



Stanley Tweyman's *Hume on Miracles* and *Hume on Natural Religion*

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STANLEY TWEYMAN, ed. *Hume on Miracles*. Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 1996. Pp. xii+168. ISBN 1 85506 444 8. \$72.00 (cloth). ISBN 1 85506 443 X. £14.95 (paper).

STANLEY TWEYMAN, ed. *Hume on Natural Religion*. Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 1996. Pp. xiv+334. ISBN 1 85506 451 0. \$72.00 (cloth). ISBN 1 85506 450 2. £14.95 (paper).

Stanley Tweyman's two recent anthologies, *Hume on Miracles* and *Hume on Natural Religion*, are part of a series by Thoemmes Press of early reactions to classic philosophical, political and economic works. Tweyman's volumes—as well as others in this series—aim to make rare critical texts available at an affordable price. Scholars should applaud this goal in view of the time and expense typically involved in tracking down the originals in rare book rooms or on microfilm. We judge anthologies of this sort based on three factors: (1) the choice of the selections, (2) the helpfulness of the editorial comments, and, most importantly, (3) the accuracy of the text. While there are limitations to Tweyman's volumes in each of these categories, if students and scholars are aware of them, his volumes may be very useful.

As to choice of selections, most of the items appear to be based on T. E. Jessop's *A Bibliography of David Hume* (1938). Although Jessop's bibliography does contain many important early responses to Hume, his list is not exhaustive. For example, Jessop does not list Philip Skelton's *Ophiomaches or Deism Revealed* (1749), which is the earliest critique of Hume's "Of Miracles" uncovered to date. There are also additional reviews of Hume's religious publications in the *Critical Review*, *London Review*, and *English Review*, which Jessop also does not list. Accordingly, Tweyman's anthologies reflect the limitations of Jessop's bibliography. In the volume on miracles, Tweyman has included not only the early responses listed in Jessop but also a reprint of Hume's "Of Miracles" from the first *Enquiry*. Although a minor problem, the inclusion of this text is puzzling since, unlike most of the items in the two anthologies, Hume's "Of Miracles" is widely available. Further, this choice is inconsistent with Tweyman's apparent decision to exclude Hume's writings on natural religion from the other volume. Most importantly, in a note in the introduction Tweyman states that he would have included other early

responses "had space permitted." Excluding "Of Miracles" would have allowed for at least one additional item.

As to the helpfulness of his editorial comments, Tweyman only provides four pages of introduction to each of the volumes, and includes no editorial annotations. His comments in the miracles volume principally state that Hume's essay was influential. His comments in the volume on natural religion principally emphasize that Hume was a mitigated skeptic—as defined in Section XII of the first *Enquiry*—and that Cleanthes at the close of the *Dialogues* represents Hume as a mitigated skeptic. Emphasizing the Cleanthes thesis in a volume like this is puzzling, since the early responses almost unanimously argue that Philo is Hume's mouthpiece throughout the *Dialogues*. Thus, if we adopt Tweyman's Cleanthes thesis, then we must see the perspective of the early responses as ill-founded. The reverse view, though, is more reasonable, namely that the early respondents had a better grasp of eighteenth-century concealed writing techniques and, accordingly, many twentieth-century interpretations of the *Dialogues* are ill-founded.¹

In addition to the limitations of Tweyman's editorial comments, there are problems with his editorial input on bibliographical matters. First, he does not provide complete bibliographical references to his selected items and, thus, users must rely on a secondary bibliographical source for this information. Second, the headings of the selections from review journals do not reveal the names of the journals from which the selections appear. Instead this information is listed in the table of contents. Third, there is confusion as to the copy texts from which Tweyman derived the first three items in the volume on natural religion. In the table of contents, Tweyman notes that these items are taken from Pratt's *Apology for the Life and Writings of David Hume* (1777); however, Pratt's *Apology* contains none of the three items. Fourth, and most importantly, the authorship of several items is either incorrect or missing. As an example of an incorrect attribution, Tweyman identifies Hume as the author of S. J. Pratt's *Supplement to the Life of David Hume*, which is ironic in view of the account of Hume's funeral contained in the *Supplement*. As an example of missing attributions of authorship, Tweyman does not give the authors of the reviews in the *Monthly Review*, although Benjamin Christie Nangle establishes these in *The Monthly Review First Series* (1934) and *The Monthly Review Second Series* (1955). At the close of this review I list the contents of both of Tweyman's volumes and, when appropriate, I supply the correct authorship in brackets.

