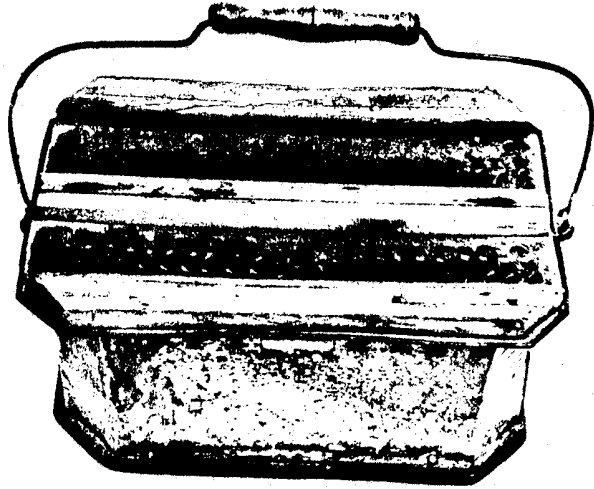


*We had Thunder & Lighten<sup>g</sup> here on Thursday morn<sup>g</sup> between 5 & 7 - no very bad Thunder, but a great deal of Light<sup>g</sup>. - It has given the commencement of a season of wind & rain; & perhaps for the next 6 weeks we shall not have two dry days together. - Letter to Cassandra, October 11, 1813.*

#### FOOTWARMERS

Travelling in the winter, in any sort of carriage, was cold. This tin foot warmer, circa 1780, was filled with hot coals, and helped to ward off a chill. (12"x8"x6")

Bricks, previously heated in the fire and wrapped in cloths, were also used to keep feet warm in carriages.



#### DANCE - SEPTEMBER MEETING - E. Sutherland.

Haven't you always thought that the cotillion was a graceful dance? No dancer of the 18th century would have recognized what was going on at the Vancouver September meeting!

Under the expert guidance of Catherine Lee, who has degrees in English Drama and Dance from Queens and York Universities, thirty members practised steps and movements from dances of Jane Austen's period.

The first exercise was easy: we imagined ourselves dressed in shimmering satins and rich brocades, the ladies with dignified panniers to their gowns and hair coiffed by their personal hairdressers, the gentlemen with flared tails to their coats and magnificent powdered wigs. But then, how difficult -- how impossible -- to point toes, move feet, bend and rise, turn and bow, smiles on faces and arms floating in various positions! Elegance and grace disappeared forever.

Between dances, we learned about the Court of Louis XIV of France, a fine figure of a man who loved dancing and watching dancers. To keep his courtiers under his eye, too busy to plot rebellion, he insisted on a precise, meticulous ritual of the dance, requiring the aristocracy to practise four hours a day under threat of banishment if they performed badly.

These were the old dances that came to England in a simplified form - the *nouveau riche*, buying their way into the gentry and aristocracy, didn't have time or talents for the intricacies of the formal dances of the French Court. Country dances, too, added their influence.

In one of these country dances, a forerunner of the Virginia reel, we did better, and soon found ourselves in a "longways" set, advancing, retreating, casting off and arming down the centre. The number of our dancers grew less and less, as participants retired to the sidelines in various states of exhaustion, but a few couples were enthusiastic to the end - the waltz!

It was a different kind of meeting for us, but a pleasant and interesting experience, and we learned to appreciate Willoughby "dancing from eight o'clock till four, without once sitting down", or Jane Austen's own comment in a letter to Cassandra, "I fancy I could just as well dance for a week together as for half an hour." What stamina our ancestors had!

\* \* \* \* \*

#### READINGS AND DISCUSSIONS IN OCTOBER - E. Sutherland.

Selections from members' recent reading led to spirited discussion at the October meeting. Mary Anderson, Fanny Pugliese and Mavis Jones vividly dramatized an essay by Leigh Hunt on "Getting up on a Cold Morning", leaving us with a renewed appreciation for central heating, wondering about the heat produced by fireplaces and candles, and whether there was any connection between the introduction of coal fires and the increasing scantiness of ladies' dresses.

Murray Wanamaker read parts of essays by Mary McCarthy, in which she points out that Jane Austen's details of incomes, ages, times and distances are exact and used whenever a chance arises; and Margaret Lane, who found that we think that Jane Austen gives us elaborate details but rather she rouses our imaginations to fill in the pictures of her houses and people for ourselves.

