A FEW days after the death of Mrs. Piozzi, in May, 1821, Sir James Fellowes, one of her executors, received a letter from Mrs. Siddons requesting the return of her letters to her "inestimable and lamented friend." Fellowes replied: "Sir John Salusbury and myself were left joint executors by my incomparable and lamented friend, Mrs. Piozzi. The whole of her valuable papers are consigned to our care, and I hope soon to be able to arrange them. For the present they are sealed up at Bath, but I shall take the earliest opportunity of informing Sir John, when we meet, of your request, and I am persuaded he will be desirous of partaking with me the pleasure of attending to any wish expressed by Mrs. Siddons."  

It is difficult to estimate the full value of the papers of Mrs. Piozzi, for over twenty years the intimate friend and correspondent of Dr. Samuel Johnson, the centre of a brilliant literary circle, an authoress of parts, and a witty and entertaining letter-writer of outstanding merit in a period particularly remarkable for its distinguished letter-writers. The papers "sealed up at Bath," which became the property of Sir John Salusbury Piozzi Salusbury, nephew of Gabriele Piozzi, and the adopted son and heir of his widow, without doubt included Mrs. Piozzi's diaries and notebooks, the original MSS. of her works, both published and unpublished, large packets of letters from her numerous friends and acquaintances, packets of letters in her

own hand, returned to her by the executors of several of her correspondents, and a miscellaneous collection of family letters, business correspondence, estate papers and deeds. This mass of papers was probably removed at an early date to "Brynbella," the villa constructed by Piozzi a few miles from Denbigh and occupied by Sir John Salusbury since his marriage in 1814. To them were eventually added Sir John's own papers, together with the numerous letters received by him from his benefactress, and Thradiana, her bulky MS. diary and notebook, covering the period from September, 1776, to March, 1809, which Mrs. Piozzi had handed over to Sir James Fellowes, and from whose hands Sir John later received it.

The collection remained unbroken and, except for Thradiana, largely unconsulted for many years. There was from September 17th to 26th, 1823, at the Emporium Rooms, Exchange Street, Manchester, a sale described as that of "The Library, pictures, prints, coins, plate, china, and other valuable curiosities, the property of Mrs. Hester Lynch Piozzi, deceased," which included, together with many books with MS. notes and materials of Johnsonian interest, a number of Johnson letters. Apparently only one letter was sold.

On Sir John Salusbury's death on December 18th, 1858, the papers became the property of his son, the Rev. George Augustus Salusbury. He supplied Mr. Abraham Hayward with material, in the form of large extracts from Thradiana, for his Autobiography, Letters and Literary Remains of Mrs. Piozzi. Still more extracts were provided for the second edition of the work which appeared in the same year, 1861.

The next heir was the Rev. G. A. Salusbury's son, Major Edward Pemberton Salusbury, who sold Brynbella but retained the old family estate of Bachygraig. Possibly by this time some of the papers were in the hands of other members of the family, but in any case before Major Salusbury's death in 1908 part of the collection had been sold. On December 6th, 1904, Messrs. Sotheby, Wilkinson and Hodge sold by auction a fine collection of letters addressed for the most part to Mrs. Thrale. There were sixteen letters from Johnson, eleven to Mrs. Thrale, four to Miss Boothby; two letters from Boswell to Mrs. Thrale; and a number of single letters to Mrs. Thrale from Burke, Goldsmith, Garrick, Michael Lort, Samuel Lysons, Fanny Burney, Hannah More, Mrs. Siddons and other
prominent people. In January, 1907, the same auctioneers disposed of twenty-five letters from Johnson to Mrs. Thrale and the five volumes of Piozziana, presented by Mrs. Piozzi in 1810 to her adopted son. On June 4th, 1908, took place a further sale of "books from the Library of Mrs. Thrale," together with forty-one letters from Johnson, a number of other letters from various correspondents, and some of the original MSS. of her works. The most important MS. was that of Thrauliana, which was bought in by the owner, was again offered for sale in March, 1920, and was finally secured by private treaty for the Huntington Library in 1922. Other MSS. sold in 1908 included Mrs. Piozzi's Anecdotes of the late Samuel Johnson, LL.D.; her Lyford Redivivus (unpublished); The Two Fountains: A Faery Tale in Three Acts; a new Common-place book, begun in 1809; Minced Meat for Pyes; a domestic journal from September, 17th, 1766, to the end of 1778, chiefly concerned with her children; and her Journal of the Tour in Wales with Dr. Johnson, July-September, 1774, printed by A. M. Broadley in his Dr. Johnson and Mrs. Thrale (1910). Mr. Broadley evidently collected together a considerable amount of the material dispersed by the above-mentioned sales and made use of it in his book; he believed that the 1908 sale marked the complete dispersal of the MSS. of Mrs. Piozzi, an event which he deplored as "an insurmountable barrier to the completion of Johnson's biography" as well as to any exhaustive work dealing with the life and correspondence of Mrs. Piozzi. Mrs. Piozzi, however, had been exceptional in the care taken by her for the preservation of MSS. and correspondence, and a mass of papers remained as yet undisturbed exceeding in sheer bulk and in many respects surpassing in importance such part of the collection as had already been scattered.

On January 30th, 1918, and the following day, one hundred and fifty-nine letters from Johnson to Mrs. Thrale, the property of Mrs. R. V. Colman, great-granddaughter of Sir John Salusbury, were sold by "Sothebys." These letters, now widely dispersed, appear for the most part to have been printed in Mrs. Piozzi's Letters to and from the late Samuel Johnson, LL.D. (1788). Finally, in January, 1931, the Governors of the John Rylands Library acquired by purchase the remaining part of the collection.

