Mistress; and where are these performed with more Dexterity, than by the *Saints*? Nay, to bring this Argument yet closer, I have been informed by certain Sanguine Brethren of the first Class that in the Height and *Orgasmus* of their Spiritual exercise it has been frequent with them * * * * * ; immediately after which, they found the *Spirit* to relax and flag of a sudden with the Nerves, and they were forced to hasten to a Conclusion. This may be farther Strengthened, by observing, with Wonder, how unaccountably all Females are attracted by Visionary or Enthusiastick Preachers, tho' never so contemptible in their *outward Men*; which is usually supposed to be done upon Considerations, purely Spiritual, without any carnal Regards at all. But I have Reason to think, the *Sex* hath certain Characteristicks, by which they form a truer Judgment of Human Abilities and Performings, than we our selves can possibly do of each other. Let That be as it will, thus much is certain, that however Spiritual Intrigues begin, they generally conclude like all others; they may branch upwards towards Heaven, but the Root is in the Earth. Too intense a Contemplation is not the Business of Flesh and Blood; it must by the necessary Course of Things, in a little Time, let go its Hold, and fall into *Matter*. Lovers, for the sake of Celestial Converse, are but another sort of *Platonicks*, who pretend to see Stars and Heaven in Ladies Eyes, and to look or think no lower; but the same *Pit* is provided for both; and they seem a perfect Moral to the Story of that Philosopher, who, while his Thoughts and Eyes were fixed upon the *Constellations*, found himself seduced by his *lower Parts* into a *Ditch*.

I had somewhat more to say upon this Part of the Subject; but the Post is just going, which forces me in great Haste to conclude,

SIR,

Yours, &c.

Pray, burn this
Letter as soon
as it comes to
your Hands.

FINIS

EDITORS' NOTES TO *A TALE OF A TUB, THE BATTEL OF THE BOOKS,* AND *A FRAGMENT*

Title page. Published together in 1704 and three more times during the next year, these three works were given their final form in the edition of 1710. In composing the fifth edition, Swift enlarged the whole, adding the "Apology" and the great wealth of footnotes; and it is this edition that is here reproduced. The few significant instances in which the present editors have preferred readings from the earlier editions are acknowledged in their notes.

A TALE OF A TUB

Title page. "Diu multumque desideratum.": "Desired long and greatly."
Title page. "Basima . . . Iren. Lib. I. C. 18."; See Swift's own note, p. 279.
Title page. "Juvatque . . . Musae.": "I love to pluck fresh flowers, and to seek a glorious garland for my head from fields whence the muses have never yet crowned any brows at all." Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura,* I, 928–931.
1. A street near Moorfields (renamed Milton Street) inhabited by hack writers; and an expression used in literary tradition to indicate all kinds of hack writing.
2. The "Apology" appeared for the first time in the edition of 1710.
3. Chiefly Wotton's *Observations upon The Tale of a Tub* (1705), from which Swift drew a number of his notes for the 1710 edition. He identified these notes by adding at the end of each "W. Wotton"—as, for example, on p. 279.
4. The occasional concern most closely associated with these three works is the long-drawn-out controversy over ancient and modern learning. The exchanges in the controversy most immediate to Swift's entry into it are described in "The Bookseller to the Reader" (p. 374), which precedes the *Battel*. Both the *Tale* and the *Fragment* present and parody a variety of "modern" attitudes and, in the process, indicate the virtues of the "ancient" position; however, the *Battel* is the only one of these works centrally and continuously devoted to the controversy itself.
5. "You have never yet lacked for an external enemy." Lucan, *De Bello Civili*, I, 23.
6. Here Swift acknowledges his use in the *Tale* of the persona or mask, actually indicating, in the expression "other *Writers*" and in his examples, that his practice involves the use of several different masks. At any point in the *Tale*, then, we should be prepared to face not Swift but a professed author, a mask, whose arguments and attitudes differ from Swift's own; furthermore, the professed author detected at one point in the work may differ from the professed author detected at another point.
7. P. 300.
8. Here Swift disclaims or seems to disclaim, several years after having finished the *Tale* itself, the interpretations and deductions which the professed author insists, especially in Sections I and X, and the "Conclusion," that readers must strive for in order to comprehend his discourse. Swift's admission in the "Apology" that the story of the coats and the brothers is allegorical, on the other hand, substantiates this insistence.
9. This, like Swift's disclaimers of *"ill Meanings,"* is hard to comprehend. Nothing really seems obvious about the *Tale*; indeed, readers have always found it terribly puzzling, as Swift's affixing footnotes to the 1710 edition attests. Furthermore, Sections I, III, V, VII and X, and the "Conclusion," in every one of which the professed author devotes himself to the interlocking difficulties and problems of writing and of reading such a work as the *Tale*, strongly indicate that it was actually designed, at least to some extent, to puzzle its readers, to draw them into questionable and troubling interpretations. At any rate, whether the reader thinks of Swift as disingenuous here—or merely projecting another mask—he must obviously play the professed author's game of deep, interpretive reading simply in order to follow the discourse; he must do so even if this involves his countenancing some foolish or vicious meanings. On the other hand, the reader must exercise caution in his interpretations and must determine to judge both the sense in them and the apparent sensibility that conceived them.
10. The reader may usefully compare this passage with the actual exposition and interpretation of the machines in the "Introduction" (pp. 292–297).
11. This gives us a further clue to the reading of the *Tale*. Sometimes when Swift enunciates notions and beliefs that differ from his own, he does so by projecting a palpable intellectual presence that differs from himself, that is, a mask: in these cases the reader must judge not only a statement or an argument but also a type of sensibility. At other times Swift may deviate not in this dramatic way, but simply in tone, illuminating his actual ideas by artfully presenting ideas that are at some degree of variance with them: in such cases it is sufficient for the reader to consider and judge the statement. Generally speaking, the digressions are those

