Burke did not like Rousseau, his condemnation of him for disowning his five children is not surprising. Vanity he thought a logical explanation for Rousseau's unusual behavior. This reference is a good example of attention to a specific incident in Rousseau's life.

He melts with tenderness for those only who touch him by the remotest relation, and then, without one natural pang, casts away, as a sort of offal and excrement, the spawn of his disgusting amours, and sends his children to the hospital of foundlings. The bear loves, licks, and forms her young; but bears are not philosophers. Vanity, however, finds its account in reversing the train of our natural feelings. Thousands admire the sentimental writer; the affectionate father is hardly known in his parish.<sup>3</sup>

(1791)

That Rousseau was entirely lacking in refinement Burke believed.

La Nouvelle Héloïse he considered a good example of his crudity.

Rousseau, a writer of great force and vivacity, is totally destitute of taste in any sense of the word. Your masters, who are his scholars, conceive that all refinement has an aristocratic character. The last age has exhausted all its powers in giving a grace and nobleness to our natural appetites, and in raising them into a higher class and order than seemed justly to belong to them. Through Rousseau, your masters are resolved to destroy these aristocratic prejudices. The passion called love has so general and powerful an influence, it makes so much of the entertainment, and indeed so much the occupation, of that part of life which decides the character forever, that the mode and principles on which it engages the sympathy and strikes the imagination become of the utmost importance to the morals and manners of every society. Your rulers were well aware of this; and in their system of changing your manner: to accommodate them to your politics, they found nothing so convenient as Rousseau. Through him they teach men to love after the fashion of philosophers: that is they teach to men, to Frenchmen, a love without gallantry,--a love without anything of that fine flower of youthfulness and gentility which places it, if not among the virtues, among the ornaments of life.

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<sup>3</sup> Burke, op. cit., p. 28.

Instead of this passion, naturally allied to grace and manners, they infuse into their youth an old-fashioned, indelicate, sour, gloomy, ferocious medley of pedantry and lewdness,--of metaphysical speculations blended with the coarsest sensuality. Such is the general morality of the passions to be found in their famous philosopher, in his famous work of philosophic gallantry, the Nouvelle Eloïse.<sup>4</sup>

(1791)

Three of the allusions to the life and the personality of Rousseau are Burke's; one is Walpole's. Both writers were adverse critics.

We find, then, that the references to incidents in Rousseau's life concern his visit to England, his belief that people plotted against him, and the spurning of his five children. His undesirable personality traits named and discussed are vanity and suspicion.

#### ALLUSIONS TO ROUSSEAU'S WRITINGS

A few allusions to the writings of Rousseau are more vague than were allusions to his life and personality. Most of the general comments pertain to the style and doctrines of his writings.

The writings which are mentioned specifically are Rousseau juge Jean-Jacques, Les Confessions, and La Nouvelle Héloïse. Les Confessions is referred to twice and Rousseau juge Jean-Jacques and La Nouvelle Héloïse once each.

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Burke, op. cit., pp. 30-31.

A general allusion to Rousseau, which, if Holcroft admired Shakespeare, Moliere, Boileau, Pope, Voltaire, and Milton, should be considered favorable, is found in Holcroft's Memoirs.

Received a letter from my father, alarmed, supposed him dying. Went immediately to take coach. Set out on the 25th, in the Manchester Commercial Coach for Haslington.... Quaker taken up at Hinckliff, but four and twenty, conceived himself a wit, rude to rheumatic old woman.... Quaker listens to learned discourse on Shakespeare, Moliere, Boileau, Pope, Gresset, Rousseau, Voltaire, Milton, in raptures.

(1788)

Burke, who disliked Rousseau intensely, criticized his revolutionary doctrines especially. In 1791, Walpole, in a letter to Miss Mary Berry, mentioned Burke's pamphlet against the French Revolution. "His invective against Rousseau is admirable, just, and new,"<sup>6</sup> was Walpole's terse comment.

In the pamphlet, "Reflections on the Revolution in France," Burke denounced Rousseau's revolutionary doctrines and commended Englishmen for avoiding radical teachings.

Thanks to our sullen resistance to innovation, thanks to the cold sluggishness of our national character, we still bear the stamp of our forefathers. We have not, as I conceive, lost the generosity and dignity of thinking of the fourteenth century; nor as yet have we subtilized ourselves into savages. We are not the disciples of Voltaire; Helvetius has made no progress amongst us. Atheists are not our preachers; madmen are not our lawgivers.... We have not been drawn and trussed, in order that we may be filled, like stuffed birds in a museum, with chaff and rage, and paltry blurred shreds of paper about the rights

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<sup>5</sup> Thomas Holcroft, Memoirs (Oxford: Humphrey Milford, 1926), vol. I, pp. 220-221.

<sup>6</sup> Walpole, Letters (Lewis, editor), vol. II, p. 395.

of man. We preserve the whole of our feelings still native and entire, unsophisticated by pedantry and infidelity. We have real hearts of flesh and blood beating in our bosoms. We fear God; we look up with awe to kings; with affection to parliaments; with duty to magistrates; with reverence to priests; and with respect to nobility. Why? Because when such ideas are brought before our minds, it is natural to be so affected; because all other feelings are false and spurious, and tend to corrupt our minds, to vitiate our primary morals, to render us unfit for rational liberty; and by teaching us a servile, licentious, and abandoned insolence, to be our low sport for a few holidays, to make us perfectly fit for, and justly deserving of slavery, through the whole course of our lives.

(1791)

Rousseau's doctrines Burke considered entirely impracticable although he admitted that Rousseau occasionally wrote with some understanding of human affairs.

We cannot rest upon any of his works, though they contain observations which occasionally discover a considerable insight into human affairs. But his doctrines, on the whole, are so inapplicable to real life and manners that we never dream of drawing from them any rule for laws or conduct, or for fortifying or illustrating anything for a reference to his opinions.

(1791)

Walpole had written in 1776 of his contempt for Rousseau. Indication of his attitude nine years later is found in a letter to the Countess of Upper Ossory. Walpole's contention was that Rousseau "might have excelled by writing good sense" instead of allowing absurdity to rule him.

Should a doubt remain with any man (your Ladyship I flatter myself will not question my truth) I will give him an irrefutable proof of my not having had a hand in these Letters (Letters on Literature), if he will have patience to wait for it; and that is,

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<sup>7</sup> Edmund Burke, Select Works (E. J. Payne, editor, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1888), vol. II, pp. 101-102.

<sup>8</sup> Burke, Works, pp. 31-32.

that the author will write better than he has done twenty years after I shall be underground. In short, it is a capacity that will improve by maturity, for it will be corrected by opponents; if it is not hardened into the defense of paradoxes by defending them too ingeniously; as was the misfortune of Rousseau, who might have excelled by writing good sense, but found that there was a shorter path to celebrity by climbing the precipice of absurdity.<sup>9</sup>

(1785)

That Rousseau himself would have been disappointed if he had known how far his disciples would deviate from good taste in writing was Burke's belief--a belief similar to Walpole's idea that Rousseau "might have excelled by writing good sense."

Mr. Hume told me that he had from Rousseau himself the secret of his principles of composition. That acute, though eccentric, observer had perceived, that to strike and interest the public, the marvelous must be produced; that the marvellous of the heathen mythology had long since lost its effect; that giants, magicians, fairies, and heroes of romance which succeeded, had exhausted the portion of credulity which belonged to their age; that now nothing was left to a writer but that species of the marvelous, which might still be produced, and with as great an effect as ever, though in another way; that is, the marvellous in life, in manners, in characters, and in extraordinary situations, giving rise to new and unlocked for strokes in politics and morals. I believe, that were Rousseau alive, and in one of his lucid intervals, he would be shocked at the practical phrenzy of his scholars, who in their paradoxes are servile imitators; and even in their incredulity discover an implicit faith.<sup>10</sup>

(1791)

Concerning the style of Rousseau's writings, Burke said:

We certainly perceive, and to a degree we feel, in this writer, a style glowing, animated, enthusiastic, at the same time that we find it lax, diffuse, and not in the best taste of composition,--

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<sup>9</sup> Walpole, Letters (Lewis, editor), vol. II, p. 397.