The papers, which came to the Library in two large closely-
packed cases, are of a very miscellaneous nature. They were for the most part unsorted. Notes on the back of many letters and documents in his easily recognised hand show that they have been examined by Johnson; several bundles were made up by Mrs. Piozzi herself; others have evidently been gone through by Sir John Salusbury; one very large miscellaneous group of letters, which appears to have been kept apart, was briefly listed, probably by the Rev. G. A. Salusbury, in a fragment of a "House Book" of 1856, which also names the books kept in various cupboards, while the same owner later began to make an alphabetical index of correspondents. Together with these groups were mingled many packets of letters, notes and memoranda, note-books of all sizes, hundreds of deeds and family papers, and large batches of loose leaves of MSS.—many evidently gathered together indiscriminately, with no attempt at arrangement, and after being compared with the proofs of the printed works stored away as of little value in hastily made parcels.

It is hoped that before the end of the year this large mass of papers will be reduced to order and made accessible. A separate and detailed catalogue, with a full index, is already in course of preparation.

The contents of the collection may be arranged in the following groups:

A. Letters to, and from, friends and acquaintances of Mrs. Piozzi.
B. Letters to, and from, members of Mrs. Piozzi's family.
C. Business letters and papers.
D. Deeds and estate papers.
E. MSS. of works (both published and unpublished), diaries, rough note books, etc.

GROUP A. Letters to, and from, friends and acquaintances of Mrs. Piozzi.

There are twenty letters to Mrs. Thrale (later Piozzi) from Dr. Johnson, of which eighteen are complete, a long letter in French bears neither signature nor date, and the remaining letter has lost the end sheet. The dates range from May 22nd, 1781, to December 1st, 1783. None of the letters were known to Dr. G. Birkbeck Hill when he edited The Letters of Samuel Johnson, L.L.D., in 1892. Bound up with them is Johnson's draft of his epitaph on Mrs.
Salusbury, and also a number of notes, several in Latin, in Johnson's hand.

One hundred and ten letters to Johnson from members of the Thrale family, the great majority from Mrs. Thrale, cover the period from July 1st, 1771, to July 15th, 1784. The manner in which these letters returned to the writer's hands is revealed in two letters to Mrs. Piozzi, dated April 29th and August 30th, 1785, from Charles Selwin. Selwin writes "Sir Joshua Reynolds has in his hands all your letters to Dr. Johnson that were found amongst his papers, and wishes to know what you would have done with them," and later "I take for granted you will have heard of Mr. Cator's having received your Letters from Sir Joshua Reynolds as he promised me to send them to him in a sealed Parcel or Box agreeable to your Desire." All these letters are unpublished, but it is hoped in the near future to bring out an edition of Mrs. Thrale's letters to Johnson, which, apart from their own intrinsic interest, are invaluable as supplementing and occasionally elucidating Johnson's own letters.

There is part of the MS. of Mrs. Piozzi's Letters to and from the late Samuel Johnson, LL.D. (1788). The letters from Johnson —the originals of which appear to have been sent to the printer— have been removed and dispersed.¹

A few letters to Johnson from various correspondents, including two from Charlotte Lennox, were probably left behind by him at Streatham.

There are numerous letters to Mr. and Mrs. Thrale dating from the time of her friendship with Johnson onwards. The names of the writers include many which are familiar to all students of Johnson and the literature of the second half of the eighteenth century. There are two letters from Boswell, eight from Baretti, eight from Fanny Burney, thirteen from Charles Burney, twenty-four from Samuel Lysons, thirty-five from Elizabeth Montagu, and over fifty from Arthur Murphy. Over one hundred letters to Hester Lynch Salusbury, before her marriage with Thrale the brewer, are from her tutor, Dr. Collier.² Other writers include Dr. Lawrence, Johnson's physician

¹ See above.
² They have been examined carefully by Dr. Johnson, who has written short notes on the back of several of them. Also there are many tutorial papers in Latin from Dr. Collier. For Collier see Sketches of the Lives and Characters of Eminent English Civilians [by Charles Coote?], London, 1804.
(7), Sir Lucas Pepys, Sir William Weller Pepys, Dr. Michael Lort, 
the Regius Professor of Greek at Cambridge (13), Dr. Delap, poet 
and dramatist (15), Henry Bright of Abingdon, Sir Philip Jennings 
Clerke, Dr. E. Crane, prebendary of Westminster, Thomas Davies, 
the bookseller, William Seward (6), John Hinchliffe, Bishop of 
Peterborough, James Merrick, the versifier of the Psalms, Dr. 
Wetherell, Master of University College, Oxford, Francesco Sastres 
and Miss Sophy Streatfield. Twenty-one letters are from Mrs. 
Thrale to her friend Mrs. Lambart.

Much more numerous are the letters to and from Mrs. Thrale 
during the later period of her life after her marriage with the Italian 
musician, Gabriele Piozzi, and the death of Johnson. There are 
several large groups.

One hundred and sixty-five letters, written between 1786 and 
1818, are from Mrs. Piozzi to the Rev. Leonard Chappelow,¹ and 
one hundred and twenty-five from Chappelow in reply. Chappelow 
himself was not without literary merit and was persona grata in 
literary circles.

