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"IN "HOM TO LAY THE PATTERN OF A CHRISTIAN HERO": MILTON AND THE ELIZABETHAN TRADITION OF CHRISTIAN LEARNING

by

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Approved,

[Signature]

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**CONTENTS**

**Section I:** Milton's Statement in *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 1.</th>
<th><em>Paradise Lost</em></th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 2.</td>
<td><em>Paradise Regained</em></td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Section II:** "The Benefit To Be Had" of Studying History: an Elizabethan Convention

| Chapter 3. | The "Beginning, End, and Reason": Milton's Statement of the Use of History and the Christian Humanist Tradition | 52 |
| Chapter 4. | Milton and the "Reformers' Times" of Sixteenth-Century England | 64 |
| Chapter 5. | "The Tragical Histories" of the Mirror for Magistrates "Mostly Furnished of Beautiful Parts" | 83 |
| Chapter 6. | What Literature Best Serves the Christian? An Elizabethan Crisis | 107 |
| Chapter 7. | "An Authentical President to After Ages": Sir Philip Sidney and Fulke Greville's "Dedication" | 133 |

**Section III:** "Only Good Men, by Their Government and Example, Make Happy Times in Every Degree and State": the Courtesy Book and the Protestant Epic

| Chapter 8. | "Gentle and Virtuous Discipline": Spenser's Protestant and Epic Synthesis of the Tradition of Courtesy in the *Faerie Queene*, Book VI, Proem | 156 |
| Chapter 9. | "Ensamples": The Several Episodes of Book VI as a Code of Christian Learning | 175 |
Section IV: Evaluation

Chapter 10. Conclusion ......................................... 217

Appendix: Scholarly Comment on Milton's Theory of Learning ........................................... 226

Footnotes .................................................................. 241

List of Works Cited .................................................. 259
SECTION I

Milton's Statement

In Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained
CHAPTER 1

MILTON'S THEORY OF LEARNING IN PARADISE LOST

Professor G. F. Sensabaugh is only one of several scholars who have recently been concerned over the apparent "contradiction" between Milton's early attitude toward learning (the attitude, that is, which Milton expressed in the tractate Of Education and in the Areopagitica) and the post-Restoration attitude which Milton expressed in the Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained. Professor Sensabaugh writes:

Why Milton, in the period of his greatest poetic activity, should renounce intellectual curiosity and belittle his old classic friends calls for an investigation of the forces which helped shape his thought, not only for what such an inquiry might tell of his changed educational views, but also for what it might reveal about the state of his mind when he wrote Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained.¹

Professor Sensabaugh notes that E. M. W. Tillyard² and James Holly Hanford³ are either "bewildered" or "astonished" by Milton's later rejection of the classics and of learning,⁴ and concludes that those scholars who "are puzzled by the stand Milton took" have weightier arguments than those who ignore the so-called "change":
After all, Raphael told Adam in no uncertain terms not to explore the secrets of the universe but to be lowly wise, and Christ flatly stated that the classics contain nothing firm. Such statements, however construed, cannot be made to square with Areopagitica and Of Education; they do violence to both the letter and spirit of Milton's two early essays.

One purpose of this dissertation is to define Milton's theory of learning. One facet of this definition, or one means of arriving at the differentia of the definition, will be to consider in the Appendix scholarly arguments concerning Milton's supposed rejection of learning in Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained. The purpose of this first chapter is not to "construe" any particular passage or to attempt to reconcile particular passages in Paradise Lost with others in Of Education and Areopagitica, but rather to establish Milton's statement in Paradise Lost of the means by which man, both before and after the fall, may gain knowledge and wisdom.

The several invocations in Paradise Lost and other passages which show Milton's prayerful and humble seeking for personal enlightenment, and Milton's masterful use of the broad learning which he had spent his life in acquiring, are too well known and have been too often discussed to require reiteration in this study. Oliver Morley Ainsworth in "Milton on Education" has collected these passages and all other passages from all of Milton's writings, and has established beyond doubt or contention that Milton's practice and example
were certainly a tribute to the value of learning.⁶ This first chapter of this dissertation will therefore confine its examination of those particular passages in *Paradise Lost* which bear directly upon a theory of how man may learn, particularly those passages which seem, as Sensabaugh has pointed out, to condemn or reject learning.

To take as a point of departure the passage to which Professor Sensabaugh objects—that in which Raphael advises Adam to be lowly wise—it is obvious within the limits of the single speech and without reference to the framework within which Milton records Raphael's speech, that the passage might well be interpreted as a thorough condemnation of human efforts to learn. It would be possible to argue that Milton advocated obedience in ignorance as the sole source of human felicity:

```
....to recount Almighty works
What words or tongue of Seraph can suffice,
Or heart of man suffice to comprehend?
Yet what thou canst attain, which best may serve
To glorifie the Maker, and infer
Thee also happier, shall not be withheld
Thy hearing, such Commission from above
I have receav'd, to answer thy desire
Of knowledge within bounds; beyond abstain
To ask, nor let thine own inventions hope
Things not reveal'd which th' invisible King,
Onely Omniscient hath suppress in Night,
To none communicable in Earth or Heaven:
Aenough is left besides to search and know.
But Knowledge is as food, and needs no less
Her Temperance over Appetite, to know
In measure what the mind may well contain,
Oppresses else with Surfet, and soon turns
Wisdom to Folly, as Nourishment to Winde.

(PL, VII, 112-130)
```
This discussion will return to this passage in a few moments to consider more closely the meaning of Raphael's statement; but if one wishes to speculate on possible meanings of isolated speeches of the angels in *Paradise Lost*, let him consider also a speech by another angel delivered to Adam on a very different occasion. Adam says,

Henceforth I flie not Death, nor would prolong Life much, bent rather how I may be quit Fairest and easiest of this combrous charge, Which I must keep till my appointed day Of rendering up. *Michael* to him repli'd. Nor love thy *Life*, nor hate; but what thou livest Live well, how long or short permit to Heav'n: And now prepare thee for another sight.