<sup>10</sup> Burke, Select Works, p. 202.

all the members of the piece being pretty equally labored and expanded, without any due selection or subordination of parts. He is generally on the stretch, and his manner has little variety.<sup>11</sup>

(1791)

Burke contrasted English and Continental good taste in reading when he discussed Rousseau's literary ability. Again Burke conceded that Rousseau's writings were not entirely worthless although he did not approve of his teachings.

We continue, as in the two last ages, to read, more generally than I believe is now done on the Continent, the authors of sound antiquity. These occupy our minds; they give us another taste and turn; and will not suffer us to be more than transiently amused with paradoxical morality. It is not that I consider this writer as wholly destitute of just notions. Amongst his irregularities, it must be reckoned that he is sometimes moral, and moral in a very sublime strain. But the general spirit and tendency of his works is mischievous,--and the more mischievous for this mixture: for perfect depravity of sentiment is not reconcilable with eloquence; and the mind (though corruptible, not complexionally vicious) would reject and throw off with disgust a lesson of pure and unmixed evil. These writers make even virtue a pander to vice.<sup>12</sup>

(1791)

After mentioning an opinion concerning infidelity on the Continent, Boswell gave Dr. Johnson's views. The word infidelity as used here refers to want of belief in religion.

Mrs. Kennicott, in confirmation of Dr. Johnson's opinion, that the present was not worse than former ages, mentioned that her brother assured her, there was now less infidelity on the Continent than there had been; Voltaire and Rousseau were less read. I asserted, from good authority, that Hume's infidelity was certainly less read. JOHNSON: "All infidel writers drop into oblivion, when personal connections and the floridness of novelty are gone; though now and then a foolish fellow, who thinks he can be witty upon them, may bring them again into notice."<sup>13</sup>

(1784)

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<sup>11</sup> Burke, Works, p. 31.

<sup>12</sup> Burke, op. cit., pp. 32-33.

<sup>13</sup> Boswell, op. cit., vol. IV, p. 288.

If Walpole had not believed that vanity and suspicion were the basis of Rousseau's dialogues, Rousseau juge Jean-Jacques, he might have criticized them favorably. Even though his comments were primarily uncomplimentary, he did mention Rousseau's eloquence and persuasive ability.

There is just published a dialogue of Rousseau, the title of which is Rousseau juge Jean-Jacques. There are fine strokes of eloquence, you may be certain, and much address in the management of the argument, which is to confute the charges of his enemies; but the groundwork is his old frenzy, composed of vanity and suspicions.<sup>14</sup>

(1780)

Burke's allusion to La Nouvelle Héloïse has been quoted in the section treating Rousseau's life. Burke considered Rousseau a symbol of the lewdness of the age and Rousseau's novel a typical example of disgusting vulgarity. The idea that Rousseau worked as a tool of the French rulers to make the nation more sensual is a new idea. Although Burke did not agree with Rousseau's ideas in La Nouvelle Héloïse, he did call him "a writer of great force and vivacity."<sup>15</sup>

(1791)

In another part of the letter to a member of the French National Assembly, Burke discussed Rousseau's vanity as a reason for his writing Les Confessions.

It is from this same deranged, eccentric vanity, that this, the insane Socrates of the National Assembly, was impelled to publish a mad confession of his mad faults, and to attempt a new sort of glory from bringing hardily to light the obscure and vulgar vices

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<sup>14</sup> Walpole, Letters (Townsend, editor), p. 181.

<sup>15</sup> Burke, op. cit., pp. 30-31.

which we know may sometimes be blended with eminent talents.<sup>16</sup>

Unlike Burke, who sometimes named a few good qualities while censuring Rousseau, Walpole, writing to the Countess of Upper Ossory, July 4, 1785, condemned utterly Rousseau's Confessions.

I will read no more of Rousseau; his Confessions disgusted me beyond any book I ever opened. His hen, the schoolmistress, Madame de Genlis, the newspapers say, is arrived in London. I nauseate her too; the eggs of education that both he and she laid could not be hatched until the chickens would be ready to die of old age. I revere genius; I have a dear friendship for common sense; I have a partiality for professed nonsense; but I abhor extravagance, that is given for the quintessence of sense, and affectation that pretends to be philosophy.<sup>17</sup>

(1785)

#### CONCLUSIONS

The only writers who mentioned Rousseau during this period were Burke, Walpole, Holcroft, and Boswell. Burke and Walpole, like Hume and Boswell in the preceding period, appear to have been more interested in Rousseau than were other writers. The opinions of Burke and Walpole, unlike those of Boswell and Hume, were consistently unfavorable. Boswell evidently had lost interest in Rousseau, for he commented only once about him during this period.

Since Rousseau died in 1778, little attention to happenings in his life and much attention to his personality are not surprising findings. Writers mentioned frequently the undesirable personality traits, vanity and suspicion.

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<sup>16</sup> Burke, op. cit., p. 27.

<sup>17</sup> Walpole, Letters (Lewis, editor), p. 395.

Although the French Revolution occurred during this period, works with revolutionary doctrines, the second Discours and Le Contrat social, were apparently not referred to; but the purely literary writings, Les Confessions and La Nouvelle Héloïse, were mentioned. Burke did allude in a rather indirect manner to Rousseau's revolutionary theories. In addition to the second Discours, Le Contrat social, Les Confessions, and La Nouvelle Héloïse, Rousseau juge Jean-Jacques received some attention at this time. The allusion to the dialogues, Rousseau juge Jean-Jacques, is the first found in this investigation.

The decline of Rousseau's reputation, both from the point of favor and from the point of the number of allusions--a decline which commenced at the time of his departure from England in May, 1767--continued throughout the remainder of the century, if we may trust the evidence produced by the present intensive, though not an entirely exhaustive, investigation.

### CHAPTER III

#### ROUSSEAU'S REPUTATION IN ENGLAND FROM 1800 TO 1832

The arbitrary dates, 1800 to 1832, were chosen, not merely because they are often used to designate the Romantic Period in English literature, but because this was found to be a natural as well as a convenient break. William Hazlitt, who was evidently the principal writer interested in Rousseau, died in 1830; and some of his writings are dated as late as that year. Approximately one-half of the allusions in this chapter are those of Hazlitt's.

Characteristics of this period pertaining to Rousseau's reputation in England are the many allusions found, the enthusiasm of most writers, and the predominance of allusions dealing with the writings over those referring to his life and personality. Les Confessions, La Nouvelle Héloïse, and Le Contrat social are the writings mentioned and discussed.

#### ALLUSIONS TO ROUSSEAU'S LIFE AND PERSONALITY

Of the allusions to the life and personality of Rousseau from 1800 to 1832, only three--two of Lord Byron's and one of Samuel Taylor Coleridge's--are unfavorable although Thomas Carlyle implies an uncomplimentary viewpoint. Three of the allusions in this section are William Hazlitt's, three Byron's, two Carlyle's, and one Coleridge's. Hazlitt and Byron, the only writers who mention incidents in Rousseau's life, do so in a rather indirect manner.

Byron in "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage," canto III, described eloquently Rousseau's personality and mentioned his connection with the French Revolution.

Here the self-torturing sephist, wild Rousseau,  
 The apostle of affliction, he who threw  
 Enchantment over passion, and from woe  
 Wrung overwhelming eloquence, first drew  
 The breath which made him wretched; yet he knew  
 How to make madness beautiful, and cast  
 O'er erring deeds and thoughts a heavenly hue  
 Of words, like sunbeams, dazzling as they past  
 The eyes, which o'er them shed tears feelingly and fast.

His love was passion's essence--as a tree  
 On fire by lightning; with ethereal flame  
 Kindled he was, and blasted; for to be  
 Thus, and enamored, were in him the same.  
 But his was not the love of living dame,  
 Nor of the dead who rise upon our dreams,  
 But of ideal beauty, which became  
 In him existence, and o'erflowing, teems  
 Along his burning page, distemper'd though it seems.