One hundred and fifty-one letters, written between 1788 and 
1821, are to Mrs. Piozzi from Mrs. Pennington, Anna Seward’s 
“graceful and elegant Sophia Weston.” Many of the corresponding 
letters from Mrs. Piozzi to Mrs. Pennington were published in 1914 
by Mr. Oswald G. Knapp.²

Forty letters, written between 1787 and 1816, are from members 
of the Whalley family, most of them from the Rev. Thomas Sedgwick 
Whalley.³

There are one hundred and sixty letters to Mrs. Piozzi between 
1806 and 1820 from Miss Marianne Francis. Marianne Francis 
was the daughter of Charlotte, fourth daughter of Dr. Charles Burney, 
and the niece of Fanny Burney. She was a close friend of William 
Wilberforce and of Arthur Young, the agriculturist. Her letters, 
which are full of interest, refer frequently to Wilberforce and Young, 
and to her aunt, Madame d’Arblay, Hannah More, and other writers

Of Roydon, near Diss, and Hill Street, Berkeley Square, London.

² The Intimate Letters of Hester Piozzi and Penelope Pennington, 

³ For Whalley see Journals and Correspondence of Thomas Sedgwick 
of the time. A few other letters are from Marianne's sister, Charlotte, and from her brother, Clement Francis.

Seventy-two letters written between 1791 and 1821 are to Mrs. Piozzi from the Rev. Robert Gray, afterwards Bishop of Bristol (1827-34).

One hundred and seventy letters, written between 1798 and 1809, are to Mrs. Piozzi and her husband from John Gillon. Gillon appears to have done much business for Mrs. Piozzi, but he was also a close friend and a very well-informed man. His letters are rich in information, both personal and general, and he was evidently one of the chief sources of news enabling the active-minded Mrs. Piozzi, when far from the capital in Bath or Denbigh, to keep abreast of the happenings of the time.

There are groups of letters from Miss Anna Seward (11), Lady Eleanor Butler and Miss Sarah Ponsonby, the recluses of Llangollen (22), Mrs. Siddons, the actress (16), William Siddons (12), Daniel Lysons, the topographer (12), Thomas Pennant, the naturalist (23), George James, A.R.A. (8), Miss Helen Maria Williams, authoress and "Girondist" (11), Robert Merry, "Della Crusca" (11), the Rev. Edward Mangin, author of Piozziana (20), Lady Kirkwall and family (54), Charles Sheppard, afterwards Attorney-General of Santa Lucia (15), Rev. Reynold Davies, tutor to the young John Piozzi Salusbury (42), John Cathron, Somerset herald (12), and William Augustus Conway, the actor (10).

Twenty-four letters are from Mrs. Piozzi to Mrs. Byron, wife of Admiral the Hon. John Byron (Foulweather Jack), and grandmother of the poet, and six letters are from Mrs. Byron.

The numerous other writers include Dr. Lewis Bagot, Bishop of

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1 Mrs. Piozzi's letters to Dr. Gray were put at the disposal of Hayward for the second edition of his Autobiography, Letters and Literary Remains of Mrs. Piozzi (1861), by the Bishop's son, Mr. J. E. Gray.

2 For the ladies of Llangollen, see The Hanwood Papers of the Ladies of Llangollen and Caroline Hamilton, edited by Mrs. G. H. Bell (John Travers), London, 1930.

3 With copies of a number of replies.

4 For other correspondence, see Love Letters of Mrs. Piozzi, written when she was eighty, to William Augustus Conway (London, 1842), P. Merritt's The True Story of the so-called Love Letters of Mrs. Piozzi (Cambridge, 1927), etc.
S. Asaph, Bertie Greatheed, the dramatist, Ann Greatheed, Cadell, the publisher, Dr. Robert Dealtry, Lord Deerhurst, Richard Duppa, editor of *A Diary of a Journey into North Wales in the year 1774, by Samuel Johnson, LL.D.*., Sir James Fellowes, Mrs. Piozzi's executor, Rev. G. H. Glasse, the classical scholar, James Hutton, the Moravian, Sir Walter of James Langley Hall, Berks., the celebrated Miss Ellis Cornelia Knight, Miss Harriet Lee, the novelist, Mrs. C. Lewis, widow of the Dean of Ossory, Miss Hannah More, William Parsons, the poet (?), M. Perkins, Thrale's superintendent and successor at the brewery, Stockdale, the publisher, Mrs. Strickland, Mrs. Piozzi's "oldest friend," Lord Thurlow, Horace Twiss, the future biographer of Lord Eldon, and also the Marquess Trotti, Alfonso Pellegrini, and a number of Italians.

A number of copies of letters from Mrs. Piozzi to various correspondents, made by Mrs. Piozzi herself, are bound up in a separate volume.

**GROUP B. Letters to, and from, members of Mrs. Piozzi's family.**

A miscellaneous collection includes letters from Mrs. Piozzi's father, John Salusbury, to his wife, several sent from Halifax, Nova Scotia; letters to John Salusbury from Lord Halifax, Dr. E. Crane and others; letters from, and relating to, Sir Thomas Salusbury, Sir Lynch Salusbury Cotton, and other members of the Salusbury and Cotton families.2

There are a number of letters from Mrs. Piozzi's daughters, Hester Maria Thrale (Dr. Johnson's Queeny), later Viscountess Keith; Susannah Arabella Thrale, Sophia Thrale, later Mrs. Henry Merrick Hoare, and Cecilia Margaretta Thrale, later Mrs. John Meredith Mostyn. A bundle of correspondence concerns the opposition met with by the youthful love affairs of Cecilia, which ended with her elopement with Mostyn. No fewer than four hundred and sixty-nine letters, written between 1807 and 1821, are from Mrs. Piozzi to her adopted son, John Salusbury Piozzi Salusbury. They cover his school-days, spent at the Rev. T Shepherd's, Enborne Cottage, near Newbury, Berks., his career at Christchurch, Oxford, and the period down

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1 Letters to Sir James Fellowes are printed in Hayward, *Autobiography* etc., and A. M. Broadley, *Dr. Johnson and Mrs. Thrale* (1910).