apprehensible; whereas the impression of a mask often fades in the sections devoted to the three brothers, that is, notably, Sections II, IV and VI.

12. William King's *Remarks on the Tale of a Tub* (1704).
13. Wotton's *Observations.*
14. Sir William Temple.
15. A captured Roman assassin told the Etruscan king Porsenna, "three hundred of us have sworn to make the same attempt."
16. *The Battel of the Books* describes this whole business; see esp. p. 374.
17. A part of Whitefriars, on which see p. 273.
18. "The necessary changes having been made."
19. Min-ellius and Farnaby were classical scholars of the seventeenth century.
20. P. 339.
21. White-Fryars was a precinct of London; it enjoyed the privileges of sanctuary until 1697.
22. Edmund Curll; see pp. 598–600 for excerpts from his "*foolish Paper.*"
23. Lord Sommers was a Whig statesman and a patron of learning.
24. James I, who inherited the throne of Scotland in 1567 from his mother, Mary, and that of England in 1603 from his cousin, Elizabeth.
25. The English Order of the Garter, from the time of the Tudor King Henry VII, had red and white roses around the collar; the Order of the Thistle, which originated in Scotland, had thistles around the collar.
26. "Glittering choler": black bile, which has a glittering appearance and was traditionally supposed to cause choler or irascibility. Horace, *Satires*, II, iii, 141.
27. Vergil, *Aeneid*, VI, 128–129. The translation in the footnote is from Dryden.
28. "So that, when they are old, they may retire in safe repose." Horace, *Satires*, I, i, 31.
29. The reader may refer to the illustration occupying p. 293, which appeared in the 1710 edition, for a pictorial representation of these machines.
30. The Scottish woods.
31. Puritans, among them William Prynne and John Bastwick, were pilloried and lost their ears as a punishment for sedition. Men could also address passers-by from the pillory and thus have an influence on ears. See Defoe's "Hymn to the Pillory," published the year before the *Tale* first appeared, the opening line of which reads, "Hail! *Hi'roglyphick* State *Machin.*"
32. Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*, IV, 526–527. The translation in the footnote is by Creech, whose work the reader will find described in *The Battel of the Books.*
33. In this and the next few paragraphs the professed author gives his reader an example of the deductions, or, as he will call them, the exantlations, of deep meanings which, he insists, are persistently present within his work. If one follows the author's example in studying his whole system of oratorial machines, he may exantlate the drop of sense from *that* and find it to be simply, "this is an amusing book." By comparing this small measure of meaning with the elaborate discourse in which it was hidden, the reader may test the validity of this discourse and judge the mind, the sensibility, that would compose and publish it.
34. An expression for Puritans and Dissenters, enunciated during this time in a variety of tones.
35. To conclude, especially, to conclude an oration.
36. Mine and yours.
37. The Royal Society met at Gresham College.
38. Intriguing.
39. Here the professed author is saying, as exantlation will discover, "this is really a very deep book." Having drawn forth this assertion, one may compare it with the exantlated sense of the oratorial machines.
40. Drawing out, as from a well.
41. This and the following examples, by which the professed author develops his understanding of literary depth, cry out to be tested against common sense: can we really believe *Tom Thumb*, *The Wise Men of Goatham*, or any work with such a title as *Tommy Potts* to be intellectually profound; can we seriously consider the mind which finds them so to be reliable? The professed author's description of these works intensifies the need for a common-sense judgment of his substance and realiability. His figurative representation of wisdom a few pages before this (pp. 298–299), in which he likened wisdom, among other things, to a cheese whereof to a judicious palate the maggots are the best, and to a nut which may repay your opening it with nothing but a worm, similarly demands the practice of common sense. The reader may wonder, for example, whether the epicure who relished maggots found in the cheese might not also relish a worm found in a nutshell; and whether he himself would relish either.
42. One who has learned the great secret of alchemy: how to convert base metals