For then he was inspired, and from him came,  
 As from the Pythian's mystic cave of yore  
 Those Oracles which set the world in flame,  
 Nor ceased to burn till kingdoms were no more:  
 Did he not this for France, which lay before  
 Bow'd to the inborn tyranny of years?  
 Broken and trembling to the yoke she bore,  
 Till by the voice of him and of his compeers  
 Roused up to too much wrath, which follows o'ergrown fears?<sup>1</sup>  
 (1816)

In an essay, "On Reason and Imagination," which is part of The Plain Speaker, Hazlitt, who seems to have had the most interest

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<sup>1</sup> Lord Byron, Complete Postical Works (Cambridge edition, Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1905), pp. 47-48.

in Rousseau during this period, said that Rousseau's knowledge of his weak emotional tendencies probably accounted for the formal structure of Le Contrat social.

Rousseau was too ambitious of an exceedingly technical and scientific mode of reasoning, scarcely attainable in the mixed questions of human life, (as may be seen in his Social Contract--a work of great ability, but extreme formality of structure) and it is probable he was led into this error in seeking to overcome his too great warmth of natural temperament and a tendency to indulge merely the impulses of passion.<sup>2</sup>

(1826)

During the last quarter of the eighteenth century, Edmund Burke criticized Rousseau's vanity; but Haslitt, in the first part of the next century, praised the effect of Rousseau's egotism on his writings.

Before we can take an author entirely to our bosoms, he must be another self; and he cannot be this, if he is "not one, but all mankind's epitome." It was this which gave such an effect to Rousseau's writings, that he stamped his own character and the image of his self-love on the public mind--there it is, and there it will remain in spite of everything. Had he possessed more comprehension of thought or feeling, it would only have diverted him from his object. But it was the excess of his egotism and his utter blindness to every thing else, that found a corresponding sympathy in the conscious feelings of every human breast, and shattered to pieces the pride of rank and circumstance by the pride of internal worth or upstart circumstance.<sup>3</sup>

(1830)

Carlyle's conception of Rousseau was that of a maladjusted, misunderstood individual who was alternately praised and blamed. He contrasted the English and the French attitudes toward Rousseau in the latter part of the eighteenth century, citing Burke's denunciation as

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<sup>2</sup> William Haslitt, Complete Works (Edited by P. P. Howe after the edition of A. R. Waller and Arnold Glover, Centenary edition, London: J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1930), vol. XII, pp. 52-53.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., vol. XI, p. 278.

an example of the reaction in England.

Poor Jean Jacques! Alternately deified, and cast to the dogs; a deep-minded, high-minded, even noble, yet woefully misarranged mortal, with all the misformations of Nature intensified to the verge of madness by unfavorable Fortune. A lonely man; his life a long soliloquy! The wandering Tiresias of the time;--in whom, however, did lie prophetic meaning, such as none of the others offer. Whereby indeed it might partly be that the world went to such extremes about him; that long after his departure, we have seen one whole nation worship him, and a Burke, in the name of another, class him with the off-scourings of the earth. His true character, with its lofty aspirings and poor performings; and how the spirit of the man worked so wildly, like celestial fire in a thick dark element of chaos, and shot forth ethereal radiance, all-piercing lightning, yet could not illuminate, was quenched and did not conquer: this, with what lies in it, may now be pretty accurately appreciated. Let his history teach all whom it concerns, to "harden themselves against the ills with which Mother Nature will try them with;" to seek within their own soul what the world must forever deny them; and say composedly to the Prince of the Power of this lower Earth and Air: Go thou thy way; I go mine!<sup>4</sup>

(1829)

Although both of Carlyle's allusions to Rousseau's personality are essentially favorable, they contain rather faint praise. Discussing Voltaire's love of truth, Carlyle said in Critical and Miscellaneous Essays:

It is a far inferior love, we should say, to that of poor Jean Jacques, half-sage, half-maniac as he was; it is a more prudent calculation than a passion.<sup>5</sup>

(1829)

Haslitt in "On the Love of the Country," an essay from The Round Table, mentioned briefly one incident in Rousseau's life--his

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<sup>4</sup> Thomas Carlyle, Complete Works (The People's Edition, Boston: Estes and Lauriat, 1885), vol. XV, pp. 112-113.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., vol. XIII, p. 411.

going to the home of Madame de Warens when she lived at Annecy. In "On the Character of Rousseau," another essay from the same book, Hazlitt named several incidents in Rousseau's life. A passage from the latter essay will be quoted in the section dealing with the writings.

Rousseau, in his Confessions, (the most valuable of all his works), relates, that when he took possession of his room at Annecy, at the house of his beloved mistress and friend, he found that he could see "a little spot of green" from his window which endeared his situation the more to him, because, he says, it was the first time he had had this object constantly before him since he left Boissey, the place where he was at school when a child.<sup>6</sup>

(1817)

Coleridge, in "The Landing-Place," an essay from The Friend, contrasted the personal characteristics of Rousseau and Martin Luther. Although the picture of Rousseau is rather vivid, the comparison is not particularly effective because he says so little about Luther.

But the heroic Luther, a giant awaking in his strength, and the crazy Rousseau, the dreamer of love-sick tales, and the spinner of speculative cobwebs; shy of light as the mole, but as quick-eared too for every whisper of the public opinion; the teacher of stois pride in his principles, yet the victim of morbid vanity in his feelings and conduct.<sup>7</sup>

(1809)

Two unfavorable allusions are those of Byron's. Although Byron left England in 1816 because of unfriendly sentiment, he made light of Rousseau.

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<sup>6</sup> Hazlitt, op. cit., vol. IV, pp. 17-18.

<sup>7</sup> Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Complete Works (W. G. T. Sneed, editor, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1884), vol. II, p. 124.

I retired from the country, perceiving that I was the object of general obloquy; I did not indeed imagine, like Jean Jacques Rousseau, that all mankind was in a conspiracy against me, though I had perhaps as good grounds for such a chimera as ever he had.<sup>8</sup>

(1820)

On another occasion, Byron, contrasting Rousseau and himself as to literary tendencies, habits of life, character, and personality traits, displays familiarity with the life and character of Rousseau. Although Byron believed the comparison to be to his own advantage, he admitted that "Rousseau was a great man."

My Mother, before I was twenty, would have it that I was like Rousseau, and Madame de Stael used to say so too in 1813, and the Edin<sup>n</sup> Review has something of the sort in its critique on the 4th. Canto of Ch. Ha.<sup>d</sup> I can't see any point of resemblance: he wrote prose, I verse; he was of the people, I of the Aristocracy; he was a philosopher, I am none; he published his first work at forty, I mine at eighteen; his first essay brought him universal applause, mine the contrary; he married his housekeeper, I could not keep house with my wife; he thought all the world in plot against him, my little world seems to think me in plot against it, if I may judge by their abuse in print and coterie; he liked Botany, I like flowers, and herbs, and trees, but know nothing of their pedigrees; he wrote Music, I limit my knowledge of it to what I catch by Ear--I never could learn anything by study, not even a language, it was all by rote and ear and memory; he had a bad memory, I had at least an excellent one (ask Hodgson the poet, a good judge, for he has an astonishing one); he wrote with hesitation and care, I with rapidity and rarely with pains; he could never ride nor swim, "nor was cunning of fence," I am an excellent swimmer, a decent though not at all a dashing rider (having staved in a rib at eighteen in the course of scampering), and was sufficient of fence--particularly of the Highland broadsword; not a bad boxer when I could keep my temper, which was difficult, but which I strove to do ever since I knocked down Mr. Purling and put his knee-pan out (with the gloves on) in Angelo's and Jackson's room in 1806 during the sparring; and I was besides a very fair cricketer--one of the Harrow Eleven when we play [ed] against Eton in 1806.

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<sup>8</sup> Lord Byron, Works (Rowland E. Prothero and Ernest Hartley Coleridge, editors, London: John Murray, 1924), vol. IV, p. 479.