2 Many letters have been examined and endorsed by Johnson.
to Mrs. Piozzi's death, during which he married Harriet, second daughter of Edward Pemberton of Ryton Grove, Shropshire; took up residence at Brynbella, was sheriff of Flintshire in 1816, and was knighted the following year on presenting an address to the Prince Regent. There are also twenty-seven letters from him to Mrs. Piozzi between 1808 and 1821.1

One hundred and twenty-seven letters are from Mrs. Piozzi to Lady Salusbury, both before and after her marriage. Other correspondence includes twenty-one letters from Mrs. Piozzi to Mrs. Pemberton, Lady Salusbury's mother, and also a large packet of letters relating to Mrs. Pemberton's family, and, in particular, to her brother, Nicholas Owen Smythe Owen of Condover (1770-1804), a rather wild young man.

GROUP C. Business Letters and Papers.

Hundreds of letters2 are from solicitors, estate agents, stewards, and business people. They date from the time of Mrs. Lucy Salusbury of Bachygraig, Mrs. Piozzi's grandmother, onwards. Many letters relating to the Bachygraig estate and to business affairs in Wales are from Edward Bridges of Aberwheeler, Richard Lloyd of Tynewydd, Thomas Lloyd, Clement Mead, William Shackfield, and John Oldfield of Farm, Abergely. Letters relating to the property left to Mrs. Thrale by Sir Thomas Salusbury are from William Wiltshire of Hitchin. Others relating to London affairs are from her steward Alexander Leak and others. A small group are from Nova Scotia and deal with the lands acquired there by John Salusbury. Bundles of letters concerned with legal business, many dealing with Mrs. Piozzi's dispute with her daughters over Mr. Thrale's will, are from John Cator, acting executor to Mr. Thrale, J. Ward, and the firm of Vandercom and Grant. There is also a "Memorial of H. L. Piozzi against John Cator, Esq.;" in Mrs. Piozzi's hand. Among the numerous smaller groups may be mentioned letters from Mr. Scrase of Brighton, an old retired solicitor, who had been the friend of Mr. Thrale's father and was deep in Mrs. Thrale's con-

1 Notes to Mrs. Piozzi from her young adopted heir are also found among the letters of the Rev. Reynold Davies.
2 Notes, in Johnson's handwriting, occur on a large number of the letters of the earlier period.
fidence, and others from Perkins of Barclay and Perkins, Thrale's successors at the brewery. There is also a collection of bills and receipts, including many from lesser tradespeople. This group also includes various inventories taken by Mrs. Piozzi of china, plate, and other goods belonging to Mr. Piozzi in 1784, with additions up to 1788; a "Catalogue of Books at Brynbella, 18 Octr, 1806" with additions up to 1813, made by Mrs. Piozzi; a priced catalogue of the Manchester sale\(^1\) in 1823, together with correspondence with the auctioneers; and a priced catalogue and correspondence relating to a sale at Brynbella on April 13th, 14th, and 15th, 1836.

**Group D. Deeds and Other Documents.**

There are over three hundred and thirty deeds, grants, conveyances, rentals, wills, bonds and other documents for the period from 1490 to 1837. The majority of them relate to Bachygraig and to lands in and around Dymerichion in the county of Flint. They mostly concern the Salusbury family from the Sir Thomas Salusbury of Henry VII's reign onwards, but many of the early ones also concern the Billings family, while the Cloughs, the Pennants and many local families are named in numerous later deeds. In two deeds of 1777 relating to land in Bodvarry, in the county of Flint, the parties named are, in the first deed, Henry Thrale of the one part, and Dr. Samuel Johnson and John Cator of the other, and, in the second, Henry Thrale and Hester Lynch, his wife, of the one part, and Dr. Samuel Johnson and John Cator of the other. The documents also include an abstract of the settlement made on the 9th and 10th October, 1763, previous to the marriage of Henry Thrale and Hester Lynch Salusbury; Henry Thrale's bond to his wife's mother, Mrs. Salusbury, for two thousand pounds, dated March 25th, 1770; deeds, dated July 19th, 1784, concerning a settlement made before the marriage of Hester Lynch Thrale, widow, and Gabriele Piozzi; the certificate of the marriage of Hester Lynch Thrale and Gabriele Piozzi, dated July 23rd, 1784; the denisation certificates of Gabriele Piozzi and of his nephew John Salusbury Piozzi; and the will of Hester Lynch Piozzi, dated March 29th, 1816, together with a duplicate of the same in her own hand.

\(^1\) See above.
The following brief descriptions will serve to give some indication of the importance of the numerous MSS.:

(i) A copy in Mrs. Thrale's hand of *The Fountains: A Fairy Tale*, by Dr. Samuel Johnson. A translation in Italian of this work has been roughly removed from the same note-book, and a much later note states "Why this was translated, or transcribed, or why the translation was torn, and the transcript left, I cannot now make a guess, H. L. P., 1801."

(ii) Mrs. Piozzi's original account of her "Italian Journey." This is in a large 4to note-book, written up from time to time. The first entry was made at Dover on September 5th, 1784, and the last at Milan on September 6th, 1786.

(iii) Mrs. Piozzi's original account of her "German Journey." This is in another large 4to note-book, and was written up from time to time. The first entry records her departure from Milan on September 22nd, 1786, and the last was probably written at Brussels early in March, 1787.

(iv) Seven folio note-books containing "Observations and Reflections collected from the Diary of Hester Lynch Piozzi during her Journey thro' France, Italy, and Germany in the years 1784, 85, 86 and 87." This work was rewritten with many important modifications and alterations. The new work survives in

(v) A manuscript of three hundred and eighty-two loose leaves, from which was printed Mrs. Piozzi's *Observations and reflections made in the course of a journey through France, Italy, and Germany*, (2 vols., London, 1789).