*(PL, XI, 546-552)*

This second conversation occurs, of course, after Adam's fall and in the course of *Michael's* stern "heartening" of the hero Adam for the slow and ignominious battle of life which Adam, as man fallen, must "attend" with patience and fortitude. There is in this conversation between Michael and Adam a superficial resemblance between the ideas which they express and some of the ideas of pagan Stoic and Epicurean thought. Despite this superficial likeness, however, it is impossible to entertain, even for a moment, the theory that Milton intended seriously to represent Adam as a stoic or Michael as an Epicurean (though a vicarious one, to be sure, inasmuch as Michael is in this passage philosophic about Adam's problems rather than his own). Such a theory would of course be absurd.
Even aside from Milton's explicit statements of his purpose to write a Christian epic, statements which occur both in the text of the *Paradise Lost* and throughout his earlier writings which record his plan for an epic, the text of the *Paradise Lost* would refute any supposition that Milton expounded pagan ethics as a sufficient guide for choice and action.

In a similar manner, before one can assume that any individual passage in *Paradise Lost* rejects learning and condemns intellectual curiosity *per se*, he must examine that passage against the background of the entire *Paradise Lost* and also in the immediately surrounding context. It is, of course, self-evident that the character to whom Milton assigns a speech, the question which a speech answers or poses, and the dramatic circumstances under which the discourse occurs (for example, whether before or after the fall) must all be considered. By so examining the passage quoted above, in which Raphael instructs Adam, and several other passages which bear directly upon means of learning and the use of human intellect, this chapter will attempt to define Milton's idea of the way in which men learn as that idea emerges in the text of *Paradise Lost*.

One of the most important elements of this full context is the fact that *Paradise Lost* is an epic. Both the Christian story which is the subject of the epic and the tradition of
Homer and Virgil, particularly of Virgil, made it convenient, perhaps mandatory, that Milton represent the action of this epic on three stages—the stage in heaven, the stage in hell, and the crucial conflict in Adam's mind and soul on earth. These three stages also require three points of view and three concepts of time, all focused, to be sure on Adam's mind and soul, for it is only by understanding the human implications that man can learn.

Raphael's likening of the use of knowledge to the use of food was no mere accident—no strained conceit or casual detail. In the first place, Adam would have been aware of the proper use of food, and the parallel would have been meaningful to him. We can be sure that Adam would have been aware because, throughout the description of Adam and Eve in the unfallen state, Milton again and again emphasizes the fact that, as Eve gathered and served the food, taste followed taste "with kindliest change" (PL, V, 346) ("kindliest" in the sense of "most natural" in that elegant taste would be pleased and legitimate need for sustenance satisfied). Because this satisfaction is "kindly" or "natural," the food satisfies without "burdening" nature. A backward glance at the debate between Comus and the Lady concerning the proper use of appetite will demonstrate that this proper use of appetite was an ethical problem which Milton had long considered; and the early speeches could well serve as an explanation of Milton's conclusion in the Paradise Lost. It is not, however,
necessary to go back earlier than the text of the *Paradise Lost*, or indeed to part company with Raphael to be certain of Milton's reason for using the parallel between the proper use of food and the proper use of knowledge. When Adam wonders that Raphael has condescended to partake of the nourishment upon which human beings subsist, Raphael compares the ascending chain of being in the universe to the growth of a single plant on earth. As Raphael explains the process of growth and of proper nourishment, he points out that each growing thing sustains a higher order of being:

O Adam, one Almighty is, from whom
All things proceed, and up to him return,
If not deprav'd from good, created all
Such to perfection, one first matter all,
Indu'd with various forms, various degrees
Of substance, and in things that live, of life;
But more refin'd, more spiritous, and pure,
As neerer to him plac't or neerer tending
Each in thir several active Spheres assign'd,
Till body up to spirit work, in bounds
Proportion'd to each kind. So from the root
Springs lighter the green stalk, from thence the leaves
More aerie, last the bright consummate flour,
Spirits odorous breathes; flours and thir fruit
Mans nourishment, by gradual scala sublim'd
To vital Spirits aspire, to animal,
To intellectual, give both life and sense,
Fancies and understanding, whence the scule
Reason receives, and reason is her being,
Discursive, or Intuitive; discourse
Is ofttest yours, the latter most is ours,
Differing but in degree, of kind the same.
Wonder not then, what God for you saw good
If I refuse not, but convert, as you,
To proper substance; time may come when men
With Angels may participate, and find
No inconvenient Diet, nor too light Fare:
And from these corporal nutriments perhaps
Your bodies may at last turn all to Spirit,
Improv'd by tract of time, and wing'd ascend
Ethereal, as wee, or may at choice
Here or in Heav'nly Paradises dwell;
If ye be found obedient, and retain
Unalterably firm his love entire
Whose progenie you are. Mean while enjoy
Your fill what happiness this happie state
Can comprehend, incapable of more.

(PL, V, 469-505)

Thus Adam's question concerning the diet of angels provides
Raphael with an opportunity to instruct Adam in terms of
Adam's limited experience, and to show Adam that the proper
use of all the earth's bounty and of all knowledge is the
ascent, step by step, to heaven and the throne of God. Adam
shows that he understands Raphael's lesson:

Well hast thou taught the way that might direct
Our knowledge, and the scale of Nature set
From center to circumference, whereon
In contemplation of created things
By steps we may ascend to God.