43. Artephius' thousand years may be attributed to his having taken the alchemically composed *elixir vitæ.*
44. Spelled *Gotham* in the first three editions.
45. Dryden dedicated his translation of Vergil to three patrons: the *Eclogues* to Lord Clifford, the *Georgics* to the Earl of Chesterfield, and the *Aeneid* to the Marquis of Normanby.
46. Beneath the open sky.
47. An iron, so called because the handle of it is shaped like a goose's neck.
48. Referring to the temple of Jupiter on the summit of the Capitoline Hill in Rome. The Capitol was saved from the Gauls in 390 B.C. when the sacred geese roused its defenders.
49. The dark place under a tailor's shopboard into which he threw scraps of cloth —which were thereafter looked on as his perquisites.
50. A god of an inferior order.
51. Waved or watered silk or taffeta.
52. The doctrine of traduction maintained that a person's soul is transmitted to him from his parents, just as his body is.
53. Sometimes written *Kalendæ*: the first day of any month.
54. A thrust at pedantry: this abbreviation simply stands for the Latin expression in the margin, which, in turn, is merely equivalent to the English expression that is given in the footnote. Peter was giving the aura of esoteric learning to his assertion that *Calendæ* was sometimes written *Kalendæ.*
55. According to the paternal law.
56. "Deep silence." Vergil, *Aeneid*, X, 65.
57. In some measure adhere to the essence.
58. By word of mouth.
59. If the same thing is affirmed with regard to word-of-mouth proclamation, it is denied.
60. Many absurdities would follow.
61. Zoilus attacked Homer; Tigellius, Horace.
62. Slightly misquoted from Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*, VI, 786–787: Swift has substituted "odore . . . retro" ("with an odor from the rear") for "odore . . . tætro" ("with a vile odor"). The translation in the footnote is from Creech.
63. Insurance companies.
64. Sprinkling.
65. "It spreads variegated . . . plumes and ends in a black fish." Horace, *Ars Poetica*, lines 1–5.
66. "With this throwing out of paltry dust." Vergil, *Georgics*, IV, 87.
67. "This persuades me to carry out any work whatever and induces me to spend tranquil nights in wakefulness." Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*, I, 141–142 (slightly misquoted).
68. Sluggishness.
69. Profit and pleasure, the two widely acknowledged values of poetry: see Horace, *Ars Poetica*, lines 341–346.
70. Double boiler.
71. That is, in sufficient quantity.
72. The leavings and the residuum.
73. Flower cullings, i.e., anthologies.
74. "Homer comprehended everything pertaining to humanity in his poetry." Xenophon, *Convivium*, IV, 6.
75. The great work: that is, the conversion of base metals into gold.
76. An alchemist.
77. A German mystic.
78. The fire-formed sphere.
79. I can hardly believe that this author has ever heard the voice of fire.
80. A device for holding candle-ends so that they can be totally burned up.
81. Here Swift suggests a positive mode of conduct primarily, of course, in church reform. But the scope of the allegorical presentation—the tenor being institutional and the vehicle articulated in the actions of one man—and the very allegoricalness of it allow for translations into other spheres of human life, indeed, into all those in which a person or a society finds itself unable to begin afresh, but rather forced to proceed from conditions already in effect. There are many other positive indications in the *Tale*, although they are commonly wedged in—as Martin is wedged in between the flamboyant absurdities of Peter and of Jack—between prevailingly satiric and destructive utterances. One may notice, for instance, the professed author's recognition of "a sort of morose, detracting, ill-bred People" who, as he explains in Section VII, reject the "Modern Improvement of Digressions": also his acknowledgement in the same section that "the Society of