Besides, Rousseau's way of life, his country, his manners, his whole character, were so very different, that I am at a loss to conceive how such a comparison would have arisen, as it has done several times, and all in rather a remarkable manner. I forgot to say, that he was also short-sighted, and that hitherto my eyes have been the contrary to such a degree, that, in the largest theatre of Bologna, I distinguished and read some busts and inscriptions painted near the stage, from a box so distant, and so darkly lighted, that none of the company (composed of young and very bright-eyed people--some of them in the same box) could make out a letter, and thought it was a great trick, though I had never been in that theatre before.

Altogether, I think myself justified in thinking the comparison was not well founded. I don't say this out of pique, for Rousseau was a great man, and the idea if true were flattering enough; but I have no idea of being pleased with a chimera.

(1821)

#### ALLUSIONS TO ROUSSEAU'S WRITINGS

Thirty-one allusions from 1800 to 1832, the greatest number found in any part of the study, deal with some phase of Rousseau's writings. Only six of the total number are unfavorable, and none of these is very specific.

William Hazlitt is responsible for sixteen of the allusions, fifteen of them favorable. Hazlitt mentioned Les Confessions, which he considered Rousseau's best work; La Nouvelle Héloïse, which he enjoyed most in his youth; and Le Contrat social, which he described as "a work of great ability, but extreme formality of structure."<sup>10</sup>

No criticism in this section is especially detailed although Hazlitt in particular did mention specific writings and definite characteristics. Most critics who named certain literary tendencies

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., vol. V, pp. 408-410.

<sup>10</sup> Hazlitt, op. cit., vol. XII, pp. 52-53.

praised Rousseau's descriptive ability.

Since the references are numerous and since they cover a period of thirty-two years, a chronological arrangement, within the proper divisions, has been used as often as seemed feasible.

Haslitt, commenting early in the century upon Rousseau's vivid style of writing, said, "If he had not true genius, he had at least something which was a very good substitute for it."<sup>11</sup>

Rousseau is the only French writer I am acquainted with (though he by the bye was not a Frenchman) who from the depth of his feelings, without many distinct images, produces the same kind of interest in the mind that is excited by the events and recollections of our own lives. If he had not true genius, he had at least something which was a very good substitute for it.<sup>11</sup>  
(1805)

Lord Byron in "Sonnet to Lake Lemán" named Rousseau, Voltaire, Gibben, and De Stael as writers worthy of the beautiful lake.

Rousseau, Voltaire, our Gibben, and De Staël--  
Leman! these names are worthy of thy shore,  
Thy shore of names like these!--Wert thou no more,  
Their memory thy remembrance would recall;  
To them thy banks were lovely as to all,  
But they have made them lovelier, for the lore  
Of mighty minds doth hallow in the core  
Of human hearts the ruin of a wall  
Where dwelt the wise and wondrous; but by thee,  
How much more, Lake of Beauty! do we feel,  
In sweetly gliding o'er thy crystal sea,  
The wild glow of that not ungentle seal,  
Which of the heirs of immortality  
Is proud, and makes the breath of glory real.<sup>12</sup>  
(1816)

Visiting the Rousseau country in 1816, Byron noticed that the guide confused Rousseau and St. Preux, the hero in La Nouvelle

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., vol. I, p. 26.

<sup>12</sup> Byron, Complete Poetical Works (Cambridge edition), p. 192.

Heloise. He also mentioned seeing a young girl as beautiful as Julie herself.

After a slight and short dinner, we visited the Chateau de Clarens; an English woman has rented it recently (it was not let when I saw it first): the roses are gone with their Summer; the family out, but the servants desired us to walk over the interior of the mansion...Saw all worth seeing, and then descended to the "Bosquet de Julie," etc., etc.; our Guide full of Rousseau, whom he is eternally confounding with St. Preux, and mixing the man and the book. On the steps of a cottage in the village, I saw a young paysanne, beautiful as Julie herself.<sup>13</sup>

(1816)

Shelley too visited the Rousseau territory in 1816 and, when writing to Thomas Love Peacock from Geneva, contrasted the writings of Gibbon and Rousseau, to Rousseau's advantage.

My companion gathered some acacia leaves to preserve in remembrance of Gibbon. I refrained from doing so, fearing to outrage the greater and more sacred name of Rousseau; the contemplation of whose imperishable creations had left no vacancy in my heart for mortal things.<sup>14</sup>

(1816)

In "On Patriotism," an essay from The Round Table, Hazlitt described Rousseau as "an acute observer and eloquent writer."<sup>15</sup> He offered no explanation for this criticism. (1817)

The outstanding essay in The Round Table from the point of view of this investigation is "On the Character of Rousseau." As might

<sup>13</sup> Byron, Works, op. cit., vol. III, pp. 352-353.

<sup>14</sup> Percy Bysshe Shelley, Essays, Letters from Abroad (Mrs. Shelley, editor, London: Edward Moxon, 1852), vol. II, p. 61.

<sup>15</sup> Hazlitt, op. cit., vol. IV, pp. 67-68.

naturally be expected, Hazlitt's most detailed criticisms of Rousseau are found in this essay. One allusion from it, although not detailed, is pertinent.

He did more towards the French Revolution than any other man. Voltaire, by his wit and penetration, had rendered superstition contemptible, and tyranny odious; but it was Rousseau who brought the feeling of irreconcilable enmity to rank and privilege, above humanity, home to the bosom of every man, -- identified it with all the pride of intellect, and with the deepest yearnings of the human heart.<sup>16</sup>

(1817)

In another section of "On the Character of Rousseau" Hazlitt mentioned Rousseau's egotism and its importance when he said,

The three greatest egotists that we know of, that is, the three writers who felt their own being most powerfully and exclusively, are Rousseau, Wordsworth, and Benvenuto Cellini.<sup>17</sup>

(1817)

Since Hazlitt approved of Rousseau's egotism and Burke had scorned his vanity, Hazlitt's denunciation of Burke is not surprising.

His jealousy of Rousseau was one chief cause of his opposition to the French Revolution. The writings of the one had changed the institutions of a kingdom; while the speeches of the other, with the intrigues of his whole party, had changed nothing but the turnspit of the King's kitchen. He would have blotted out the broad pure light of Heaven, because it did not first shine in at the little Gothic windows of St. Stephen's Chapel. The genius of Rousseau had levelled the towers of the Bastille with the dust; our zealous reformist, who would rather be doing mischief than nothing, tried, therefore, to patch them up again, by calling that loathsome dungeon the King's castle, and by fulsome adulation of the virtues of a court strumpet. This man, --but enough of him here.<sup>18</sup>

(1817)

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 89.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 93.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 105.

As Byron in canto VII of "Don Juan" named Rousseau with seven other prominent men, the allusion is probably favorable, although in an indefinite fashion.

They accuse me--Me--the present writer of  
 The present poem--of--I know not what--  
 A tendency to under-rate and scoff  
 At human power and virtue, and all that;  
 And this they say in language rather rough,  
 Good God! I wonder what they would be at!  
 I say no more than hath been said in Dante's  
 Verse, and by Solomon and by Cervantes;  
 By Swift, by Machiavel, by Rochefoucault,  
 By Fenelon, by Luther, and by Plato;  
 By Tillotson, and Wesley, and Rousseau,  
 Who knew this life was not worth a potato,  
 'Tis not their fault, nor mine, if this be so,--  
 For my part, I pretend not to be Cato,  
 Nor even Diogenes.--We live and die,  
 But which is best, you know more than I.<sup>19</sup>

(1819-1825)

In canto XIV of "Don Juan," the following allusion, which is even more vague, is found.