(PL, V, 508-512)

It is therefore Adam's understanding, and a part of the
knowledge which could have made him sufficient to stand, that
"by steps he may ascend to God," and that the "contemplation
of created things" must be "orderly" (as Milton had earlier
stipulated in the tractate Of Education) and one step at a
time. Raphael has used the analogy, actually a "correspondence,"
of the process by which a plant grows to fruitful maturity in
discharging its function within God's order as an illustration
or example of the way in which Adam must "direct his knowledge."
Adam now knows that he must so direct his knowledge as to climb each step carefully and firmly; he cannot and must not, like Satan, spiral upward like a disorderly comet; and he must omit no steps. Adam now knows that he must so order his systematic "conning over" of nature (or "created things") that he may be able to ascend one step at a time and "from center to circumference"—that is, he must proceed from his present partial understanding step by step upward to the utmost limit of his own understanding. As he speaks out—indeed, almost exclaims—this understanding in his own words, Adam can still, in his unfallen state, look forward to a very high level, or limit, of his understanding—one which, in time, may, as Raphael has just told him, enable man to "participate" with angels. Within the theological context of Book V, Raphael's advice to Adam,

Mean while enjoy
Your fill what happiness this happie state
Can comprehend, incapable of more,
(PL, V, 503-505)

and the emphasis on obedience to God as a framework for all effort, angelic and human, is not, as some scholars seem to think, a rejection of free and full intellectual inquiry, but rather a statement of the direction in which inquiry may be fruitful. In nautical terms, Adam's understanding of his own position in relation to the universe "boxes his compass" so
that he may steer his course toward God. The example of Satan, who ignored the laws which govern "created things" and in his pride attempted to elevate his own whims above God's laws, is sufficient explanation for the necessity of a divine revelation to Adam—a revelation which will explain enough to him of the "laws of created things" within God's divinely ordered universe so that Adam will have a chance to reach the circumference (or outer limit) of his understanding. Without such a compass to steer by, Adam would (again in nautical terms) wind in endless circles on a vast intellectual and spiritual sea of speculation. The impending temptation by Satan only makes immediate and dramatic the crisis for the newly created and as yet uninformed Adam—the crisis of the criteria by which he may choose until he can gain for himself, bit by bit and step by step, the knowledge which will enable him one day to participate with angels.

Milton's conception of the Jacob's ladder, which descends from God and ascends up to Him, applies, as Raphael has explicitly told Adam, to all created beings, including both men and angels. This upward progression forms an outward and visible architecture which ties the universe together and which is the means of presenting one of the important theological and dramatic crises of the "heroic" poem—the crisis of Satan's seeing this architecture as he first views the universe after his flight through hell and chaos, and of his
recognizing, and rejecting once more, the law of step-by-step
ascension which his view reminds him is true.

All this dark Globe the Fiend found as he pass'd,
And long he wander'd, till at last a gleame
Of dawning light turn'd thither-ward in haste
His travell'd steps; farr distant hee descries
Ascending by degrees magnificent
Up to the wall of Heaven a Structure high,
At top whereof, but farr more rich appeard
The work as of a Kingly Palace Gate...
The Stairs were such as whereon Jacob saw
Angels ascending and descending...
Satan from hence now on the lower stair
That scal'd by steps of Gold to Heav'n Gate
Looks down with wonder at the sudden view
Of all this World at once.

(PL, III, 498-506, 510-11, 540-543)

Satan, in the guise of a stripling cherub bent upon learning
from God's marvelous works, asks directions from the archangel
Uriel. Uriel, in turn, explicitly approves the desire which
Satan expresses (that is, the desire to "know the works of
God, thereby to glorifie" Him) (PL, III, 694-695), but states
the impossibility even for archangels to fathom the infinity
and the intricacy of all God's designs:

But what created mind can comprehend
Thir number, or the wisdom infinite
That brought them forth, but hid thir causes deep.
I saw when at his Word the formless Mass,
This worlds material mould, came to a heap:
Confusion heard his voice, and wilde uproar
Stood rul'd, stood vast infinitude confin'd;
Till at his second bidding darkness fled,
Light shon, and order from disorder sprung;
Swift to thir several Quarters hasted then
The cumbrous Elements, Earth, Flood, Aire, Fire,
And this Ethereal quintessence of Heav'n
Flew upward, spirited with various forms,
That rowld orbicular, and turnd to Starrs
Numberless, as thou seest, and how they move;
Each had his place appointed, each his course,
The rest in circuit walles this Universe.

(PL, III, 705-721)

Uriel here makes clear the proper use of the intellect and
of knowledge; and his approval of those who seek knowledge
firsthand is almost extravagant: such a desire and such
effort, Uriel declares, lead

...to no excess
That reaches blame, but rather merits praise
The more it seems excess, that led thee hither
From thy Empyreal Mansion thus alone,
To witness with thine eyes what some perhaps
Contented with report heare onely in heav'n;.

