

Preface to Temple's *Letters to the King*

Running Commentary

They were Corrected by Himself; and fairly Transcribed in his Life time] In his quarrel with Lady Giffard over the publication of Temple's *Memoirs: Part III* in 1709, Swift insisted: "Nothing of [Sir William Temple's] ever printed in my Time was from the Originall; the first Memoirs was from my Copy, so were the second Miscellanea, so was the Introduction to the English History: so was every Volume of Letters, They were all copyed from the Originalls by S^r W^m Temples direction, and corrected all along by his Orders; and it was the same with these last Memoirs" (*Correspondence*, ed. Woolley, I, 270 and n,nn6,7).

I have in all Things followed his Directions as strictly as I could] Swift told Lady Giffard on 10 November 1709: "And I might insist upon it, that I had particular Commands for every Thing I did" (*Correspondence*, ed. Woolley, I, 270 and n5; see also I, 250 and n).

Because great Numbers of such LETTERS, procured out of the Office ... have been already Printed] This is explained by Elias, *Swift at Moor Park*, pp. 218-19n67, as well as by N. F. Lowe and W. J. Mc Cormack, "Swift as 'Publisher' of Sir William Temple's *Letters and Miscellanea*," *Swift Studies*, 8 (1993), 46-57 (pp. 52-53).

these Letters ending with the Author's Revocation from his Employments abroad] The last letter, "To My Lord Treasurer," is dated 28 February 1678 (N.S.).

his Retirement from all publick Business] Temple withdrew from public life in February 1681, first retiring to his country estate Sheen and subsequently to Moor Park (Homer E. Woodbridge, *Sir William Temple: The Man and his Work* [New York: The Modern Language Association, and London: Oxford University Press, 1940], pp. 204, 210-18). His essay "Upon the Gardens of Epicurus" concludes on the enjoyment of his independence there: "The sweetness and satisfaction of this Retreat [confirmed me in] my Resolution ... of never entring again into any Publick Employments" (*Miscellanea: The Second Part* [London: by T. M. for Ri. and Ra. Simpson, 1690], p. 63).

If I could have been prevailed with by the Rhetorick of Booksellers] It is in the nature of a bookseller's business 'to expand.' An example occurs in "The Bookseller to the Reader" of *A Tale of a Tub*: "If any Gentleman will please to furnish me with a Key, in order to explain the more difficult Parts, I shall very gratefully acknowledge the Favour, and print it by it self" (*A Tale of a Tub*, p. □).

if the Press must needs be loaded] A topos of affected modesty, reiterated in the Apology preceding the fifth edition of the *Tale* (see the note on "the World having been already too long nauseated with endless Repetitions upon every Subject," p. G) and *Gulliver's Travels*: Gulliver declines Captain Wilcocks's suggestion to publish an account of his adventures with the argument that the world was "already overstocked with Books of Travels" (*Prose Works*, XI, 147 [II, viii, 12]).

one Word in the Style of a Publisher (an Office lyable to much Censure, without the least Pretension to Merit or to Praise) that ... the Reader will hardly find one Letter in this Collection unworthy of the Author, or which does not contain something either of Entertainment or of Use] By humbly presenting himself as the publisher, the Editor of Temple's *Letters*, Swift also assumes an authorial voice, not only playfully refuting "the least Pretension to Merit or to Praise," but also invoking the Horatian dichotomy of *prodesse et delectare*. This final claim to literary excellence strengthens Swift's argument throughout that his collection is better than those of his rivals. It is difficult to see why a statement like this should "speak doubtfully for Swift's genuine feelings" (Elias, *Swift at Moor Park*, pp. 71-72), or why it should reflect "Swift's growing disaffection with Temple" (Lowe and Mc Cormack, "Swift as 'Publisher' of Sir William Temple's *Letters* and *Miscellanea*," pp. 56-57).

in the Style of a Publisher] That is, of an Editor.

France in order to break the force of the Confederacy, and elude all just Conditions of a general Peace, resolved by any means to enter into separate Measures with Holland; to which end it was absolutely necessary to engage the good Offices of the King of England, who was look'd upon to be Master of the Peace whenever he pleas'd] Swift is likely to have heard all the details about the negotiations from Sir William Temple himself, whose main concern had been to make Charles II arbiter of a general peace in Europe. It came as a complete shock to Temple when he learnt a few weeks later that Charles II had agreed

with Louis XIV on the terms for a separate peace between Holland and France, by the mediation of the obscure French-born diplomat, Joseph August Du Cros (for more details, see Kirsten Juhas, “Du Cros, Leibniz, and *An Answer to a Scurrilous Pamphlet*: New Light on Sir William Temple’s French Adversary,” *Swift Studies*, 25 [2010], 7-55 [pp. 9-10], and the Introduction to *An Answer to a Scurrilous Pamphlet*, pp.).

Monsieur Barillon the French Ambassador] Paul Barillon d’Amoncourt, Marquis de Branges (1630-91) was the French ambassador to England from 1677 to 1688, “an Ambassador ... engaged in Interests visibly opposite to those of England,” Swift snarled in *An Answer to a Scurrilous Pamphlet* (p. 11, ll. 11-12). Temple had reason to believe that the detested Du Cros was one of Barillon’s “Confident[s]” (p. 11, l. 30; see also Lois G. Schworer, “*No Standing Armies!*”: *The Antiarmy Ideology in Seventeenth-Century England* [Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974], pp. 118-19). With William of Orange, Louis XIV’s most implacable enemy, ascending the English throne, Barillon was expelled, and war commenced between the two kingdoms (Sir George Clark, *The Later Stuarts, 1660-1714*, 2nd ed. [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955], p. 148). La Fontaine dedicated his fable “Le Pouvoir des Fables” to him (*Fables choisies* [Amsterdam: Pierre Mortier, 1693], pp. 228-30 [II, iv]).

—’d’s fish] A euphemistic abbreviation used in oaths and asseverations, as “in the quasi-oath *God’s fish!* (more commonly *od’s-fish*)” (OED).

my Brother of *France*] The royal mode of address for each other, as Swift knew only too well (see also *Gulliver’s Travels*, XI, 76 [I, viii, 3]): “Time as long againe / Would be fill’d vp (my brother) with our thanks,” Polixenes, King of Bohemia, addresses Leontes, King of Sicilia, in SHAKESPEARE’S *The Winters Tale* (I, ii, 50-51; I, ii, 211), and Queen Anne referred to William III as her “late Most Dear Brother” (*The Letters and Diplomatic Instructions of Queen Anne*, ed. Beatrice Curtis Brown [London: Cassell, 1968], p. 81).

I may be a little mistaken as to the Sums of Money] Swift’s estimate was correct (Clark, *The Later Stuarts, 1660-1714*, p. 90).