There is a flower called "Love in Idleness,"  
 For which see Shakespeare's ever-blooming garden;--  
 I will not make his great description less,  
 And by his British godship's humble pardon,  
 If, in my extremity of rhyme's distress,  
 I touch a single leaf where he is warden;--  
 But, though the flower is different, with the French  
 Or Swiss Rousseau--cry "Viola la Pervenche!"<sup>20</sup>

(1819-1825)

Discussing in his "Essay on Christianity" the equality of mankind, Shelley said:

Rousseau is perhaps the philosopher among the moderns who, in the structure of his feeling and understanding, resembles

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<sup>19</sup> Byron, Works, op. cit., vol. VI, pp. 302-303.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., pp. 535-536.

most nearly the mysterious sage of Judea. It is impossible to read these passionate words in which Jesus Christ upbraids the pusillanimity and sensuality of mankind, without being strongly reminded of the more connected and systematic enthusiasm of Rousseau.<sup>21</sup>

(1818-1822)

In Characteristics: In the Manner of Rochefoucault's Maxims, Hazlitt merely said about Rousseau, "It is a fine remark of Rousseau's, that the best of us differ from the others in fewer particulars than we agree with them in."<sup>22</sup>

(1823)

Then, in another of the Characteristics, Hazlitt said,

Magnanimity is often concealed under an appearance of shyness, and even poverty of spirit. Heroes, according to Rousseau, are not known by the loftiness of their carriage; as the greatest braggarts are generally the merest cowards.<sup>23</sup>

(1823)

Hazlitt in an essay, "On the Conversation of Authors," taken from The Plain Speaker, quoted another opinion of Rousseau's.

Men of the world have no fixed principles, no groundwork of thought; mere scholars have too much an object, a theory always in view, to which they wrest every thing, and not unfrequently, common sense itself.... There is more to be learnt from them than from their books. This was a remark of Rousseau's, and it is a very true one.<sup>24</sup>

(1826)

Both Byron and Hazlitt visited the Rousseau country and were impressed by Rousseau's descriptive ability. Byron told John Murray

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<sup>21</sup> Percy Bysshe Shelley, Works in Verse and Prose (Harry Duxton Ferman, editor, London: Reeves and Turner, 1880), vol. VI, pp. 364-365.

<sup>22</sup> Hazlitt, op. cit., vol. IX, p. 201.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 168.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., vol. XII, pp. 32-33.

of his impressions on June 27, 1816.

I have traversed all Rousseau's ground, with the Héloïse before me; and am struck, at a degree, with the force and accuracy of his descriptions and the beauty of their reality. Meillerie, Clarens, and Vevay, and the Château de Chillon, are places of which I shall say little, because all I could say must fall short of the impressions they stamp.<sup>25</sup>

(1816)

Shelley too enjoyed visiting the country Rousseau described. He praised Rousseau's imaginative qualities as illustrated in La Nouvelle Héloïse, which he called Julie.

It is nearly a fortnight since I returned from Vevai. This journey has been on every account delightful, but most especially, because then I first knew the divine beauty of Rousseau's imagination, as it exhibits itself in Julie. It is inconceivable what an enchantment the scene itself lends to those delineations from which its own most touching charm arises.

.....  
I read Julie all day; an overflowing, as it now seems, surrounded by the scenes which it has so wonderfully peopled, of sublimest genius, and more than human sensibility. Meillerie, the castle of Chillon, Clarens, the mountains of La Valais and Savoy, present themselves to the imagination as monuments of things that were once familiar, and of beings that were once dear to it. They were created indeed by one mind, but a mind so powerfully bright as to cast a shade of falsehood on the records that are called reality.<sup>26</sup>

(1816)

While traveling on the Continent in 1825, Hazlitt apparently observed critically the scenes Rousseau had described and was usually much impressed.

The next day being cloudy, we lost sight entirely of the highest range of Alpine hills, and saw them no more afterwards. ...We, however, had the Lake of Biemme and Isle of St. Pierre in prospect before us, which are so admirably described by

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<sup>25</sup> Byron, Works, op. cit., vol. III, p. 335.

<sup>26</sup> Percy Bysshe Shelley, Letters (Roger Ingpen, editor, London: Sir Isaac Pitman and Sons, Ltd., 1909), vol. II, pp. 489-497.

Rousseau, in his Reveries of a Solitary Walker, and to which he gives preference over the Lake of Geneva.<sup>27</sup>

(1826)

Pleasure from reading a letter in La Nouvelle Héloïse Hazlitt discussed in "On Novelty and Familiarity," an essay from The Plain Speaker.

I once sat on a sunny bank in a field in which the green blades of corn waved in the fitful northern breeze, and read the letter in the New Eloise, in which St. Preux describes the Pays de Vaud. I never felt what Shakespear calls my "glassy essence," so much as then. My thoughts were pure and free. They took a tone from the objects before me, and from the simple manners of the inhabitants of mountain scenery, so well described in the letter. The style gave me the same sensation as the drops of morning dew before they are scorched by the sun; and I thought Julia did well to praise it. I wished I could have written such a letter. That wish, enhanced by my admiration of genius and the feeling of the objects around me, was accompanied with more pleasure than if I had written fifty such letters, or had gained all the reputation of its immortal author!<sup>28</sup>

(1826)

After visiting the scene of La Nouvelle Héloïse, early his favorite work, Hazlitt re-read the novel to determine whether or not the adverse critics had better judgment than he. His conclusion, although not especially favorable, is a rather indirect sort of praise. A more detailed passage concerning his former fondness for La Nouvelle Héloïse and his loss of taste for it will be quoted with the references which are more specific.

I did not, on a re-perusal, find my once favorite work quite so vivid, quite so void of eloquence or sentiment as some critics (it is true, not much beholden to it) would insinuate.<sup>29</sup>

(1826)

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<sup>27</sup> Hazlitt, op. cit., vol. X, p. 297.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., vol. XII, p. 304.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., vol. X, p. 281.

Concerning Voltaire, Carlyle said, "As in real sensibility, so in the delineation of it, in pathos, loftiness and earnest eloquence, he cannot, making all fair abatements, and there are many, be compared with Rousseau."<sup>30</sup>

A passage from canto III of "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage" was quoted at the beginning of the section treating Rousseau's life and personality although it does pertain also to Rousseau's writing. Byron stressed the idea that Rousseau's life experiences and his personality had been poured into his works. He described his writing as "his burning page" and said he "knew how to make madness beautiful, and cast o'er erring deeds and thoughts a heavenly hue of words."<sup>31</sup>

Comparing Wordsworth and Rousseau in the essay, "On the Character of Rousseau," Hazlitt stated that Rousseau's superiority was in the personal element of his writings. The principal difference between the two writers, he believed, could be accounted for by the type of writing which each did.

Rousseau, in all his writings, never once lost sight of himself. He was the same individual from first to last. The spring that moved his passions never went down, the pulse that agitated his heart never ceased to beat. It was this strong feeling of interest, accumulating in his mind, which overpowers and absorbs the feelings of his readers. He owed all his power to sentiment. The writer who most nearly resembles him in our own times is the author of the Lyrical Ballads. We see no other difference between them, than that the one wrote in prose and the other in poetry; and that prose is perhaps better adapted to express those local and personal feelings, which are inveterate habits in the mind, than poetry, which embodies its

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<sup>30</sup> Carlyle, op. cit., vol. III, p. 459.

<sup>31</sup> Byron, Complete Poetical Works, op. cit., pp. 47-48.

imaginary creations. We conceive that Rousseau's exclamation, "Ah, viola de la pervenche," comes more home to the mind than Mr. Wordsworth's discovery of the linnet's nest "with five blue eggs," or than his address to the cuckoo, beautiful as we think it is; and we will confidently match the citizen of Geneva's adventures on the Lake of Bieme against the Cumberland's Poet's floating dreams on the Lake of Grasmere. Both create an interest out of nothing, or rather out of their own feelings; both weave numberless recollections into one sentiment; both wind their own being round whatever object occurs to them. But Rousseau, as a prose-writer, gives only the habitual and personal impression. Mr. Wordsworth, as a poet, is forced to lend the colours of imagination to impressions which owe all their force to their identity with themselves, and tries to paint what is only to be felt. Rousseau, in a word, interests you in certain objects by interesting you in himself; Mr. Wordsworth would persuade you that the most insignificant objects are interesting in themselves, because he is interested in them. If he had met with Rousseau's favorite periwinkle, he would have translated it into the most beautiful of flowers. This is not imagination, but want of sense. If his jealousy of the sympathy of others makes him avoid what is beautiful and grand in nature, why does he undertake elaborately to describe other objects?<sup>32</sup>

(1817)

In citing passages from Les Confessions to illustrate Rousseau's use of the personal element in his writings, Haslitt showed familiarity with Rousseau's life and with the writing he discussed. This allusion, like the one which precedes it, is from "On the Character of Rousseau."