John Howe brought us back to the words of Jane Austen herself, reading a passage from P&P in which Elizabeth and Charlotte Lucas debate about how much a young woman should show encouragement to a favoured admirer. Later in the discussion we found Anne Elliot doing just what Charlotte recommended - speaking warmly to Captain Wentworth at the concert, making room for him beside her, and coaxing him to remain. John Parker read the passage where Emma is finally enlightened about her love for Mr. Knightley and realizes that she has probably thrown it away if he is really attracted to Harriet - leading to the comment, supported by almost everyone, that "This was when I first began to like Emma". Keiko Parker read us a musical passage about Anne Elliot at the concert in Bath.

Further discussion ranged from punctuation rules of the period; customs of address: "Miss Bennet, Miss Elizabeth," etc.; exactness or indefiniteness of Jane Austen's details; and why Elizabeth was allowed (by Jane Austen) to be rude to her mother but Emma never treated her exasperating father with anything but loving respect.

Following the usual "finger food" pot-luck lunch, a report of the conference was received with great interest.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### REJECTION SLIPS

I don't know what sort of rejection slip Jane Austen received when Cadell refused Pride and Prejudice unread. But I have just discovered the perfect one, used by the editors of a Chinese economics journal:

"We have read your manuscript with boundless delight. If we were to publish your paper it would be impossible for us to publish any work of a lower standard. As it is unthinkable that, in the next thousand years, we shall see its equal, we are, to our regret, compelled to return your divine composition, and to beg you a thousand times to overlook our short sight and timidity".

- Writing for Antiquity: Glyn Daniel (quoted in NYT Book Rev. Aug.9,1992)

\* \* \* \* \*

SAMPLES FROM SANTA MONICARomantic Correspondence: Jane Austen, Politics and the Fiction of Letters - Mary Favret, Indiana University (Ron Sutherland)

Letter writing and correspondence were very important to life in the 18th century. Corresponding societies were highly popular, but ultimately were prohibited by the Pitt government in fear of the seditious ideas which were being circulated in this way. The Post Office had the power to open any mail during this period, and many letters (especially those from people in government or the military) would be written in guarded language.

Letter writing manuals were published and proved popular. Instructions were given on how to write various types of letters. In Emma, Jane Fairfax comments on the differences between business letters and those sent to friends. Letters were often passed around the family and the community, giving news of the family and the village. They give a good indication of the social structures of the period.

Postage was paid by the recipient, so the writer felt obliged to make the letter worthy of payment. In 1790-1805, the price of stamps was increased five times, as one of the ways to pay for the costs of the war. There was an outcry by the people and critical articles in newspapers about the use of stamps to support an unpopular war.

The importance of letters (both seen and unseen) to the story line of Sense and Sensibility and Persuasion is evident. Jane used the letter to re-establish relations in Persuasion when she had a letter written by Captain Wentworth passed directly to Anne Elliot. His letter was much more intimate than he would otherwise have dared to be.

\*

Jane Austen and the West Indies - Daniel Segal (Ron Sutherland)

Segal invited us to read Jane Austen novels in the context of the West Indies and their social and political perspective. In Mansfield Park, Mary Crawford is described as having a "clear brown complexion" and Henry as being "absolutely plain, black and plain". Why should we assume they are white Europeans? Jane Austen was very particular in her descriptions - how can we deny their racial background? Henry and Mary are creole whites or mulattos. They are from a family of seafaring people, including Admiral Crawford, their uncle. From a West Indies perspective, these characters have some black and white in their background.

Was this a racist description of moral inferiority of the two characters? This type of racism was socially acceptable at the time, but Jane Austen's style is most untypical of such racism, and Segal rejected a racist interpretation of Mansfield Park.

A major focus of the novel, however, is absenteeism - of clerics receiving two incomes, and of landlords away from their estates. Jane Austen discusses the concept and its moral correctness. Sir Thomas Bertram's West Indies affairs go wrong when he is at Mansfield Park, and the reverse is true when he is in the West Indies. Jane Austen's criticism of absenteeism applies both at home and away; it is a criticism of the privileged taking advantage of their position. It is possible that she was uncomfortable with the issue because it also reflected on the British Navy and other British social structures. It is very possible that Jane Austen had been in contact with one of the families involved in business in the West Indies. It was quite usual for children from these irregular alliances to be brought back to England to be educated and brought up with the rest of the family.