what is to the Purpose." Again, one may notice the brief passage in Section IX in which the professed author makes passing reference to "the Brain, in its natural Position"; and passing reference to "common Understanding, as well as common Sense," the rejection of which brings on the intellectual madness and folly which he devotes himself to explaining and exalting.

82. The mob; from *mobile vulgus*, that is, the changeable crowd.

83. "I touch all with a honeyed charm." Slightly misquoted—substituting *mellæo* for *musæo*—from Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*, I, 934.

84. The reader may feel inclined to add a third category of literary works to the professed author's antithesis, namely, an *Iliad* itself, although the author, as it seems, would have no interest in and no regard for this category.

85. Changed to *Pudenda* in the 1710 edition.

86. But whose genitals were thick and reached all the way to their ankles.

87. May governing Fortune turn that far from us.

88. Worship or service.

89. They honor Boreas (the North Wind) most of all the Gods.

90. Out of the innermost recesses and innermost rooms.

91. The chameleon lived, according to popular belief, on air.

92. This division of subject matter may remind the reader that the professed author's favorite number is three and, further, that he has earlier given this numerical preference as cause for confining himself to three oratorial engines as a representation of the realm of literature (p. 294). Elsewhere, moreover, he has categorized three kinds of readers, three brothers, and three types of critics. As Swift may have been suggesting by this emphatically recurrent method of literary order and definition, a study of the professed author's categories and his categorical procedure can often help the reader understand the author and judge his performance. To begin with, one may notice that he commonly fails to handle his categories either equitably or consistently. In the present case, for example, the author's first effort to comprehend his subject matter under three headings expands, almost unnoticeably, to include not only madmen, but all intellectual beings. This expansion occurs, first, in the passage on the sympathetic vibration between the mad and their proselytes and, second, in the great paragraph which explicitly inaugurates the topic of proselytes. In this process of discursive expansion, the three-part division of the subject matter seems to have been replaced by a two-part division: intellectual beings are categorized into the mad and the credulous—or the "enlightened teacher" and the "fanatick auditory," as the two will be named in the *Fragment*. When one examines this new scheme he sees that it really relates to only two of the three categories of madness: the exemplary kings were not portrayed as infecting any "fanatick auditory," as the revolutionaries in philosophy and religion have been. The reader may also discover still deeper failures in this new and imperfectly articulated categorization of human intelligence. It may occur, for example, partly because of the elements by which this scheme is developed and partly because of one's own common sense, that these two categories do not actually comprehend all intellectual beings and that one must, as he has done before, make up the professed author's favorite number, three, adding the category of sensible men, in order to achieve a truly comprehensive scheme.

93. "Any other bodies." Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*, IV, 1065.

94. "The body seeks that by which the mind has been wounded with love." Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*, IV, 1048.

95. "He stretches toward that body from which the impulse has radiated, and desires to be sexually united with it." Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*, IV, 1055.

96. "Woman is the most terrible cause of war." Horace, *Satires*, I, iii, 107–108. The first word of this quotation was cut from the 1710 edition.

97. According to the teachings of Epicurus and Lucretius, the fortuitous swerve of the atoms as they fall through the void, from which derives free will in living beings. See Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*, II, 216–293.

98. Actually, charioteers. Cicero, *Familiar Epistles*, VII, 6.

99. "It should please you to have come to the very place in which anyone may seem wise." Cicero, *Familiar Epistles*, VII, 10.