Although inconvenient, all of these problems do not count decisively against the usefulness of Tweyman's two texts. For, if we accessed the original texts themselves, they would be without editorial comment and, for anonymously published works, without authorial attribution. The crucial factor in the value of Tweyman's anthologies concerns the accuracy of the reproduced texts. It is difficult to produce a new edition of a text that is

completely without error. Even in the most painstakingly produced critical editions mistakes occasionally creep in. In an edited text of this sort, some mistakes are expected; the key question concerns the frequency and seriousness of the mistakes. As to the frequency of mistakes, the following were revealed by a comparison of William Adams's original 1752 text with Tweyman's selection (38-63):

- p. 38: ln. 1 "Mr Hume" read "Mr. Hume";
- ln. 6 "present us" read "present is";
- ln. 15 delete tab;
- ln. 18 "so long" read "as long"
- p. 40: ln. 24 delete tab
- p. 41: ln. 19 delete tab
- p. 43: ln. 22 "'To increase..." read "'To increase...";
- ln. 30 delete tab
- p. 44: ln. 4 insert tab before quotation
- p. 45: note 13 "P. 198" read "P. 198.";
- note 15 "P. 195" read "P. 195."
- p. 47: ln. 3 "possible" read "possibly"
- p. 51: ln. 28 delete tab
- p. 52: ln. 36 "well be" read "will be"
- p. 56: ln. 25 delete tab
- p. 61: ln. 12 "belief" read "believe";
- ln. 25 delete tab
- p. 63: ln. 9 "overwise" read "otherwise"

Assuming that this selection is representative of all selections, the error rate appears about normal for an inexpensive reprint volume, although we would hope for better in a scholarly work. As to the seriousness of the errors, the mistakes above are of three sorts: (1) incorrect punctuation, (2) incorrect insertion of tabs, which likely resulted from miscommunication with the publisher, and (3) wrong words inserted by the typist that are undetectable through normal spell check. Of these, the insertion of wrong words is the most significant problem. Elsewhere in the volumes much more serious errors of this sort appear. In the miracles volume, Thomas Rutherford's name is consistently misspelled as "Rutherford," even within the review of Rutherford's pamphlet in the *Monthly Review*.² Page 66, line 24 of that volume mistakenly reads "pertinent" rather than "impertinent." In the natural religion volume, Warburton's pamphlet *Remarks on Mr. David Hume's Essay* is misprinted as *Remarks on Dr. David Hume's Essay*, and the year of Tweyman's copy text is mistakenly reprinted as 1778 rather than 1788.

In spite of the limitations of Tweyman's volumes, the original selections themselves are indeed important for understanding the early reception of Hume. Those who purchase Tweyman's volumes may wish to pencil in some of the more important corrections noted below, especially the authors identified below within brackets. To save space, I have shortened the section and selection titles from what Tweyman lists in the tables of contents:

I. Contents of Volume 1: *Hume on Miracles*

1. Hume's "Of Miracles"
2. Thomas Rutherford's *The Credibility of Miracles* (1751)
[Tweyman mistakenly reprints this author's name as "Rutherford"]
3. Review of Rutherford's *Credibility* in *Monthly Review* (1751)
[Nangle identifies the reviewer as William Rose]
4. William Adams's *An Essay on Mr. Hume's Essay* (1752), selections
5. Review of Adams's *Essay* in *Monthly Review* (1752)
[Nangle identifies the reviewer as William Rose]
6. Anthony Ellys's *Remarks on Mr. Hume's Essay* (1753)
7. Review of George Campbell's *Dissertation on Miracles* in *Monthly Review* (1762)
[Nangle identifies the reviewer as William Rose]
8. Review of Richard Price's *Four Dissertations* in *Monthly Review* (1767)
[Tweyman does not provide Price's first name, and Nangle identifies the reviewer as William Rose]
9. Samuel Vince's *Credibility of Scripture Miracles* (1809), selections
10. James Sommerville's *Remarks on an Article in the Edinburgh Review* (1815)
11. "On Hume's Argument Against Miracles" in *Blackwood's Magazine* (1839)
[the author of this article is Thomas De Quincey]
12. William Warburton's *Letter to Mr Millar* in *Unpublished Papers* (1841)
13. Joseph Napier Butler's *Argument on Miracles* (1863), selections
14. Joseph Mazzini Wheeler's *Introduction to Hume's Essay on Miracles* (1882)
15. Thomas Huxley's *Hume* (1881), selections

II. Contents of Volume 2: *Hume on Natural Religion*

HUME'S LIFE AND WRITINGS:

1. Hume's *The Life of David Hume* (1777)
2. Adam Smith's *Letter* (1777)
3. *Supplement to the Life of David Hume* (1777)
[this item was anonymously written by Samuel Jackson Pratt, not by

Hume as Tweyman states]

4. Review of Ritchie's *Life* in *Monthly Review* (1810)
[Nangle identifies the reviewer as Stephen Jones]

DIALOGUES:

5. Review of Hume's *Dialogues* in *Gentleman's Magazine* (1779)
6. Review of Hume's *Dialogues* in *Monthly Review* (1780)
[Nangle identifies the reviewer as William Rose]
7. Thomas Hayter's *Remarks* (1780)
8. Priestley's *Letters* (1780), Letter 9
9. Review of Hayter in *Monthly Review* (1781)
[Nangle identifies the reviewer as William Rose]
10. John Hunt's "David Hume" in the *Contemporary Review* (1869)
11. "Preface" and "Postscript" to 1875 edition of Hume's *Dialogues*
12. Thomas Huxley's *Hume* (1881), selections
13. Bruce McEwen's "Introduction" to 1907 edition of Hume's *Dialogues*

NATURAL HISTORY OF RELIGION:

14. "Postscript" to *Three Questions Resolved* (1757)
[Tweyman states that the author is "A. Marvel";
however, authorship is usually ascribed to Caleb Fleming]
15. Review of Hume's *Four Dissertations* in *Monthly Review* (1757)
[Nangle identifies the reviewer as William Rose]
16. Review of Warburton's *Remarks* in *Monthly Review* (1757)
[Nangle identifies the reviewer as William Rose];
17. S.T.'s *Remarks* (1758), selections
[authorship is attributed to Thomas Stona in John Nichols's *Literary Anecdotes*, (London: 1812), Vol. 2, 717]
18. Review of S.T.'s [Thomas Stona's] *Remarks* (1758)
[Nangle identifies the reviewer as William Rose]
19. Warburton's *Remarks* (1788), selections
20. Henry O'Connor's *Connected Essays* (1837), selections

IMMORTALITY:

21. John Leland's *View* (1755), selections
22. Joseph Priestley's *Letters* (1780), Letter 8
23. Review of Hume's *Essays on Suicide* in *Monthly Review* (1784)
[Nangle identifies the reviewer as William Rose]
24. Review of Hume's *Essays on Suicide* in *Gentleman's Magazine* (1784)
25. *An Essay* (1784)
26. George Giles Vincent's *Science of the Moral Nature* (1856), selections
27. Thomas Huxley's *Hume* (1881), selections

NOTES

1 I defend this view in "Hume's Concealed Attack on Religion and His Early Critics," *Journal of Philosophical Research* 20 (1995): 431-449.

2 I am informed that this misspelling of Rutherford's name recently appeared in a submitted journal article that relied on Tweyman's volume.

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