How accepted socially would the mulatto children be? If they had money, they would certainly be reasonably accepted in the community. Other fictional examples are Miss Lamb in Sanditon, and Bertha Rochester in Jane Eyre.

\*

Traveling and Dining in Regency England - Simon Varey (Ron Sutherland)

Simon Varey prepared a meal for the fifty or so people in attendance, while at the same time giving a running commentary on what he was cooking and how it fit into the Jane Austen period. He pointed out that one of the better recipe books for the period was Hannah Glasse's book, published in 1747 and still a best seller in 1853.

Varey started with "Lambs' Wool", a drink served hot in winter and cold in summer, and common at inns all over England. It was a popular drink, reported in the literature from 1560-1825. It consists of beer, ale, wine and spiced cider - English wine was a Riesling type, slightly sweet.

Bread and cheese was the common snack at inns where the coaches stopped. It was whole grain bread, but was nutritionally useless because of the English addiction to sugar with tea: consumption averaged 30-40 cups per person per day. Stilton was a white cheese until the 19th century with no blue veins. Cheshire and Double Gloucester were also popular - only local cheeses were served until the coming of rail transport allowed for wider distribution of foods around the country.

Vegetables were considered peasant food. For the upper classes, vegetables were used as garnishes and as fillers to a platter of meat. For those who could afford it, immense amounts of meat were eaten. Lamb was the most popular. Simon Varey cooked us "Lamb à la Maintenon", dipping the pieces of lamb into melted butter, then into a mixture of chopped herbs (basil, thyme, marjoram and parsley, NOT rosemary), and grilling them. Lamb was preferred rare or medium rare. A sauce was made with beef stock, chopped shallots and a touch of vinegar.

Many families made home-made wine from local fruits - pear wine and cider were the most common. The upper classes drank young wines, like *Beaujolais nouveau*, daily. Port, too, was consumed in large quantities - a "four bottle man" was not uncommon in Jane Austen's time. Dinner was served anywhere from 2 to 6, with four to six meat dishes. Supper was at 8, and was mostly drink.

Simon made our vegetable dish from peeled cucumbers and pearl onions sautéed in butter and then simmered in a white sauce. He mentioned that this was often cooked to the point of being a sauce only. Our dessert was a kind of flan, with short pastry in a pan, spread with preserved quinces, and then covered with sliced apple, lemon and orange juice, orange peel and spices (no sugar); and baked until done. There were at least 60 varieties of apples in Jane Austen's time - less than ten are available today.

\*

Jane Austen's Heroines & the 18th Century English Portrait - Paula Radisich (E.S.)

In a letter of 1813, Jane Austen writes of going to the Great Exhibition and looking for a picture of Mrs. Darcy. From the letters we learn that she enjoyed going to art exhibits in London - three are mentioned. She knew the works of Sir Joshua Reynolds, and other artists. She was attracted to small portraits and miniatures. In her well-known letter to her nephew James Edward, she calls herself a miniaturist - she works on "two Inches of Ivory...with so fine a Brush, as produces little effect after much labour".

For miniature painting, thin sheets of ivory were prepared to resemble paper; brushes were made from the hair of squirrels' tails; watercolours were used. "Effect" was a technical term of the handling of light and shadow to create mood - it was not a distinguishing trait of 18th century miniatures. "Sparkle" was a word used to describe them, and Jane Austen uses this word of P&P.

There are parallels between the novels and painting. Many famous artists, for example Fuseli and Reynolds, defined miniatures as an inferior form of art. Jane Austen would consider herself as distancing herself from the grandiose aims of the Academy. It was a private art form, rather than a public one.

As a genre, portrait miniatures were extremely popular. The face was usually in the top area, and the figure cut off below the bust, but not always: there might be more than one figure, e.g. mother and child, or a three-quarter length figure. It was size and use that set off miniatures from regular paintings. They should be small enough to hold in one's hand, to be carried around, to be worn as jewelry. They were usually commissioned as personal mementoes of loved ones. Sometimes they had an erotic message, intended to please a lover. Margaret Dashwood sees Marianne wearing a miniature and suspects it is of Willoughby; actually it is a deceased uncle. Lucy Steele has a miniature of Edward Ferrars. Locks of hair and miniatures sent the same message in the 18th century. Tresses of hair were often placed in the back of the frame, or surrounding the face. Miniatures of amorous attachment could be publicly displayed because they could be concealed: for example, it was quite common to have a miniature painting of a single eye. A large painting does not have this uncertain meaning - it is public display rather than private use. Such mistaken codes and false meanings are central also to Jane Austen's novels.