(vi) A manuscript of two hundred and forty-two loose leaves. This is evidently Mrs. Piozzi's final draft, except for a few pages now missing, of her work *British Synonymy* (2 vols., London, 1794). Together with this MS. is a folio note-book containing a draft of a short section of the work and a few notes.

(vii) Four folio note-books containing rough drafts of the preface and of several long sections of Mrs. Piozzi's work, "Retrospection."

1 Originally printed in *Miscellanies in Prose and Verse*, by Anna Williams (London, 1766).
(viii) A manuscript of five hundred and four loose leaves, evidently the final draft of Mrs. Piozzi's *Retrospection: or a Review of the most striking and important events, characters, situations, and their consequences, which the last eighteen hundred years have presented to Mankind* (2 vols., London, 1801). Part of the short preface and four leaves of text are missing.

(vii) A volume of "Manuscript poems on various subjects and on several occasions." The poems were written by Mrs. Thrale, before and after her marriage, between 1757 and 1768. They include "The Three Warnings," which first appeared in the *Miscellany* of Anna Williams. Many poems do not appear to have been printed.

(viii) A manuscript, in Mrs. Thrale's hand, of the poem on the Streatham portraits, printed by Hayward with the *Autobiography*.

(ix) Seven small note-books containing a journal kept by John Salusbury from June 15th, 1749, to April, 1751, when in Nova Scotia, and another small note-book also containing memoranda made in Nova Scotia. On the covers are notes in Dr. Johnson's handwriting showing that he had read the books carefully. Mrs. Thrale in her *Autobiography* refers to Salusbury's going to Nova Scotia in the following passage: "Lord Halifax was now, or soon after, head of the Board of Trade, and wished to immortalise his name—he had no sons—by colonising Nova Scotia. Cornwallis and my father, whom he patronised, were sent out, the *first persons* in every sense of the words."

Together with the above are two more small note-books, used as common-place books.


(xi) Mrs. Thrale's original "French Journal, 1775." This is in
a 4to note-book, written up from time to time, and fills 147 pages. The first entry relates to September 15th, 1775, and the last concludes with the words: "My adventures are now at an end and so shall be my Journal, finished at Dover, Saturday, 11th Nov., 1775."

(xii) A note-book containing "Three Dialogues on the Death of Hester Lynch Thrale. Written in August, 1779." The speakers in the first dialogue, supposed to take place "A month after my Death," are Johnson, Burke, Pepys and Mrs. Montagu; in the second they are Cator, Mrs. Cator, Norman and Baretti; and in the third they are Seward, Sir Richard Jebb, Sir Philip Jennings Clerke, and later, Thrale, Miss Thrale, Lady Lade and Miss Dodson. Mrs. Thrale in her Preface says, "The first Dialogue will be the favourite with everybody else—but the last was best liked by the Author."

(xiii) A folio note-book containing Mrs. Piozzi's MS. of a work in ten chapters headed respectively: "Of the Holy Scriptures;" "Of the Lord's Prayer;" "Of the Creeds;" "Of the Decalogues;" "Of the Sacraments;" "Of the Christian Virtues;" "Of the Mysteries;" "Of Ceremonies;" and "Conclusion." It is prefaced by a letter, dated "Milan, 13 August, 1786," from H. L. Piozzi to her daughter Susanna, for whom it was evidently written.

(xiv) Mrs. Piozzi's original "Journey Book" of her "Journey through the North of England and part of Scotland, Wales, etc." A folio note-book, written up from time to time. The final entry is as follows: "Bath to London afforded nothing new, so here at Han's Square, 27 Dec., 1789, ends a Journey of 1300 miles made in Great Britain alone since the 3d of last June, 1789."

(xv) A large 4to notebook containing, in Mrs. Piozzi's handwriting, a work with the title "Una and Duessa, or a set of Dialogues upon the most popular subjects." The MS. was "begun in April and ended in July, 1791."

(xvi) A folio note-book containing, in Mrs. Piozzi's handwriting, a three-act play with the title "The Two Fountains. A faery tale." The scene of the play is Derbyshire. Mrs. Piozzi has made numerous later alterations and additions to the text.

(xvii) A manuscript of twenty-three loose leaves, in Mrs. Piozzi's handwriting, with the title "Three Warnings to John Bull before he
dies. By an old Acquaintance of the Public.” On the old wrapper is the note, “MS. of a political Pamphlet, 1798, Mrs. Piozzi, Warren’s Hotel.”

(xviii) A collection of poems, translations, charades and other jeux d’esprit, written by Mrs. Piozzi on loose sheets, scraps of note-paper and small cards. They belong to all periods of her life.

(xix) A collection of miscellaneous prose pieces, fragments of works, notes and jottings, by Mrs. Piozzi and others. Several pieces relate to Dr. Johnson.

(xx) An 8vo note-book containing “The Trial of Midas the 2d, or, Congress of Musicians,” a long poem in three cantos. At the end is the date “1777.”


(xxiii) A 4to note-book also containing “The Adventurer. A Comedy in two Acts.” This MS. is written in a hand not yet determined. There are also several emendations evidently made by Mrs. Thrale herself.