(PL, III, 696-701)

But if Uriel praises the seeking of knowledge, he must also
record the limits of the understanding which even the angels
may achieve; and in his "uprightness," Uriel takes it for
granted that the imposter (that is, Satan in disguise) lives
by God's law. In fact, at one level, the most pedestrian,
perhaps, from Milton's point of view, Uriel's statement and
Raphael's warning to Adam might both in twentieth-century terms
be described as analogous to the insistence of the scientist
that knowledge must be pursued with the utmost humility and
with a constant check upon human blindness, prejudice, stupidity,
and imagination lest any one of these disorderly human mental
traits betray the mind and destroy the validity of an experiment. But for Adam before the fall, no less than for a "stripling cherub," the knowledge which must be revealed to him as a prerequisite for his pursuing knowledge rather than whimsy was the knowledge that all things proceed from God and ultimately return to him if not corrupted. Adam may pursue knowledge only by accepting this fundamental law or modus operandi as the framework within which he may pursue his orderly progression upward. Satan in his long soliloquy at the beginning of Book IV (lines 32-112) is moved to "self doubt" and to debating his course by the very orderliness and lawfulness of all natural objects; it is indeed the sun at its proper noonday zenith which evokes Satan's hatred and despair. It is the fact that there is no way out for Satan but through "submission" to divine law which moves him once more to choose, and to choose the evil and prideful flouting of divine law as his course.

There is, however, a very fundamental theological and dramatic difference between Satan's wilful rejection of a truth of which he is fully aware and Adam's well-meaning but ignorant and false speculations based on partial observation. Therefore, when Raphael at the beginning of his account of the council in Heaven after the fall of Lucifer tells Adam that "knowledge is as food and needs no less/Mer Temperance over Appetite," (PL, VII, 127) he is again warning Adam to direct
his mind into channels in which the human mind may profitably think and discourse. By no stretch of this speech, within the context of the order of the universe and of human psychology and function within that universal divinely ordered plan, can one imagine that Milton opposes reason or knowledge or the exercise of either. A bit later in the discourse, Adam, to borrow the phrase which Milton uses in the "Argument" of Book VIII, "inquires concerning celestial motions" in such a way as to indicate that his speculations have far outstripped his understanding, and that he has therefore falsely combined his observations:

When I behold this goodly Frame, this World Of Heav'n and Earth consisting, and compute, Thir magnitudes, this Earth a spot, a graine, An Atom, with the Firmament compar'd And all her numberd Starrs, that seem to rowle Spaces incomprehensible (for such Thir distance argues and thir swift return Diurnal) meerly to officiate light Round this opacous Earth, this punctual spot, One day and night; in all thir vast survey Useless besides, reasoning I oft admire, How Nature wise and frugal could commit Such disproportions, with superfluous hand So many nobler Bodies to create, Greater so manifold to this one use, For aught appeares, and on thir Orbs impose Such restless revolution day by day Repeated, while the sedentarie Earth, That better might with farr less compass move, Serv'd by more noble then her self, attaines Her end without least motion... (PL, VIII, 15-35)

To these "thoughts abstruse" which Adam expresses, Raphael gives a very careful answer—an answer which takes
great pains (even as Uriel's to the supposed stripling cherub) not to discourage the pursuit of knowledge. First, Raphael praises "asking and searching," and then he points to the folly of reasoning on the basis of speculation and of leaping to conclusions beyond the scope of the evidence available to man:

To ask or search I blame thee not, for Heav'n
Is as the Book of God before thee set,
Wherein to read his wondrous Works, and learne
His Seasons, Hours, or Days, or Months, or Yeares:
This to attain, whether Heav'n move or Earth,
Imports not, if thou reckon right...
Think onely what concerns thee and thy being;
Dream not of other Worlds, what Creatures there
Live, in what state, condition or degree,
Contented that thus far hath been revealed
Not of Earth onely but of highest Heav'n.

(PL, VIII, 66-71; 174-178)

Thus Raphael encourages Adam to inquire, but not to dream; and again Adam recognizes the truth and the aptness of Raphael's warning, and puts the idea in his own words:

...apt the Mind or Fancie is to rove
Uncheckt, and of her roaving is no end;
Till warn'd, or by experience taught, she learn
That not to know at large of things remote
From use, obscure and subtle, but to know
That which before us lies in daily life,
Is the prime Wisdom...

(PL, VIII, 188-194)

It must be emphasized that the word "use" in this passage is not employed in any Philistine sense, but rather in the opposite sense of "that which will enable man to tend upward by making the next step upward on the ladder which leads
ultimately to God." It is of primary theological importance that God has provided all men with a sufficient means of knowledge to assure each man an opportunity to be saved—each, that is, in his degree and according to his capacities and opportunities—provided, of course, each man makes proper "use" of his opportunities. It is not knowledge but aimless fancy-led speculations and dreams which Milton rejects—not as evil necessarily in themselves, but as false methods of pursuing knowledge or making choices. The opportunity to climb upward "in the tract of time" is the prospect which Raphael has held out to Adam in his blessed and unfallen state; and Adam must first of all concern himself with the proper means of attaining the knowledge which will enable him to climb.

It must also be remembered that Raphael is acting upon God's orders when he warns Adam and prepares him for Satan's temptation. Raphael knows that Satan will on this occasion as in the past pose as a kind of Prometheus—that Satan will deliberately confuse the seeking of knowledge and truth with his own lawless and prideful myth. Raphael must therefore prepare Adam for a temptation which will be a subtle and appealing one for man's pride and ego—a temptation which masquerades hypocritically as an appeal to man's reason or "godlike faculty." It should be observed that in this entire passage, only a small part of which I have been able to quote,
Raphael never condemns knowledge or inquiry, but only the improper "use" of them—the jumping to conclusions on the basis of evidence which is inadequate or which man can not yet understand or assimilate or act upon in his chief business, which is to become all "spirit" and ascend upward to God. Furthermore, Raphael, without arguing the point, which would belittle his insistence upon what constitutes for Adam "prime wisdom," nevertheless shows that he is quite aware (and that Milton was quite aware) of Copernican astronomy; (PL, VIII, 122-168) and there is even a bit of sardonic humor in the fact that Adam in the very act of "entering on studious thoughts abstruse" and in the seeming modesty of his astronomical variation on the universal theme, "What is man that thou art mindful of him?" should in fact have been so mistaken. In fact, Adam is almost prideful, and has deceived himself with the surface modesty—prideful, that is, in that he has been led to question the reason for a "fact" in which he is totally mistaken and about which he has not the slightest shred of sound information. Raphael's allusion is an extremely forbearing "not that I so affirm, though so it seem/To thee who hast thy dwelling here on Earth." (PL, VIII, 117-118)