Miniature lockets could be worn openly or hidden inside clothing. Often a circlet of pearls or other jewels surround the portrait - erotic symbols - which makes the figure appear more valuable and the miniature more jewelry-like.

Miniatures do not intimidate the beholder. Grand Gainsborough portraits dominate and give a sense of power. Elizabeth looks up to the portrait of Darcy at Pemberley - she is an inferior looking up to a superior. A miniature has a different set of practices or constraints - the beholder clearly controls the image.

In the years 1790-1810, miniature painting reached its peak; this was the period of the most important artists. Women painted miniatures but did not become prominent in this field.

\*

#### Travels With Penelope - Stuart Tave (Eileen Sutherland)

It is difficult for us to get a feeling for travel before the time of the railroads, to realize the "danger" of speeds up to 10 miles an hour, or the short (to us) distances which could be covered in a day. Jane Austen uses travel in her novels and is very careful of the times and distances: Willoughby's going 120 miles in 12 hours to see Marianne is intended to express his intensity, his urgency. The times and distances in Catherine Morland's journey, or the Musgroves going to Bath, are exact and realistic.

Books mentioned in the novels include Fordyce's Sermons, which Mr. Collins chose to read. This advice to a young lady recommends books of travel, which will increase national pride, arouse and satisfy curiosity, and teach something about one's self and home. McArtney's book about China, which Fanny was reading, told about the "odd" Chinese customs such as binding women's feet, but also discussed the foolishness of his own country: the tight, fashionable dress, steel stays, etc.

A basic necessity was a "travelling purse of one's own" which Jane Austen herself yearned for. Anne Elliot was quiet, confined to home, her vision focussed on the "confined and unvarying society" of her life.

"Explore" was a 19th century word for making an excursion, going on a pleasure journey somewhere. Mrs. Elton uses it five times in one paragraph. The journey to Box Hill gives us beautiful views contrasting with ugly human incidents: this is Emma's longest exploration, one of self-discovery. The tour to the Lakes in P&P is a touristy thing to do but Elizabeth will not do it in the general way - we hear almost nothing about rocks and mountains - but she learns the meaning of others' lives and her own.

The "freedom" of being homeless like a soldier or sailor, or a traveller, is a modern idea. Travel was not for pleasure, it was travail: hard work, painful, often fatal. Men made the passage of their lives; women stayed home, moved to a husband's house, and then stayed home again. Odysseus has great adventures, dangers, faces death, is enticed to linger along the way, journeys into the unknown, alone, without support; until at last his happy homecoming. Penelope maintains the home, wards off the suitors and waits - she is a subordinate character. Jane Austen tells the story in a different way in Persuasion: the waiting woman is the main character, losing her home, forced into exile. Mrs. Croft is a sailor's wife, with no doubts or misgivings of herself. Anne Elliot is charmed by the sailors' wives she meets - these would have been her friends, if only...

The idea of home is important for Anne Elliot - now she must leave. Bath is an unhappy place for her. She is tempted by the thought of being Lady Elliot, in her own old home. In the small moves she makes from Kellynch to Uppercross to Lyme to Bath, she sees the difference in people and their lives, their interests - she herself changes.

Captain Wentworth is the travelling hero - he has always had all he wanted at sea. Is he really unmarked and unchanged as Anne Elliot sees him? He cannot endure Anne's actions; and there is a lack of endurance in his attitude to the Musgrove girls - his usual luck favours him and gets him out of a jam.

Anne Elliot plays the role of Penelope, but also that of the travelling hero - capable in crisis, the best consultant in time of trouble, strong, well able to endure loneliness; she rides out the weather better than anyone else.

There is no real connection between the story of Odysseus and Persuasion, but there is a kind of story behind them both.

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#### Shopping for Signs: Jane Austen and the Pseudo-Gentry - Edward Copeland (E.Sutherland)

Material goods pile up with "frustrating richness" in the letters. In the novels the few details are vivid and apt. The act of purchase is a moment of decision; the purchased object shows an act of consumption. Harriet Smith at Ford's (Emma) is bedazzled, and yearns for something different that can never be wholly embraced; Mary Crawford (MP) yearns for London life as "different", but in reality her life will be the same anywhere.

