

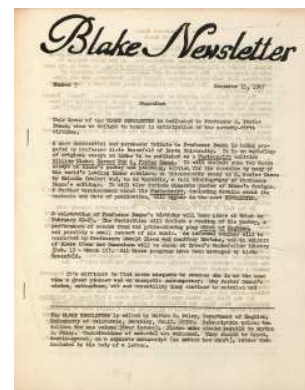
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N O T E

Europe iii: 18

Morton D. Paley

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creation in which Los and Enitharmon wander. The first of these three parts becomes merely a vague memory, first recalled by Enitharmon (10:9ff); the second becomes the material for the First Night, and this is found partly on pp.3-9, partly on 21a-19c. The activities of Los and Enitharmon, leading to the introduction of Urizen to their fallen world (p.12) is the material of the Second, starting at 9:34. The turning-point is now the change of scene from Eternity to mortality. Where the action in the fallen world begins, the Second Night now begins. Blake has inserted a new line to open this Night -

"But the two youthful wonders wanderd in the world

of Tharmas" (9:34).

The reader has been away from this scene for some time, during the narrative of pp. 21a-19c, and has to be reminded who the pair are; "they" of the deleted line is no longer clear.

As I said at the outset, this is not a matter on which final certainty can be reached, as the evidence of the MS is that Blake himself was uncertain, rather than that he had decided, and it is not for us to make up his mind for him. Yet an editor who must make a single choice has, I would argue, as good grounds for making this arrangement as for reading the MS straight through as it is now bound, and this choice makes at least as good sense.

(The second part of Professor Stevenson's article, on the two Nights VII of The Four Zoas, will appear in our next issue)

5 Europe iii: 13

In examining copy H of Europe at the Houghton Library, I found that line 18 of the prefatory poem reads "The world, when every particle of dust breathes forth its joy." The third word is usually printed as "where," but there is only one other copy of Europe with this plate extant (K, in the Fitzwilliam Museum), and David Erdman informs me that he has examined his slide of the Fitzwilliam plate iii and found the reading to be "when." The line makes perfect sense as Blake etched it; in fact, "when" ties in more closely with the theme of the prefatory poem.

At the beginning of the poem, Blake hears the Fairy singing about the senses: "Five windows light the cavern'd Man" etc. The fifth sense, touch, could admit man to the joys of Eternity if his hypocritical morality did not restrain him:

Thro' one, himself pass out what time he please, but he will not;
For stolen joys are sweet, & bread eaten in secret pleasant.

After the Fairy is caught by the poet, he promises to write a Blakean illuminated book ("on leaves of flowers") and to

shew you all alive

The world, when every particle of dust breathes forth its joy.

Thus the line as Blake etched it continues the theme of erotic mysticism introduced earlier in the poem, "when" referring to the ecstatic moment at which the life of the universe is perceived.

(continued on page 18)

In the four British Museum copies, the figure in question is clearly an angel with wings. In fact, in the posthumous, uncolored volume it is obvious that the wings were etched on the plate before the color was added. If Grant is willing to generalize from the facsimiles of copies Z and AA and conclude that the figure must be the mother (although it is in no sense clear how he can justify identifying that figure as earthly female as distinct from angelic being) about to take over, is he not falling into the very error that he attributes to us; namely, generalizing from too limited evidence?

Where then does such criticism as Grant offers lead us? Are we to be reduced to countering four winged angels to two figures whose backs are hidden, or a vaudeville Christ who sometimes appears without a beard to a conventional Christ who sometimes appears with a beard, or Blake's conception of busts to Schiavonetti's? Surely the aim of scholarship tends to get lost amidst such carping considerations. We all too readily admit that we have much to learn about Blake's complex art--both from Blake and even from John E. Grant--but we doubt if knowledge is greatly advanced by such arguments as those that have been presented in these pages.

Thomas E. Connolly

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Notes Continued...

How "when" came to be printed for "where" in editions of Blake is not clear. Perhaps Ellis and Yeats started the tradition. Sampson (1905) printed "when," but Sloss and Wallis (1926) reverted to "where." Keynes printed "when" in 1925, but afterwards substituted "where"; the Erdman-Bloom edition has "where." There appears to be no textual authority for any reading but "when."

MDP

QUERY

Martin Butlin (The Tate Gallery, London, SW1) asks for "information about the present whereabouts of 'The Lute Player', with a drawing of a profile of a man on the back, sold 15th July, 1959 at Sotheby's (lot 52), bought by Jacob Schwartz and almost certainly now in the United States. It may have been given by Mr. T. E. Hanley to some educational body."

The fourth issue of the NEWSLETTER is scheduled for publication on March 15. Copy should be received by March 7 in order to be considered.

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