In other matters, too, Raphael on this same occasion has cause to be concerned about some of the tangents which Adam pursues. After a kind of epithalamium in which Adam describes his emotion for Eve, Adam concludes:
All higher knowledge in her presence falls
Degraded, Wisdom in discourse with her
Looses discount'nanct', and like folly shewes;
Authoritie and Reason on her waite,
As one intended first, not after made
Occasionally; and to consummate all,
Greatness of mind and nobleness thir seat
Build in her loveliest, and create an awe
About her, as a guard Angelic plac't.

(PL, VIII, 551-559)

Raphael's reaction to this rhapsodic near-deification of Eve
is again tactful but apprehensive:

Accuse not Nature, she hath don her part;
Do thou but thine, and be not diffident
Of Wisdom, she deserts thee not, if thou
Dismiss not her, when most thou needst her nigh,
By attributing overmuch to things
Less excellent, as thou thy self perceav't.
For what admir'st thou, what transports thee so,
An outside? fair no doubt, and worthy well
Thy cherishing, thy honouring, and thy love,
Not thy subjection: weigh with her thy self;
Then value...
In loving thou dost well, in passion not,
Wherein true Love consists not; love refines
The thoughts, and heart enlarges, hath his seat
In Reason, and is judicious, is the scale
By which to heav'nly Love thou maist ascend.

(PL, VIII, 561-571; 588-592)

Thus once again, the criterion by which Adam must measure all
that he knows, or understands, or inquires into, is
the "use" which he may make of that knowledge and under-
standing and inquiry and emotion in "ascending" to the
spiritual state and to Heavenly love.

Within this criterion of "use," Milton makes clear the
three levels of this idea of function and discharging of
duty and achievement of destiny by showing the "use" on the three stages of action. In heaven, or in Raphael's account of the war in heaven as the angel relates the story to Adam, the pure intellectual beings, the angels, discharge their function within God's plan by voluntary praising and loving. Their intuitive knowledge as pure "intellectual" beings is entirely reliable. Satan in his soliloquy at the beginning of Book IV, in which he must admit the falseness and futility of all his arguments, articulates the spiritual and angelic function:

Ah wherefore! he deservd no such return
From me, whom he created what I was
In that bright eminence, and with his good
Upbraided none; nor was his service hard.
What could be less then to afford him praise,
The easiest recompence, and pay him thanks,
How due! yet all his good prov'd ill in me,
And wrought but malice; lifted up so high
I sdeind subjection, and thought one step higher
Would set me highest, and in a moment quit
The debt immense of endless gratitude,
So burthensome, still paying, still to ow;
Forgetful what from him I still receiv'd,
And understood not that a grateful mind
By owing owes not, but still pays, at once
Indebted and discharge'd; what burden then?

(PL, IV, 42-57)

This pure spiritual "intellectual" apprehension of the good angels is contrasted in Raphael's account with the unnatural, conniving, and devilish machinations of Satan's "Memphian chivalry," which in turn leads to the uprooting of whole mountains at the hands of the good angels to silence the "hollow engines" (the cannons) of the rebel angels. It is
Christ who puts the mountains back in their proper place and restores them to their proper use and who then banishes Satan and his forces; in other words, Christ's universal and all-encompassing understanding and love fulfill the law in harmony and completeness.

So far as the idea of "use" as the criterion of knowledge influences the rebel angels in hell, Milton describes in ascending order the several pursuits of the rebel hosts while Satan is away on his perilous journey to the earth: the lowest order of beings, Titan-like, heave physical objects about--brute strength divorced from all higher faculties, or from the control of higher faculties. The next highest order of angels beguile the time with music, which, in Milton's phrase, charms the "senses" as eloquence, the instrument of human reason, charms the "soul." The third group indulges endlessly in "vain disputation" of theological matters which are far beyond their ken. It is the highest group, the group which combines and uses, at least in a limited sense, their knowledge, experience, understanding, and desire to find a place which "might yield them easier habitation"--it is the highest group of fallen angels which suffers most in this place "for evil only good," (PL, II, 528-628) but there is no question that the four groups reflect in ascending order the physical, sensual, rational, and finally "spiritual" or "intellectual" (in Milton's sense) parallels in ascending
order of human beings, and that at each level the fallen angels represent the errors and misuses of those faculties which mankind after the fall is also likely to misuse. For example, the group whose "thoughts were more elevate" and who "reason'd high" are totally ineffectual because they are wrongly based and wrongly directed in their reasoning:

Of Providence, Foreknowledge, Will, and Fate,
First Fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute,
And found no end, in wandering mazes lost.
Of good and evil much they argu'd then,
Of happiness and final misery,
Passion and Apathy, and glory and shame,
Vain wisdom all, and false Philosophie:
Yet with a pleasing sorcerie could charm
Pain for a while or anguish, and excite
Fallacious hope, or arm th' obdured breast
With stubborn patience as with triple steel.