The "pseudo-gentry" are not landowners, but they are trying hard to be gentry: the military, the churchmen, the business men. Jane Austen carefully delineated the distinction. The gentry drank French wine; others, orange wine made at home. She makes definite contrasts. Shopping marks one's social place. Housing, diet, charity, schooling - all show status. Consumer goods can communicate and supplement the social order.

The Austen move to Bath resulted in letters about lodgings, travel arrangements - all must be done in accordance with certain social standards. Gifts, also, are mentioned often - they soften and secure the boundaries of rank: Mrs. Knight gives gifts of cash; food gifts from one part of the family to another, or to friends, travel across the country, and are mentioned every time they are sent, or received. The Austen family existed on gifts - gifts of livings (father, brother James), estates (brother Edward Knight), Chawton Cottage (Mrs. Austen and the girls).

The minutiae of consumer signs almost overwhelm the letters; in the novels, the heroes and heroines are not usually connected with consumer signs: Darcy buys his sister a piano but makes no comment - it is Miss Bingley who talks too much about it. General Tilney is too showy, too conscious of what he has bought. The heroines are more high-minded: Emma manages Hartfield with despatch; Anne Elliot draws up a good budget for Kellynch Hall; it is the lesser characters who show no consumer rectitude.

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Folks That Go A-Pleasuring - Sara B. Wingard (Eileen Sutherland)

Travels in Jane Austen's novels serve as a framework for extensive psychological explorations. Crowded conditions of travel - mentioned in her letters - give rise to incidents: Elizabeth with the boring company of Sir William Lucas and Maria; Jane and Elizabeth with Kitty and Lydia; the trip to Sotherton; even Emma's tête-à-tête with Mr. Elton.

Young ladies did not travel alone - Jane Austen never did and her heroines do not. General Tilney is proved to be a villain when he forces Catherine to go home unescorted. Missing luggage was a problem then as well as today - Jane Austen writes of her boxes being put in the wrong coach; Catherine Morland's new writing desk was almost thrown into the street by General Tilney when he felt the coach was too crowded.

In a letter to her brother Frank in 1813, Jane Austen described how their party was travelling across the country - some in a carriage, post chaise, chair, on horseback, in a coach. One's place on a journey can make or mar one's pleasure: in MP, Julia rode in Henry's curricule, the others in the carriage; Catherine Morland had part of her journey to Northanger Abbey in Henry's curricule.

Weather could make a great difference - the letters are full of heat, wet, cold. The comments are often witty or ironic, but they stress the comfort or otherwise of a journey. Rainy weather is used effectively in the novels: Elizabeth's walk to Netherfield when Jane was ill shows her indifference not just to weather conditions but to false standards of decorum.

Dependency on others was a real hardship. Jane Austen felt it very much herself, although the letters usually handle it in a comic light: when her brother Henry makes other plans and doesn't come to get her, she complains that he has "taken away the ladder". The Cinderella heroines have to depend on the charity and kindness of others. Jane Austen knew what that was like - an unusual amount of space and intensity in the letters is devoted to the different sorts of arrangements which had to be made: someone willing and able to take her; making sure someone was home to receive her as a guest; someone coming to fetch her home again, and so on. Jane Austen often writes of her dependency on her brothers until she "has a travelling purse of her own".

Travel develops the character of the heroines: Emma learns a great lesson at Box Hill; Catherine Morland matures by travelling alone. The heroines profit from the dread or discomfort, and earn their future happiness: Anne Elliot in her pretty landaulette, or Emma on her honeymoon trip to the sea.

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*Most of the talks from the Santa Monica conference  
will be printed in the coming issue of Persuasions.  
These excerpts and comments may whet your appetite.*

\* \* \* \* \*

LIMERICKS - LIMERICKS - LIMERICKS

This is the last call for limericks, to be handed to Eileen Sutherland (or phoned in if you are too late: 988-0479) by December 1st. They will be judged and read at the December meeting, and a selection will be printed in the February Newsletter. Theme: Jane Austen, or any of the characters in the novels. Try it!

\* \* \* \* \*

[For their September meeting the Toronto JASNA group discussed foreign language translations of Jane Austen. Keiko Parker was asked to comment on special problems of translating Jane Austen into Japanese].