100. Johann Bockholdt, a tailor of Leyden and an Anabaptist; he seized the city of Münster briefly during the religious struggles and made himself king, with the title "John of Leyden."

101. Here as elsewhere in the *Tale*, the professed author enunciates an area of argument which seems comprehensive but is not: in this case he has omitted a most obvious set of things, things present.

102. As in the preceding paragraph, the professed author confuses the scope and

divisions of his subject matter: he passingly acknowledges a third possible realm of experiential awareness, qualities that are drawn upon the surface of things, but he argues as if he recognizes only two realms, the inside and the outside of things. The matter is actually worse than usual in such cases in the *Tale* because the professed author confuses the actual look and feel of things—that is, the surface things naturally present to the senses—with the falsely decorated outside of things, claiming to uphold the first of these as the proper concern of human awareness (against the hidden inward of things) while actually upholding the second. If the reader corrects the definitions of *things* in the immediately preceding paragraph and in this one, he may establish in his own mind a third time and a third realm for the activity of human sense and reason: the unadorned impressions of the present moment. On the basis of this he may affirm his belief in a third type of intellectual being besides the two considered by the professed author: not only the deeply disturbed man who imposes splendid falsities on others and the gullible man who is imposed on by them, but also the man who depends for his understanding and his description of things on the unadorned realities of his own continually unfolding experience, on the real things he sees and touches minute by minute.

103. "A temper equal to public affairs." Tacitus, *Annals*, VI, 39, and XVI, 18 (imprecisely quoted).

104. Both Gresham College, at which the Royal Society met, and Grub Street were close to Bedlam.

105. The Royal College of Physicians was in Warwick Lane.

106. Bedlam stood in Moor Fields.

107. Cave-dwelling; that is, living away from the affairs of human life.

108. Another apparently comprehensive antithesis to which the reader may wish to add a third category: the professed author could have waked while others waked. The critical and conversational help a lively and balanced circle of acquaintance might have provided him would surely have prompted him to compose a more lucid and sensible system of argument.

109. From whose tears proceeds a moist substance, from whose laughter a lucid substance, from whose sorrow a solid substance, and from whose terror a movable substance.

110. Changed to *Nature* in the 1710 edition.

111. Changed to *Fortune* in the 1710 edition.

112. "Scoundrelly Proteus will nevertheless escape these fetters." Horace, *Satires*, II, iii, 71.

113. Changed to *Marks of Grace* in the 1710 edition. For the origin of this expression see Acts II, 3.

114. William Prynne, a Puritan, had his ears cut off for sedition in 1634 and the stumps of his ears cut off for the same offense in 1637. See note 31, above.

115. "Like a banqueter filled with life." Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*, III, 938 (imprecisely quoted).

THE BATTEL OF THE BOOKS

1. The same, that is, as the one who wrote the *Tale*. The *Tale*, the *Battel*, and the *Fragment* were printed together in all the early editions.

2. Subsequent scholarship has approved Bentley's argument that the epistles of Phalaris and the fables of Aesop are relatively modern forgeries.

3. Bentley.

4. The moderns, because they are living when the world is aged, are really the ancients.

5. See the Odyssey edition of Bacon's essays (New York, 1937), pp. 198–206, 274–275, and 313, for illuminating analogues to this fable. Here, if nowhere else in the *Battel*, Swift transcends the details of the ancient-and-modern controversy. The fable objectifies a major division in the intellectual life of Western man, that between the empirical mode of conduct (the bee) and the rationalistic mode (the spider), which is of persistent importance.

6. *Light-Horse*: Poets. *Bowmen*: Philosophers. *Stink-Pot-Flingers*: Chemists. *Dragoons*: Students of medicine. *Heavy-armed Foot*: Historians. *Engineers*: Mathematicians. See Guthkelch and Nichol Smith, pp. 235–239, for a detailed identification of the opposing armies.

7. The hard calcareous structure in the stomach of a lobster, called "lady" from its resemblance in shape to a seated female figure.

8. Translator of Lucretius and Horace.

9. Translator of Homer and Vergil.

10. Cowley was famous for both his Pindaric odes and his love poems.

11. Black as ink; inky.