(xxiv) Many loose leaves containing the Épitre I sur l’homme, à M. le chevalier de Ramsay of Louis Racine, rendered into English verse by Mrs. Thrale when evidently quite young. There are translations of five letters, two from Sir James Ramsay to Racine, Racine’s reply to Ramsay, a letter from Alexander Pope to Racine, and Racine’s reply to Pope; also rough drafts of parts of the translation and of proposed prefaces to the translation. In one preface the young translator writes: “I, thinking it more impertinently vain to resist the solicitations of Gentlemen so eminent in the Literary World [as Dr. Wilson, Dr. Collier and Dr. Parker crossed out] than to yield to them, comply’d and resolved not only to translate the Essay itself but the Preface and some few Original Letters w’ch I culled, not without much Trouble from the Author’s Collection of Letters.”¹ On the cover containing this manuscript Mrs. Piozzi has written: “Essay on Man A Translation from Racine by H. L. S. at a very early Period, perhaps 13 years old.”

¹ For the original letters see Œuvres de Louis Racine (Paris, 1808), pp. 435-449.
(xxv) A manuscript of thirty-four folio leaves. This is a translation made by Mrs. Piozzi, when very young (see below), of "The Life of Michael Cervantes Savedra by Don Gregorio Mayansiscar." ¹

(xxvi) A 4to note-book containing: "The Life of Michael Cervantes Savedra wrote by Don Gregorio Mayansiscar." A note at the beginning says: "This was translated by H. L. Salusbury from the Spanish in the year 1756 I believe, or rather 1755—it was copied over by Thos. Cotton, her first cousin, a Boy at School."

(xxvii) Fragments of translations from the Spanish into English and Italian of the Don Quixote of Cervantes.

(xxviii) A 4to note-book containing "A Dissertation on the God Endovellicus." A later note added by Mrs. Piozzi, says: "This was a strange thing for a child to do. It was written in the year 1755 or 1756, at latest, by H. L. Salusbury."


(xxx) A 4to note-book containing a "Sketch of Europe in 1797, unrolled by Dumouriez,² colour’d &c. by H. L. Piozzi."

(xxxi) A 4to note-book containing a later version of the above, with a Preface, also in Mrs. Piozzi’s hand. The title given is "Miniature Picture of Europe by Dumouriez in 1797."

(xxxii) Notes on Hebrew grammar, in Mrs. Piozzi’s hand. The first chapter of Genesis is translated and parsed.

(xxxiii) A 4to note-book containing the manuscript of a play in five acts. Mrs. Piozzi has added the note "This Play written by Dr. Delap was committed to H. L. Piozzi’s Care, 1790."

(xxxiv) A small 4to note-book containing a copy in an unidentified hand of "An Elegy on a Pile of Ruins. By J. Cunningham"³ and a Latin version of the same poem on opposite pages. It is followed by a letter from "The Translator" "To Christopher Anstey, Esq."

(xxv) Early page proofs of the first thirty-two pages of Dr. Johnson’s Preface to his edition of The Plays of William Shakespeare, published in 1765. There are many corrections in Johnson’s

¹ See Gregorio Mayans y Siscar, Vida de Cervantes Saavedra, (1738).
² See C.-F. Dumouriez, Tableau Spéculatif de l’Europe, 1798; a translation was published in London the same year.
³ John Cunningham (1729-73).
hand, and a comparison with the text of the version finally published shows that further considerable alterations in proof were afterwards made. There were two editions of Johnson's Shakespeare in 1765, varying considerably in format and pagination, and the proofs are, of course, those of the original edition.

The importance of this collection of Mrs. Piozzi's manuscripts is evident from the above brief outline of its contents. Its greatest general interest lies, of course, in the contributions it makes to our knowledge of Dr. Johnson, for his dominant position in the literary society of eighteenth century England endows with interest all productions, however slight, of his pen. Any evidence of his activities and sayings and, in a lesser degree, any mention of him made by his contemporaries, distinguished and otherwise, is of value.

Many of the friends of Mrs. Thrale were also friends or acquaintances of Dr. Johnson, and, as was to be expected, the detailed examination necessary for the arrangement of the great piles of letters, many of them bundled together in a haphazard manner, sometimes with the leaves of individual letters widely separated, has revealed letter after letter containing references to him. New light is thrown on his life at Streatham Place, the house both Johnson and the Thrales loved to call 'home.' Numerous notes, written in his well-known hand, on letters, deeds and papers, show the great interest taken by him in all matters, both great and small, relating to the Salusbury and Thrale families. The letters to Johnson from Mrs. Thrale make clear his position in the Thrale household. He is the trusted friend and adviser, whose advice is sought on occasions both of business and domestic difficulty. It is to him that Mrs. Thrale turns after business worries in 1772 had seriously affected Mr. Thrale's health, temper, and outlook. Johnson himself, on the other hand, received, not the sycophantic attentions frequently the lot of the great, but the comforts and cares which usually fall only to the lot of a loved and revered member of the family circle.

A few passages, taken almost at random from Mrs. Thrale's letters will serve to illustrate this. In a report of a conversation with Perkins, the manager of Thrale's brewery, she writes:

\[W. P. Courtney's A bibliography of Samuel Johnson describes the second edition.\]
"Would not one think, Dear Sir, that our Master's heart was without feeling, too? Perkins caught me alone yester morning and complained to me how coarsely Mr. Thrale treated poor Lester, whose life was made very unhappy by perpetual affronts, but charged me at the same time (only think) not to talk to our Master about it till we had consulted Doctr. Johnson, which, says he, I have long intended to tell you but never had an Opportunity. Well, Well, says I, you shall tell him yourself on Wednesday, in the meantime why should not I give Mr. Thrale a hint? He then beg'd my Pardon, was spoil'd by my Condescension forsooth, or he could not thus take the Liberty to prescribe to me, but indeed giving Hints he held to be the wrong method, they were disregarded at the same Time they were disliked, and he was of Opinion that Mr. Thrale should not be talked to at all on this same Subject, unless it was done with some degree of earnestness, and this Notion of his, as it grew out of what had many Times dropt from Doctor Johnson in Conversations he had lately had the honour to be a hearer in, he flattered himself it would obtain his Approbation. Bravo Mr. Perkins, thought I, and how finely some Folks come forward by Indulgence! but the Man has really good Parts, as you always said, and I don't know but he may be right in this particular. Is he?"