One of the first problems the translator of English into Japanese would encounter is that of syntax. In Japanese the order in which words appear would be: the subject, the preposition, the object, and finally the verb. Thus, the English sentence "I go to school", would, in Japanese, become "I school to go". (The word "to" in this case is not an infinitive but a sort of "post-position"). From this one sees that a Japanese translator will have to put an English sentence "upside down" or "inside out". Add to this the fact that it is quite "legitimate" (as opposed to "ungrammatical") to omit the subject, especially between well-acquainted people in familiar situations. Therefore, if a boy says to his mother in the morning: "school to go", he is saying to her "I am going to school". Conversely, if one were to translate a complete English sentence into Japanese with the subject and everything else intact, it might sound stilted and "translated", in other words, not natural.

Referring to family, the relationship of family members is indicated very specifically. In Japanese there is not a "generic" word denoting "sister". Instead it is either "elder sister" or "younger sister", and of course it is the same for the word "brother". Also, if one takes the word "cousin", it must, in Japanese, be either an "elder/younger cousin of male/female gender". The English "uncle/aunt" must become "uncle/aunt of the paternal/maternal side". These few examples should be enough to illustrate the family hierarchy which is at the core of Japanese thinking.

As for the word indicating the first person singular, "I", there are dozens of different ways of saying "I" - I can think of at least ten immediately - depending on one's position in society, occupation, upbringing, gender, etc., and the relationship between the "I" and the person "I" is addressing. Thus, a person would choose a more respectful form of "I" when addressing an older person or a person of higher position, achievement, and so on, and a more casual form of "I" when, for instance, speaking in a family circle. Then again, a woman would not think of using certain forms of "I" which are used only by men. The choice one makes of referring to the "I" may reveal not only gender and age, but also occupation or the type of upbringing one has received. The same applies to the word "you", which, in Japanese, is much more varied and full of nuance than the difference between the French "vous" and "tu". The same applies to "we" and similar words. Also the Japanese language does not have the regular plural, the equivalent of "s" in English, nor the article "the". And so "tree" may mean only one tree, two trees, or several or many trees. It must be gathered from the context, or be specified by additional words:

One can now readily understand why a translator of Mansfield Park, translating the opening paragraph where the three Ward daughters are mentioned, must specify that the lucky "Miss Ward" who captivates Sir Thomas Bertram is the second daughter, that the "Miss Ward" who is obliged to be attached to the Rev. Mr. Norris is the eldest, and that Miss Frances is the youngest. In the third sentence of this opening paragraph where "Miss Maria" is mentioned, my copy of a Japanese translation, in fact, has "the middle daughter, Miss Maria".

The family relationship such as the above can often be figured out by reading the entire novel and picking up bits of information here and there and piecing them together. A deeper problem surrounds the finer points of the interpretation of human relationships such as the Elizabeth Bennet/Darcy conflict, Elizabeth Bennet/Miss Bingley exchange, Colonel Brandon's private talk with Elinor on the two Elizas, Henry Tilney's teasing way of speaking to Catherine Morland, Mr. Collins' pomposity, and General Tilney's chilling couteousness. All these must be correctly interpreted by the translator, using the best equivalent mode of expression.



When I first started to learn English, and for several years after, I used to think that perhaps English is a rather business-like, matter-of-fact language. What else was I to think when "I" is "I" and "you" is "you", and can be nothing else?! Japanese is a subtler language - or so I thought, until I started to read Jane Austen. Then I discovered that English is capable of describing the most subtle nuances of the inner workings of the human heart and mind. It is this subtlety, I think, that most attracts me to Jane Austen's novels. The translator of Jane Austen into Japanese must reconcile all these factors of grammar, syntax, semantics, idiom, and cultural differences, to do justice to the genius of Jane Austen.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### A BATH WITHOUT WATER

*Oh! who can ever be tired of Bath? (N.A.)*

While the struggle goes on to save the beautiful heritage buildings of Bath, an even more vital asset of the city may be in greater danger.

According to Country Life (Aug.26, 1992), quarrying in the Mendip hills south west of Bath is steadily increasing as a result of the Government's national mineral policy. Bath's famous hot springs have their source in a geological fault under the Mendips, and if this were to be disturbed, no remedial action could restore the springs.

Formal objections to the mineral exploitation have been lodged by conservation organizations, but the spa, dating from long before Roman times, is endangered as never before.