The best of all his works is the Confessions, though it is that which has been least read, because it contains the fewest set paradoxes or general opinions. It relates entirely to himself; and no one was ever so much at home on this subject as he was. From the strong hold which they had taken of his mind, he makes us enter his feelings as if they had been our own, and we seem to remember every incident and circumstance of his life as if it had happened to ourselves. We are never tired of this work, for it everywhere presents us with pictures which we can fancy to be counterparts of our own existence.

The passages of this sort are innumerable. There is the interesting account of his childhood, the constraints and thoughtless liberty of which are so well described; of his sitting up all night reading romances with his father, till they were forced to desist by hearing the swallows twittering in their nests; his crossing the Alps, described with all the feelings belonging to it, his pleasure in setting out, his satisfaction in coming to his journey's end, the delight of "coming and going he knew not where"; his arriving at Turin; the figure of Madame Basile, drawn with such inimitable precision and elegance; the delightful adventure of the Chateau de Toune, where he passed the day with Mademoiselle G\*\*\* and Mademoiselle Galley; the story of his Zuleika, the proud, the charming Zuleika, whose last words, "Va Zanetto, a studia la Matematica," were never to be forgotten; his sleeping near Lyons in a niche of the wall, after a fine summer's day, with a nightingale perched above his head; his first meeting with Madame Warens, ... his description of her person, her angelic smile, her mouth of the size of his own; his walking out one day while the bells were chiming to vespers, and anticipating in a sort of waking dream the life he afterwards led with her, in which months and years, and life itself passed away in undisturbed felicity; the sudden disappointment of his hopes; his transport thirty years after at seeing the same flower which they had brought home together from one of their rambles near Chambéry; his thoughts in that long interval of time; his suppers with Grimm and Diderot after he came to Paris; the first idea of his writing the New Eloise, and his attachment to Madame d'Houdetot; his literary projects, his fame, his misfortune, his unhappy temper; his last solitary retirement in the lake and island of Biemme, with his dog and his boat; his reveries and delicious musings there; all these crowd into our minds with recollection which we do not chuse to express. There are no passages in the New Eloise of equal force and beauty with the best descriptions in the Confessions, if we except the excursion on the water, Julia's last letter to St. Preux, and his letter to her, recalling the days of their first loves. We spent two whole years in reading these two works; and (gentle reader, it was when we were young) in shedding tears over them

--"As fast as the Arabian trees

Their medicinal gums."

They were the happiest years of our life. We may well say of them, sweet is the dew of their memory, and pleasant the balm of their recollection! They are, indeed, impressions which neither time nor circumstance can efface.<sup>35</sup>

(1817)

In "On the Past and Future," an essay from Table Talk, Haslitt

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., pp. 90-91.

again praised Rousseau's vivid style of writing in Les Confessions.

He seems to gather up the past moments of his being like drops of honey-dew to distil a precious liquor from them; his alternate pleasures and pains are the bead-roll that he tells over, and piously worships; he makes a rosary of the flowers of hope and fancy that strewed his earliest years.<sup>34</sup>

(1821)

Hazlitt's early fondness for La Nouvelle Héloïse and his eventual tiring of most parts of it have been mentioned in this chapter. In the essay, "On Reading Old Books," he tells of his continued liking for Le Contrat social and Les Confessions.

Many a dainty repast have I made of the New Eloise;--the description of the kiss; the excursion on the water; the letter of St. Preux, recalling the time of their first loves; and the account of Julia's death; these I read over and over again with unspeakable delight and wonder. Some years after, when I met with this work again, I found I had lost nearly my whole relish for it (except some few parts) and was, I remember, very much mortified with the change in my taste, which I sought to attribute to the smallness and gilt edges of the edition, I had bought, and its being perfumed with rose-leaves. Nothing could exceed the gravity, the solemnity with which I carried home and read the Dedication to the Social Contract, with some other pieces of the same author, which I had picked up at a stall in a coarse leathern cover. Of the Confessions I have spoken elsewhere, and may repeat what I have said-- "Sweet is the dew of their memory, and pleasant the balm of their recollection!"<sup>35</sup>

(1826)

The first of the unfavorable allusions is found in the Diary of Thomas De Quincey. Incidentally, this is evidently the first allusion after 1800.

I talked with Mr. Benterjak about Rousseau's Emile--Julia--Social Contract. Mr. B. said it was generally believed

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid., vol. VIII, pp. 23-24.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., vol. XII, p. 224.

Rousseau did not write the "Confessions" in the Emile.<sup>36</sup>  
(1803)

Without going into any more detail than did De Quincey, Shelley, writing to Thomas Jefferson Hogg, May 15, 1811, questioned the value and accuracy of Les Confessions.

The Confessions of Rousseau are the only things of the kind that have appeared, and they are either a disgrace to the confessor, or a string of falsehoods, probably the latter.<sup>37</sup>  
(1811)

Seemingly, Hazlitt's only unflattering comment concerns Julie, the heroine in La Nouvelle Héloïse. In Memoirs of the Late Thomas Holcroft he said, "Rousseau's Julia, again, is something of a pedant, and cold, calculating, and insincere."<sup>38</sup>  
(1816)

When writing to Fanny Brawne, Keats sometimes scoffed at Rousseau's letter writing as illustrated in La Nouvelle Héloïse. On July 1, 1819, he said that he was glad that he had not sent a letter which he had written because it was too much like one of Rousseau's.<sup>39</sup>

Then, on February 25, 1820, Keats again laughed at Rousseau's letter writing when he wrote to Miss Brawne.

I have been turning over two volumes of Letters written between Rousseau and two Ladies in the perplexed strain of mingled finesse and sentiment in which the Ladies and gentlemen of those days were so clever, and which is still prevalent among Ladies of this Country who live in a state of re[a]soning romance.

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<sup>36</sup> Thomas De Quincey, Diary (Horace A. Eaton, editor, New York: Payson and Clarke Ltd., 1927), p. 193.

<sup>37</sup> Shelley, Letters (Ingpen, editor), vol. I, p. 77.

<sup>38</sup> Hazlitt, op. cit., vol. III, p. 130.

<sup>39</sup> John Keats, Letters (Maurice Buxton Forman, editor, Oxford: Humphrey Milford, 1931), vol. II, p. 361.

The likeness however only extends to the mannerism, not the dexterity. What would Rousseau have said at seeing Fanny's and my little correspondence! What would his ladies have said! I don't care much--I would sooner have Shakespeare's opinion about the matter. The common gossiping of washer-women must be less disgusting than the continual and eternal fence and attack of Rousseau and these sublime Petticoats. One calls herself Clara and her friend Julia, two of Ro[us]seau's heroines--they all [for a]t the same time christen poor Jean Jacques S. Preux--who is the poor cavalier of his famous novel. Thank God I am born in England with our own great Men before my eyes. Thank God that you are fair and can love me without being Letter-written and sentimentaliz'd into it.<sup>40</sup>

(1820)

In explaining the purpose of Don Juan, Byron named Rousseau as a writer who could have a worse influence than he.