(PL, II, 559-569)

Apparently, from Milton's allusions, this group embraces both pagan philosophies and scholastic theology, all divorced from proper "use" though all containing partial truths. So also with the musicians among the fallen angels: they sang their own "Heroic deeds" in harmony which "suspended Hell, and took with ravishment the thronging audience,"

(PL, II, 552-555) but the subject of their song, its purpose and use, were wrong. Even the bands of explorers must proceed "in confus'd march forlorn" (PL, II, 610-628) because their purposes are partial and their quest destined merely to discover among the four rivers and distant fastnesses of hell only more misery, confusion, evil, and death.
Adam's fall completely changes his prospects: whereas he could look forward before the fall to a step-by-step ascension "in the tract of time" to a point at which he could converse with angels, the "tract of time" now holds for him (and for all succeeding generations of men) only the prospect of dissolution and death. Whereas all nature produced bounty in a perfectly ordered economy before the fall, nature becomes "red in tooth and claw" after the fall. Man, and along with him all the things of this earth over which God had given Adam dominion, falls into a state of savage and comparatively blind dog-eat-dog mortality. Adam after the fall has to learn the bitter prospects which the "tract of time" now holds for him, and must learn with less insight, less strength, and less natural discrimination than he had had before the fall, and above all without the hope which he had had before the fall. As Michael demonstrates to him, the world, now corrupt, presents appearances which are false: that which appears good may in fact be evil; that which appears unjust (as the slaying of Abel in the passage cited above) may eventually make for a divine justice hereafter. Before the fall Adam could look forward to his own steady climb in his own person and without the necessity for undergoing physical death. Now, in a world in which injustice, as a result of Adam's sin, triumphs over justice, and evil over good, Adam must depend upon Christ's love as
his only means of salvation. Yet, paradoxically, as the difficulty of judging and choosing becomes ever greater, so also Adam's responsibility for pursuing truth and "forsaking not knowledge" becomes greater.

To anticipate later chapters and to look back at the earlier essays Of Education and Areopagitica, it should be recognized that these earlier essays, and most of Milton's other remarks on "education" written for his own time and place, are written within the framework of his recognition of this fallen and unregenerate condition of mankind. Within this fallen world of false appearances, it becomes even more necessary as it becomes more difficult for man to "get wisdom and with it to get understanding," to paraphrase Solomon. Only by the exercise of his own reason, his own soul's life, can man hope to be worthy of Christ's love.

After the fall, the angel Michael is the messenger whom God sends to prepare Adam for the slow dissolution which is to be man's life upon this earth in his fallen condition. Throughout the prophetic vision and in all his comments upon that vision, Michael warns Adam that man must not in his fallen state suppose that he can judge from outward appearances—that appearances do not in the decayed state of nature after the fall represent realities. When Adam complains about the injustice of Cain's being able to murder his more righteous and more pious brother, Michael says,
...th' unjust the just hath slain,
For en'ie that his Brothers Offering found
From Heav'n acceptance; but the bloodie Fact
Will be aveng'd, and th' others Faith approv'd
Loose no reward, though here thou see him die,
Rowling in dust and gore.

(PL, XI, 455-460)

When Michael's description of disease and madness terrify
Adam and cause him to express his wonder that man, who
retains the "divine similitude," should suffer such ills,
Michael reminds him that man has forfeited immunity by
serving "ungovern'd appetite." (PL, XI, 518-525) Again, when
Adam exclaims with delight at the beauty and industry of the
inventive people of the plain (who reflect a good deal of
pagan joy in the things of this earth for their own sakes),
Michael reminds Adam,

Judg not what is best
By pleasure, though to Nature seeming meet,
Created, as thou art, to nobler end
Holie and pure...

...studious they appere
Of Arts that polish Life, Inventers rare,
Unmindful of thir Maker, though his Spirit
Taught them, but they his gifts acknowledg'd none.

(PL, XI, 599-602; 605-609)

Finally, and most important, after Michael's long account
of prophecies which culminates in the prediction of Christ's
victory and triumph over Satan, Sin, and Death, Michael
warns Adam,
...he, who comes thy Saviour, shall recure,
Not by destroying Satan, but his works
In thee and in thy Seed...
The Law of God exact he shall fulfill
Both by obedience and by love, though love
Alone fulfill the Law; thy punishment
He shall endure...

(PL, XII, 393-395; 402-405)

It is therefore Adam's business, duty, function, and inevitable
obligation so to number his days and so to use all his
faculties and so to pursue knowledge and imitate excellence
as to be capable of partaking of Christian grace. Man
cannot save himself by his own efforts--only Christ through
love can save him; but man must nevertheless do all in his
feeble power to be worthy of Christ's love.

Thus within the epic **Paradise Lost**, Milton warns against
the improper "use" of all knowledge which does not promote
man's salvation. The theme is religious, as we have already
pointed out, and the subject matter an attempt at universality
and truth in as ultimate a form as man can achieve. Milton
warns not against learning or knowledge or human wisdom--indeed
these faculties and potentialities of the human mind he
identifies with the life of the human soul. He warns against
an implicit and improper trust in merely human knowledge and
human learning.
CHAPTER 2

MILTON'S SUPPOSED REJECTION OF LEARNING IN PARADISE REGAINED

Scholarly and critical efforts to explain Milton's supposed rejection of learning in Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained have until recently been confined to affirmations of the sort made by Verity¹ and Masson² that Milton did but condemn fruitless speculation or that his preference for Biblical literature was a lifelong habit. Though these affirmations are doubtless true, the full context of the speeches in which Raphael and Christ seem to condemn learning remains to be defined. Even Miss Samuels, who has argued convincingly that these speeches constitute an expansion of Milton's earlier theories of learning³ has not examined, as this dissertation proposes to do, the entire process of learning which Milton stated or implied. It is the purpose of this chapter to examine the full context of the supposed rejection in Paradise Regained. This full context requires, of course, a consideration of those prophetic passages in Paradise Lost which are fulfilled in Paradise Regained.