Or again,

"Do huff my Master and comfort him by Turns according to your own Dear Discretion; he has consulted you now, and given you a Right to talk with him about his ill-Tim'd Melancholy, and do keep your Influence over him for all our sakes."

A long letter of June 29th, 1775, concludes:

"When will you come home? I shall be wondrous glad to see you, though I write everything so I shall have nothing to tell; but I shall have you safe in your Bow window to run to, when anything comes in my head, and you say that's what you are kept for, you know."

On November 7, 1777, she writes:

"My Master stands over me and bids me say that if you are pretty fresh and well, and have a Mind to save his Credit, and take a frolick, you might come hither on Fryday the fourteenth of this Month, dine with us on the Saturday, with Beaucleerck on Sunday, Hamilton on Monday, and return with us to Streatham on the Tuesday the eighteenth, which is the Day we have fixed upon to leave this Place. Mr. Thrale says you will not understand what is meant by saving his Credit, but it is because he had promised those two Gentlemen the Pleasure of seeing you this Season.

Mr. Thrale is fresh and well himself, I am sure, he hunts and eats and sleeps very comfortably, and has got the vive hodie pretty strongly impressed upon him. We spend our Money merrily I know, I fret sometimes about it, but I never grumble, and desire you make no Answer to this part of my Letter, for Prosperity fanneth Wrath, and I caught my
Master listening this very Day at the Door when Scrase and I had a Teste a Teste."

A letter of September 16th in the same year, written about the time that Johnson was considering a Baltic expedition, is in a vein characteristic of the lady to whom Johnson writes: "Never imagine that your letters are long; they are always too short for my curiosity. I do not know that I was ever content with a single perusal." Mrs. Thrale writes:

"Mr. Boswell will make Ashbourne alive better than three Haut-boys and the Harpsichord; and in Seward's Phrase, will do more for one. A propos Mr. Seward is come back, but in such Pain with his Teeth & Face that he can neither talk in the Day nor he says—sleep in the Night. He only tells that he likes Scotch Hospitality and Welch Castles, that Myddelton is erecting an Urn I think to your Memory at Gwynynnog, and that your Friend the Schoolmaster at Beaumaris remembers your meeting with Delight. My Aunt is coming from Bath, but if my Uncle was coming from the Grave my Master says he would stick to his Word and go to Brightelmstone on the 30th. You have it seems longer Journeys in Contemplation, but remember Mr. Boswell has a Wife and Children, and you have Friends at Streatham who love you more than many a Man is loved by his Wife and Children."

Mrs. Thrale kept Johnson entertained with lively reports of all her activities. There is, for instance, an amusing account of a meeting at Bath in May, 1780, with the famous blue-stocking, Elizabeth Montagu, of whom Johnson said "She diffuses more knowledge than any woman I know, or, indeed, almost any man." Mrs. Thrale writes:

"Mrs Montagu and I meet somewhere every night. People think they must not ask one of us without the other, and there they sit gaping while we talk. I left it to her for the first fortnight and she harangued the Circles herself, till I heard of private Discussions why Mrs. Thrale, who was so willing to talk at other Times, was so silent in Mrs. Montagu's Company—then I began, and now we talk away regularly when there is no Musick, and the folks look so stupid, except one or two who I have a Notion lie by to laugh, and write Letters to their Sisters etc. at home about us."

The letters from Mrs. Thrale to Johnson from 1782 onwards, which now survive, are not very numerous. In November, 1784, Johnson said to Fanny Burney, "If I meet with one of her letters I burn it instantly. I have burnt all I can find." It is clear, however, that she was a regular correspondent, for among the twenty unpub-

lished letters from Johnson, for example, three letters are dated December 16th, 1782, December 17th, 1782, and December 18th, 1782. The answering of Johnson’s letters must have proved exacting, for during these years he was an ailing man and usually writes at length about his sufferings. This is reflected in a letter of Mrs. Thrale’s, written on April 17th, 1784:

Your comical Account of your own Voracity, reached me just as the Salmons came in today, pray accept this very fine one, till Pipers and Dorees come in. Eat away, my dear Sir, and fear no Colour; you will get Strength by your Food, and then your Mind will be got Strong too, and you will scorn your food—the old Fate of those who help’d in the early Periods of a Struggle, and are thrown away when Struggle subsists no longer. I shall live to be served so myself perhaps, by Puppets who could scarcely have play’d their little parts well, had not I pulled the Strings for them at the beginning of the Evening; but then perhaps I may live on, and see them all thrown into a dirty Basket together when the Show is quite over—and the Managers run out of the Village for fear of Debts. . . . You think now all about yourself, continue so do so, dear Sir. I know no one better worth thinking on.”

There is also what was perhaps the last letter between Johnson and Mrs. Thrale. It was sent by Mrs. Thrale from Bath and is dated July 15th, 1784. The signature has been very vigorously crossed out later. This letter, the tone of which is very much to the writer’s credit, is given here in full.