Don Juan will be known by and bye, for what it is intended,-- a Satire on abuses of the present state of Society, and not an eulogy of vice; it may be now and then voluptuous: I can't help that. Ariosto is worse; Smollett (see Lord Strutwell in vol. 2<sup>d</sup> of R [oderick] R [andom]) ten times worse; and Fielding no better. No Girl will ever be seduced by reading D. J.: no, no; she will go to Little's poems and Rousseau's romans for that, or even to the immaculate De Stael: they will encourage her, and not the Don, who laughs at that, and--and--most other things.<sup>41</sup>

(1822)

#### CONCLUSIONS

The decline in the reputation of Rousseau which commenced about 1767, the time of his departure from England, and continued through the remainder of the century, is a contrast to his reputation in England during the Romantic Period. The Romantic Period--from the standpoint of the number of allusions and the enthusiasm of most writers--is the

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., pp. 513-514.

<sup>41</sup> Byron, Works (Prothero edition), vol. VI, pp. 155-156.

period during which Rousseau received the most attention. Only nine of the forty allusions are unfavorable, and the majority of these allusions are quite vague in the charges.

More references to Rousseau's writings than to his life and personality occur during this period, as was also true from 1776 to 1800. Hazlitt, who is the author of almost one-half of the allusions in this chapter, was primarily interested in Rousseau's writings, Le Contrat social and Les Confessions especially. No other writing except La Nouvelle Héloïse was mentioned. Hazlitt's allusions were, as a rule, more specific than those of other writers.

While on the Continent, Hazlitt, Byron, and Shelley were interested enough in Rousseau to visit the territory which Rousseau had described in Les Confessions and La Nouvelle Héloïse. After their visits, all of these writers praised Rousseau's descriptive ability. Other writers who alluded to his life or his writings less frequently were Coleridge, Carlyle, and De Quincey.

## CHAPTER IV

### ROUSSEAU'S REPUTATION IN ENGLAND FROM 1832 TO 1850

Indifference, rather than decided disfavor, appears to be the keynote to Rousseau's reputation from 1832 to 1850, if the number and the tone of the allusions included in this chapter are accurate indications. In contrast to forty allusions for the preceding period, we find only seven from 1832 to 1850. An allusion of De Quincey's contains the only adverse criticism.

### ALLUSIONS TO ROUSSEAU'S LIFE AND PERSONALITY

The only two allusions to the life of Rousseau for the entire period are found in the Autobiography of Leigh Hunt. Although both allusions are quite incidental, they are favorable. The only reference to the personality of Rousseau is that of Thomas De Quincey and is unfavorable.

Like Byron, Shelley, and Haslitt, Leigh Hunt was eager to visit the scenes Rousseau had described and, like the other writers, he expected to be impressed although he did not say much about his experiences.

At Chambéry, I could not resist going to see the house of Rousseau and Madame de Warens, while the coach stopped. It is up a beautiful lane, where you have trees all the way, sloping fields, and a brook; as fit a scene as could be desired. I met some Germans coming away, who congratulated me on being bound as they had been, to the house of "Jean Jacques."<sup>1</sup>

(1850)

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<sup>1</sup> Leigh Hunt, Autobiography (Edmund Blunden, editor, Oxford: Humphrey Milford, 1928), p. 435.

Hunt again mentioned Rousseau and Madame de Warens when he condemned Thomas Moore's criticism of them.

I thought, afterwards, that a man of such spirit should not have condescended to attack Rousseau and poor foolish Madame de Warens out of a desire to right himself with polite life, and with the memory of some thoughtless productions of his own.<sup>2</sup>

(1850)

After quoting a passage from Les Confessions to illustrate Rousseau's "extravagant silliness," De Quincey attempted to find explanations for his peculiar ideas. The entire passage will be quoted in the section dealing with the writings.

After all, the sentimentalist had youth to plead in apology for this extravagance. He was hypochondriacal; he was in solitude; and he was possessed by gloomy imaginations "from the works of society in the highest public credit."<sup>3</sup>

#### ALLUSIONS TO ROUSSEAU'S WRITINGS

Englishmen who alluded to Rousseau's writings during this period were Thomas Carlyle and Thomas De Quincey. Carlyle praised Le Contrat social, and De Quincey criticized Les Confessions. Both Carlyle and De Quincey referred to Rousseau's doctrines rather than to the literary qualities of his writings.

In The French Revolution, Carlyle mentioned briefly Rousseau's teachings.

Fancy, for example, the Professors of Universities parading the streets with their young France, and swearing in an

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 379.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas De Quincey, Collected Writings (David Masson, editor, London: A. and C. Black, 1897), vol. VIII, p. 426.

enthusiastic manner, not without tumult. By a larger exercise of fancy, expand duly this little word: The like was repeated in every Town and District in France!...Such three weeks of swearing! Saw the Sun ever such a swearing people? Have they been bit by a swearing tarantula? No; but they are men and Frenchmen; they have Hope; and, singular to say, they have Faith, were it only in the Gospel according to Jean Jacques.<sup>4</sup>

(1837)

Concerning Rousseau and Le Contrat social, Carlyle said in The French Revolution, "Rousseau's status is decreed: virtuous Jean-Jacques, Evangelist of the Contrat Social."<sup>5</sup>

(1837)

Then, in a more pointed allusion from the same writing, Carlyle stressed the importance of the governmental ideas in Le Contrat social.

Time, and so many Montesquieus, Mablys, spokesmen of Time, have discovered innumerable things; and now has not Jean Jacques promulgated his new Evangel of a Contrat Social, explaining the whole mystery of Government, and how it is contracted and bargained for, --to universal satisfaction? ...That a new young generation has exchanged the Sceptic Creed, What shall I believe? for passionate Faith in this Gospel according to Jean Jacques is a further step in the business and betokens much.<sup>6</sup>

(1837)

To show the foolishness of Rousseau's ideas, De Quincey quoted a passage from part I, book VI, of Les Confessions. The translation is included here. Reference to this allusion has already been made in connection with Rousseau's personality.

But a mode of questioning the oracles of darkness far more childish, and under some shape or other, equally common amongst those who are prompted by mere vacancy of mind,

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<sup>4</sup> Carlyle, op. cit., vol. III, pp. 314-315.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., vol. IV, p. 51.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., vol. III, pp. 53-54.

without that determination to sacred fountains which is impressed by misery, may be found in the following extravagant silliness of Rousseau, which I give in his own words-- a case for which he admits that he himself would have shut up any other man (meaning in a lunatic hospital) whom he had seen practicing the same absurdities:--

"In the midst of my studies and of a life as innocent as it was possible to lead, and in spite of all that could be said to me, the fear of Hell again agitated me. Often I asked myself, In what state am I? If I should die at this moment, shall I be damned? According to my Jansenist friends, the thing is undubitable; but to my conscience it appeared not so continually fearful and floating in this cruel uncertainty, I had recourse, for escape, to expedients the most ridiculous, and such as I should willingly have shut up any other person for if I had seen him doing the like. One day, dreaming on this said subject, I exercised myself mechanically in throwing stones against the trunks of some trees, and this with my usual dexterity--that is, scarcely ever hitting one of them. In the midst of this fine exercise, it occurred to me to make a sort of prognostic for calming my trouble. I said to myself,--I shall throw this stone at that tree which is directly opposite me: if I touch it, sign of salvation; if I miss, sign of damnation. So saying, I threw my stone with a trembling hand and a horrible beating of the heart, but so happily that it hit the tree right in the middle: not a difficult matter truly; for I had taken care to choose a very big and very near one. Since then I have had no more doubt of my salvation. I know not, in recalling this incident, whether I ought to laugh or be ashamed of myself."

Now, really, if Rousseau thought fit to try such tremendous appeals by taking a "shy" at a random object, he should have governed his sortilege (for such it may be called) with something more like equity....After all, the sentimentalist had youth to plead in apology for this extravagance. He was hypochondriacal; he was in solitude; and he was possessed by gloomy imaginations "from the works of society in the highest public credit."<sup>7</sup>

#### CONCLUSIONS

From the standpoint of the number of allusions, this period is most nearly like the one from 1778 to 1800. Similarly, the period

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<sup>7</sup> De Quincey, op. cit., pp. 425-426.

1800 to 1832 resembles the first period in this study. The principal difference between the seven allusions for this period and the allusions for the last quarter of the eighteenth century is that all but two of the allusions cited here are favorable, and only one allusion in the other period is complimentary.