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#### PROBLEMS AND COMMENTS

Each Newsletter will have a section for points that are puzzling: why did Jane Austen do or say this? What does this strange word mean? Why did this character act in this way? If you have come across something that you have been wondering about, send it in, and perhaps a member can give an answer or comment on the passage.

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Kathleen Glancy, Edinburgh, poses these questions: "'A report of a most alarming nature...' has reached Lady Catherine, via the Lucases, Charlotte and Mr. Collins. Why was Charlotte fool enough to mention the matter to Mr. Collins? She kept quiet about her own suspicions of the subjects of the report earlier. Perhaps he reads her letters (ugh) or is in correspondence with his father-in-law. And, how would a report about anyone, much less one of Mrs. Bennet's daughters, being on the brink of Matrimony go about Meryton and not come to the ears of Mrs. Phillips and Mrs. Bennet herself? It can't have done, as the news comes as a total surprise to Mrs. Bennet, but it passes belief that it should not."

Another puzzle from Kathleen Glancy: "'I am joined with him in the guardianship of Miss Darcy', [explains Colonel Fitzwilliam to Elizabeth]. Why? Why did Mr. Darcy the elder choose Colonel Fitzwilliam as co-guardian to his daughter? I can see the sense in having one, in case Mr. Darcy's son meets some accident before the girl was of age. But why not the Colonel's elder brother, the Viscount-whatever-his-title-is? What is wrong with the Viscount? It can't be ill-health or mental deficiency, or the Colonel would in all but name have eldest son status. The Viscount is presumably not in such a risky profession, and being older may already be married. One would have thought him a far more suitable guardian. Can it be his moral standards were not all they might be? Perhaps it could. It's oddly significant that Lady Catherine never once mentions him."

\*

Murray Wanamaker wondered what Lavender Water was, and how it was used. It seems to have been administered in drops (to a near-hysterical Marianne), or used to bathe the temples of a fainting lady (in NA, Catherine "rubbed [Eleanor's] temples with lavender-water" when Eleanor was upset at her father's orders to send Catherine away.) When Lady Middleton's daughter was accidentally pricked with a pin, "her wound [was] bathed with lavender-water". When Henry Tilney was defining the duties of married partners, he said "She furnishes the fan and the lavender water."

*To make Old Virginia Lavender Toilet Water: ½ gallon rectified alcohol, 1 pint Rose Water, 1½ ounces Old Lavender, 3 drachms lemon, ½ drachm sage, 1 drachm orange, 4 drachms thyme, 1 drachm nutmeg, ½ ounce musk and 1 ounce Tincture Benzoin. First mix the oil of lavender with a little of the alcohol; then add the remaining alcohol, stirring constantly. Finally, stir in other ingredients, place in a glass fruit jar with rubber rings and allow to stand for several months before using.*

(Ingenious Inventions: Allen D. Bragdon)

A simpler recipe comes from Martha Lloyd (A Jane Austen Household Book: Peggy Hickman):

*To one quart of the best rectified spirits of wine put ¾ oz. of essence of lavender and 1/2 a scruple of ambergris; shake it together and it is fit for use in a few days.*

[This needs a little translation for us today: rectified = purified or refined by repeated distillations; essence = alcoholic solution; scruple = apothecaries' weight of 20 grains; grain = 1/437.5 of oz. avoirdupois; ambergris = wax-like substance from the intestines of sperm whales].

\*

Barbara Peacock has been puzzled by a passage in MP - Edmund's description to Fanny of his last meeting with Mary Crawford in London:

*I only said in reply, that from my heart I wished her well, and earnestly hoped that she might soon learn to think more justly, and not owe the most valuable knowledge we could any of us acquire - the knowledge of ourselves and of our duty, to the lessons of affliction - and immediately left the room. I had gone a few steps, Fanny, when I heard the door open behind me. "Mr. Bertram", said she. I looked back. "Mr. Bertram", said she, with a smile - but it was a smile ill-suited to the conversation that had passed, a saucy, playful smile, seeming to invite, in order to subdue me; at least, it appeared so to me. I resisted; it was the impulse of the moment to resist, and still walked on...*

Barbara questions: was Edmund in a passage in the house after he left the room - surely not in the street, as only servants opened doors; and what was implied by "a saucy, playful smile, seeming to invite, in order to subdue me"? This last passage seems so unlike JA - not quite as subtle as her usual writing.

\*

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