In short, this chapter will attempt to answer two related questions: first, "What precisely does the text of this so-called rejection say?" and, second, "What does the
statement mean in context?" We must always remember, of course, that "context" for either Paradise Lost or Paradise Regained is generally Christian dogma and specifically the epic pattern.

The particular passage in which Milton's Christ objects to learning is so placed in the order of the temptations as to suggest that Milton considered it the highest and most subtle of the worldly temptations which Christ must overcome. If this place of importance is intentionally assigned to the learning temptation, then Christ's condemnation is all the more important; in any event Christ's speech should be the cornerstone of Milton's theory. Satan, having failed to ensnare Christ in his earlier temptations of the flesh (stone into bread and the banquet scene) and of worldly power, offers Christ the relatively humane and altruistic temptation of pagan culture and learning. Christ rejects this offer as he has already rejected earlier ones by "proving," in St. Paul's sense of the word, the religious fallacies contained in the offer:

Think not but that I know these things, or think I know them not; not therefore am I short Of knowing what I aught: he who receives Light from above, from the fountain of light, No other doctrine needs, though granted true; But these are false, or little else but dreams, Conjectures, fancies, built on nothing firm. The first and wisest of them all profess'd To know this only, that he nothing knew; The next to fabling fell and smooth conceits.  

(PR, IV, 286-295)
The surface meaning of these lines and those which follow them seems unequivocal: Christ does not leave pagan learning among those "doctrines" which, though unnecessary, are harmless and indifferent. After condemning Socrates and Plato, Milton's Christ proceeds in the following passage to demolish the skeptics in one line, the Epicureans in three more, and the Stoics in twenty. He then points out the reason for the failure of merely human learning:

However many books
Wise men have said are wearisome; who reads
Incessantly, and to his reading brings not
A spirit and judgment equal or superior,
(And what he brings, what needs he elsewhere seek)
Uncertain and unsettled still remains,
Deep verst in books and shallow in himself,
Crude or intoxicate, collecting toys,
And trifles for choice matters, worth a spunge;
As Children gathering pibles on the shore.
(PR, IV, 321-330.)

Nor does Christ fail in the concluding lines of this speech to take the final logical step—that is, to affirm the superiority of Hebrew art and literature:

But herein to our Prophets far beneath,
As men divinely taught, and better teaching
The solid rules of Civil Government
In this majestic unaffected stile,
Then all the Gratory of Greece and Rome.
In them is plainest taught, and easiest learnt,
What makes a Nation happy, and keeps it so,
What ruins Kingdoms, and lays Cities flat;
These only with our Law best form a King.
(PR, IV, 356-364.)
The final phrase, "best form a king" reaffirms the context within which Satan has already offered the earlier temptations. "Best form a king" also recalls Christ's sense of mission and his concern that He understand and fulfill that mission properly. It was this concern which sent Christ to the Wilderness immediately after his baptism; and it is in terms of the ways in which Christ may fulfill his mission and take possession of his promised kingdom that Satan makes his offers. Any attempt to answer the question, "What does the rejection say?" must therefore take cognizance of this dramatic situation. Milton was following the Gospels and was implicitly in agreement with most other Protestant commentaries and sermons which treated these temptations, as Miss Pope has shown. The relationship of the phrase "best form a king" to Satan's temptations seems therefore to have been no subtle shifting of narrative or of focus, much less an attempt to perpetrate some private theological conviction, but, on the contrary, an effort to define essential doctrine within the generally accepted interpretation of the Biblical passages which treat the temptation.

Even if we had not the advantage of scholarly studies which establish Milton's concentrating here upon essentials, Milton's purpose and method in the two epics would establish the corollary that Milton wished to be generally and clearly
understood. There can be no doubt that Milton intends the essential doctrines of his "great argument" to be clear to any reader who wishes to understand. It is also certain that Milton, in accordance with his own precept, "Consider who it is that speaks in the play," would assign what he deemed to be the highest and most perfect truth to God and Christ. Nor is it possible to think that Milton intended these speeches as "mysteries" beyond human comprehension. On the contrary, Milton based his entire conception of moral law on the religious faith, amounting to certainty for him, that fallen man, if he really wants to and tries, can understand moral truth. Man's comprehension of moral truth is not perfect, to be sure, nor complete, nor do all men understand in the same terms; and fallen man's ability to comprehend requires God's grace; but the moral law is predicated upon every man's having available to him enough understanding of moral truth to enable him to make correct choices. This cardinal principle was so absolutely necessary a part of Milton's moral theory that he assigns to God in Book III in Paradise Lost a prophetic speech in which the process is carefully outlined:

Man shall not quite be lost, but say'd who will, Yet not of will in him, but grace in me Freely voutsaft; once more I will renew His lapsed powers, though forfeit and enthrall'd By sin to foul exorbitant desires;
Upheld by me, yet once more he shall stand
On even ground against his mortal foe,
By me upheld, that he may know how frail
His fall’n condition is, and to me ow
All his deliv’rance, and to none but me.
Some I have chosen of peculiar grace
Elect above the rest; so is my will:
The rest shall hear me call, and oft be warnd
Thir sinful state, and to appease betimes
Th’incensed Deitie, while offered grace
Invites; for I will clear thir senses dark,
What may suffice, and soft’n stonic hear’s
To pray, repent, and bring obedience due.