“Not only my good Wishes but my most fervent Prayers for your Health and Consolation shall for ever attend and follow my dear Mr. Johnson. Your last Letter is sweetly kind, and I thank you for it most sincerely. Have no Fears for me however; no real Fears. My Piozzi will need few Perswasions to settle in a Country where he has succeeded so well; but he longs to show me to his Italian Friends, and he wishes to restore my Health by treating me with a Journey to many Places I have long wish’d to see: his disinterested Conduct towards me in pecuniary Matters, his Delicacy in giving me up all past Promises when we were separated last year by great Violence in Argylle Street, are Pledges of his Affection and Honour. He is a religious Man, a sober Man, and a Thinking Man—he will not injure me, I am sure he will not, let nobody injure him in your good Opinion which he is most solicitous to obtain and preserve, and the harsh Letter you wrote me at first grieved him to the very heart. Accept his Esteem, my dear Sir, do; and his Promise to treat with long continued Respect and Tenderness the Friend whom you once honoured with your Regard and who will never cease to be, my dear Sir, Your truly affectionate and faithful serv.”
A postscript adds:

“The Lawyers delay of finishing our Settlements, and the necessity of twenty-six days Residence, has kept us from being married till now. I hope your Health is mending.”

One other manuscript relating to Johnson may be singled out for notice. This is Mrs. Thrale’s Journal of the French tour of 1775, on which the Thrales were accompanied by Johnson and Baretti. Their visit lasted two months, and Johnson’s own surviving notes, printed by Boswell, only cover twenty-six days, from October 10th to November 4th inclusive. Mrs. Thrale was naturally more concerned with recording her own impressions rather than those of Johnson, but his activities are frequently mentioned. One or two passages will illustrate this.

On September 22nd we are told:

“Mr. Johnson has made a little Distich at every Place we have slept at, for example,

A Calais.    St Omer.    Arras.
Trop de frais.    Tout est cher.    Hélas!
A Amiens.    Au Mouton.
On n’a rien.    Rien de Bon.

The Sign of the Mouton D’or a(t) Neuf Chatel.”

Part of the entry for September 27th runs:

“These Reflexions are interrupted by the Recollection of a Frightful Accident which befel the Carriage in which were Mr. Thrale, Baretti, and the Girl. Their Postillion fell off his Horse on a Strong Descent, the Traces were broken, one of the Horses run over and the Chaise carried forward with a most dangerous Rapidity which Mr. Thrale not being able to endure till somebody came up—jumped out with intent to stop the Horses for Baretti and Queeney. However, he only hurt himself and they went on till Sam came up, who had been miserably embarrassed with a vicious Horse which had retarded him so long, and afterwards flung him. This was therefore a day of Distress, and my Master found himself so ill when we arrived at St. Germains that the Surgeon he sent for advised him to go on to Paris and get himself bled, and take a good deal of Rest, which he hoped would restore him. He left us therefore at St. Germains and Mr. Baretti kindly went with him to give him Assistance and get us some

1 This is probably the “very kind and affectionate letter” (Hayward’s Autobiography, i, 114) which Mrs. Piozzi says was sent in reply to Johnson’s of July 8th (Letters, ii, 407-409).

2 This is being edited and it is hoped will shortly appear among the John Rylands Library publications.
Habitation to receive us at Paris. Dr. Johnson's perfect unconcern for the Lives of three People, who would all have felt for his, shocked and amaz'd me—but that, as Baretti says, is true Philosophy."

On the 29th she writes:

"We have made it all up with Johnson, who protests it was not unconcern for Mr. Thrale but anger at me that made him sullenly forbear Enquiry, when he found me unwilling (as he thought it) to give him a ready or rational Answer."

On November 6th we are told:

"This morning Mr. Johnson had a mind to dispute with me concerning the High Mass we saw celebrating at Douay and whether we might not have staid through the whole Ceremony and seen the Elevation of the Host. If you had staid, says Barreti, you must have kneel'd. I have no scruples, said I, I was willing enough to kneel. Johnson said he would not have knelt on such an occasion for the whole city of Douay."

Mrs. Thrale is occasionally very severe on the French. This appears in her account of a visit to dine with Madame de Bocage on October 5th:

"The Morning was spent in adjusting our Ornaments in order to dine with Madame de Bocage at 2 o'clock. There was a showy Dinner with a Frame in the middle, and she gave us an English Pudding made after the Receipt of the Dutchess of Queensbury. We saw nothing particularly pleasing at this Visit but the beauty of Madame de Bocages Niece, the Countess of Blanchetre, whose husband was so handsome too—that being a Frenchman—I wonder'd. In the course of Conversation, however, he turned out an Italian, and there was another Italian Nobleman who hailed Baretti and made himself agreeable to us all. Nothing would serve him but attend us at night to the Colissea which, after leaving our Names with the Sardinian Ambassadress, we were willing enough to permit. In Madame de Bocage's Drawing room stood the Busts of Shakespear, Milton, Pope and Dryden, the Lady sate on a Sopha with a fine Red Velvet Cushion fringed with Gold under her Feet and just over her Head a Cobweb of uncommon size & I am sure great Antiquity. A Pot to spit in, either of Pewter or Silver quite as black & ill-coloured, was on her Table, & when the Servant carried Coffee about he put in Sugar with his Fingers. The House these people live in is a fine one but so contrived that we were to pass through a sort of Hall where the Footmen were playing at Cards before we arrived at Madame's Chamber."

In concluding this brief report of the Piozzi MSS., which happily have now found a permanent home in the John Rylands Library,
Manchester, it is clear that they are invaluable, apart from their Johnsonian interest, as new materials relating to many prominent literary figures of the eighteenth century, Boswell, the Burneys, Goldsmith, Garrick and others. It is evident, also, that notwithstanding the excellent works done in the past on Mrs. Thrale herself, much remains to be done, and that a just and comprehensive estimate of her character, work, and position in English literature is now possible. Many of the papers preserved are in themselves of little value. It is only when they are viewed as a whole that they take on a new significance, and serve to show that this "lively feather-headed lady" had a great capacity for work and a reserve of zealously acquired knowledge not approached by that of some of her less attractive but more sober-minded critics.