Leigh Hunt and Thomas Carlyle wrote favorably about Rousseau. Thomas De Quincey denounced him and his theories in Les Confessions. Incidentally, Les Confessions is the only writing besides Le Contrat social to receive attention at this time. Both Carlyle and De Quincey criticized Rousseau's ideas rather than his literary style.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

On the basis of the evidence brought forth in this study, we find that the reputation of Rousseau in England from 1750 to 1850 fluctuated considerably. He was alternately worshipped and despised but seldom totally ignored. Fluctuation which sometimes occurred during a certain period of years is particularly evident during the period 1750 to 1778 when his reputation in England changed suddenly from favorable to unfavorable.

From 1750 to 1778, Englishmen were apparently most interested in Rousseau's life and personality, for the majority of the allusions deal with that phase of his reputation. Eight allusions are to the writings, and twenty-one are to his life and personality. Over half of the allusions are those of Boswell and Hume, whose opinions were favorable until their quarrel with Rousseau in the summer of 1766. Only six of the twenty-nine allusions are favorable, and five of the favorable allusions concern his life. Hume, writing about La Nouvelle Héloïse, made the only favorable comment on the writings.

In the section devoted to opinions of his writings, we find the majority of the comments concerned with La Nouvelle Héloïse. Although Hume commented favorably about the novel, no other writer of the period criticized Rousseau's literary productions favorably. Gray, who mentioned no specific writing, wrote about the "sameness" of Rousseau's plots and characters. Boswell and Dr. Burney thought that La Nouvelle

Héloïse might have a bad influence. Frances Burney gave in her Diary her father's opinion that the novel was not suitable reading for young girls. Boswell said in the Life of Johnson, "...his novel may, perhaps, do harm; but I cannot think his intention was bad." In the Life Boswell also quoted Johnson's adverse criticism of Rousseau's theories of inequality. Gibbon and Gray expressed disapproval of the Emile during this period.

The period 1778 to 1800 differs from the preceding period in that fewer writers commented about Rousseau from 1778 to 1800 and that all the allusions in the second period, with the exception of one general reference to the writings, are unfavorable. In writing about Rousseau's personality, Burke and Walpole criticized two weaknesses, vanity and suspicion. Burke was an especially severe critic. Incidents in Rousseau's life and the philosophical and political writings evidently received no attention at this time.

During the Romantic Period, 1800 to 1832, the comparatively greater number of allusions and the enthusiasm of most writers denotes a high-point in Rousseau's reputation in England, if the allusions found in this investigation are an accurate indication.

From 1800 to 1832 the majority of the allusions are favorable to Rousseau. Thirty-one of the forty allusions--the most found in any period of this study--are favorable. Hazlitt, usually a complimentary writer, was more critical, however, when he described Julie, the heroine of La Nouvelle Héloïse, as "something of a pedant, and cold, calculating, and insincere." Other writers who made minor, unfavorable comments about Rousseau were Byron, Shelley, Keats, Coleridge, and

De Quincey. Carlyle, the only other writer of the period to mention Rousseau, was not essentially an adverse critic although he described him as "poor Jean Jacques, half-sage, half-maniac." Carlyle's reaction was apparently one of pity mingled with admiration.

During this period, Hazlitt, the most prolific critic, was concerned mainly with Rousseau's writings, Le Contrat social and Les Confessions. Incidentally, La Nouvelle Heloise is the only other writing mentioned during the period. Hazlitt, who had liked the novel best in his youth, was particularly interested in Rousseau's vivid descriptions. Hazlitt, as did Byron and Shelley, visited the Rousseau country and wrote about the "beauty of his reality."

As the period 1778 to 1800 is in noticeable contrast to the period 1750 to 1778 from the point of view of the number of allusions and the attitude of critics, so is the period 1832 to 1850 in contrast to the one from 1800 to 1832. The difference between the last two periods, however, is principally in the number of allusions found. Five of the seven allusions from 1832 to 1850 and thirty-one of the forty allusions from 1800 to 1832 are favorable. De Quincey, the only writer of the period who commented unfavorably about Rousseau, criticized his fantastic ideas in Les Confessions.

Two incidental references to the life of Rousseau in the period immediately following the Romantic Age are those of Leigh Hunt, who mentioned Rousseau's association with Madame de Warens. Carlyle, who praised Le Contrat social, and De Quincey, who criticized Les Confessions, discussed Rousseau's doctrines rather than his literary style.

The work most frequently mentioned during the period 1750 to 1850 is La Nouvelle Héloïse. In the Romantic Age, 1800 to 1832, the novel was favorably commented upon by Byron, Hazlitt, and Shelley. Byron liked Rousseau's vivid descriptions, and Shelley was impressed by his imaginative qualities. Hazlitt had liked La Nouvelle Héloïse best in his early days but eventually changed his mind. Keats, the only writer who did not seem to appreciate the novel, scoffed at Rousseau's specimens of letter writing in it.

The first and third periods offer the greatest number of allusions to La Nouvelle Héloïse. In the first period, one allusion of Hume's is favorable, but two of Johnson's and Burney's are unfavorable. Burke, the only writer who mentioned the novel from 1778 to 1800, condemned its vulgarity.

Next to La Nouvelle Héloïse, Les Confessions received the most attention during the entire period 1750 to 1850, its peak coming during the Romantic Period. Hazlitt, in the Romantic Period, praised Rousseau's descriptive ability and his vivid style of writing, but Shelley said that Les Confessions were either "a disgrace to the confessor, or a string of falsehoods, probably the latter." Burke and Walpole in the period 1778 to 1800 also criticized Les Confessions unfavorably. Burke spoke of Rousseau's "mad confession of his mad faults." Walpole said that "his Confessions disgusted me beyond any book I ever read." The only reference to Les Confessions in the last period of the study is De Quincey's. De Quincey stressed the foolishness of Rousseau's salvation theories. Gibbon in the first period mentioned the work

without discussing it. Altogether, then, the judgments of Les Confessions are nearly all unfavorable.

The other writings mentioned less frequently are Le Contrat social, Emile, the second Discours, and the dialogues, Rousseau juge Jean-Jacques. Le Contrat social was not referred to until the Romantic Period when Hazlitt mentioned it twice. He spoke of his continued liking for it and described it as "a work of great ability, but extreme formality of structure." Carlyle, in the last period of the study, praised the governmental ideas set forth in Le Contrat social. Walpole, in the last quarter of the century, mentioned the fact that Rousseau juge Jean-Jacques was based on vanity and suspicion. Before this time, Johnson had written of the unsoundness of Rousseau's theory of inequality, as expounded in the second Discours. Gray, about the same time, wrote that the Emile had deserved burning when it was condemned by the parlement of Geneva.

The Romantic Age is the only time during which Rousseau was praised for his literary ability. Then, Hazlitt commended most his descriptive style and said that he had "true genius or a good substitute for it." Hazlitt also described him as an "acute observer and eloquent writer." Byron and Shelley, although less enthusiastic than Hazlitt, liked his descriptive style of writing.

Few allusions to incidents in Rousseau's life are found. The most, related in the first period, deal with Boswell's and Hume's meeting Rousseau, the question of the pension, and their quarrel. Other facts discussed in less detail are the disowning of his five children, his association with Madame de Warens, and his plot delusions.

English opinion of Rousseau's personality was apparently highest before he quarreled with Boswell and Hume. Hume before the quarrel described Rousseau as "amiable, gay, polite, and sociable" but after the quarrel called him a "madman and a villain." Burke and Walpole in the next period condemned his vanity, suspicious nature, and vulgarity. In the Romantic Period no writer mentioned especially flattering personality traits although Hazlitt praised the valuable effect of his egotism on his writings. Writers during the Romantic Period were evidently more impressed by his literary products than by his life and personality.

Evidence found in the study indicates that the greatest enthusiasm for Rousseau and his writings in the one-hundred-year period in England came from 1800 to 1832; but if the time limits of the investigation were extended to the present, it is entirely possible that a period of still greater approval might be found.

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