And I will place within them as a guide
My umpire Conscience, whom if they will hear,
Light after light well us’d they shall attain,
And to the end persisting, safe arrive.

(PL, III, 173-197)

Although theologians in Milton’s time and scholars
since have "found no end in wandering mazes lost" as
they have disputed some of the problems which this speech
touches upon, Milton’s primary purpose in this speech is
to answer Christ’s question concerning Satan,

shall he fulfill
His malice, and thy goodness bring to naught?

(PL, III, 157-158)

This question is, to be sure, Christ’s plea for mankind
stated in terms of divine love and universal compassion;
but the question which the plea raised, not only for Mil-
ton, but, as later chapters will show, for Englishmen general-
ly for a hundred years before Milton wrote, was the fundamental
one of the process of "law" by which God’s goodness overcomes
Satan's evil. Whatever Milton's particular conclusion over some points of theology may have been, he concentrated in this speech upon the two inseparable facets of essential Christian dogma: first, he asserts, on Biblical authority, the revealed mystery of Christ's sacrifice for mankind; and, second, he concentrates his reasoning, or statement of the "law," upon the means by which individual human beings can avail themselves of the opportunity which Christ's actions and words as a man upon earth—as God's "word, wisdom, and effectual might"—both overcome Satan and illustrate to fallen man the manner in which each individual "warring Christian" may follow Christ's example. Such questions as that of "predestination" and "election" Milton touches upon—for example, he interprets "elect" both here and in Christian Doctrine as prophets and saints, special instruments of the Lord—but he concentrates the moral principle or "law" which God outlines upon a universal order which applies to all mankind. It is only by knowing the moral truth implicit in each situation that each man can "justify" or "square" his choices and acts with God's law.

The entire scene in Book III of Paradise Lost which tells of Christ's offer to die for mankind parallels the preceding scene in Book II in which Satan offers also to undertake alone a perilous journey. The explicit statement of dogma in God's speech quoted above is therefore reinforced
dramatically and structurally within *Paradise Lost* in such a way as to permit the implications of God's law to emerge, as moral meaning must emerge in man's experience—that is, from the matrix of the circumstances in which decisions must be made and action taken. It was this kind of teaching which Milton, in common with most other Elizabethans and seventeenth-century writers, admires—witness the terms in which Milton stated his admiration for Spenser; and it was the peculiar province of literature to further human learning by providing just such a dramatic "unfolding."

The combined and steadily unfolding meaning of Satan's offer in Book II of *Paradise Lost* and Christ's contrasting offer in Book III are therefore the dramatic cause for the temptations in *Paradise Regained*; and the terms of those temptations and of Christ's rejection of them must be understood within the framework of the prophetic dogma set forth in *Paradise Lost*. In *Paradise Regained* Christ defeats the purpose for which Satan has undertaken his journey, and Christ overcomes Satan's temporary victory over man, not by superior force or divine power but by showing each man how he may overcome Satan's works in himself. In recapitulating the terms of Christ's offer, Milton again assigns to God at the end of the scene in Book III of *Paradise Lost* a speech in which God states the entire dogma of salvation:
And be thy self Man among men on Earth, 
Made flesh, when time shall be, of Virgin seed, 
By wondrous birth: Be thou in Adams room 
The Head of all mankind, though Adams Son. 
As in him perish all men, so in thee—
As from a second root shall be restor'd,
As many as are restor'd, without thee none.
His crime makes guiltie all his Sons, thy merit
Imputed shall absolve them who renounce
Thir own both righteous and unrighteous deeds,
And live in thee transplanted, and from thee
Receive new life. So Man, as is most just,
Shall satisfie for Man... 

(PL, III, 283-295.)

This statement is a summary which, as the foregoing discussion has attempted to show, Milton certainly intended to be clear. Yet full clarity does not come to man by precept: it comes, rather, by example, usually a little at a time, and often requires divine grace. The highest understanding and wisdom can come to man only after he has renounced all of Satan's works in himself by renouncing all his "own both righteous and unrighteous deeds" and by coming to live "transplanted" in Christ. Only then can fallen man expect that his "senses dark" may be cleared and his faltering and fickle affections steadied so that, "light after light well used," he may "persisting, safe arrive" at salvation. The difficulty which fallen man must experience in discerning the difference between appearance and reality is the occasion, as Chapter I has shown, for much of the instruction which Michael gives Adam in Book XI of Paradise Lost. There Michael reminds Adam that what looks pleasant may be evil:
Those Tents thou sawst so pleasant, were the Tents
Of wickedness...

(PL, XI, 603-504.)

Therefore the truth of God's speeches in *Paradise Lost*,
Book III, and of Christ's speeches in *Paradise Regained* is
paradoxical in the usual Christian sense. First, the truth
is "revealed" both in the sense that Scriptures are revealed
and also in the more general sense in which Bacon speaks of
higher truth, "the knowledge of truth is the presence of it."
The paradox lies in the fact that these "transparent" or
self-evident or divinely-revealed truths are so deep and so
universal as to be inexhaustible: each man may see more and
more deeply into the implications of these truths and their
concomitant processes (which grow out of the nature of things)
as his understanding and experience enable him: "light after
light well used" thus leads each man toward the center of
truth, to the "Sabhaoth" God, to salvation. The beginning of
Christian wisdom is to put aside the things of this world:
"seek ye first the kingdom of God, and all these things shall
be added unto you."9 "The stone which was rejected is
become the head of the corner"10—the Scriptures abound in
passages which emphasize humility, simplicity, the renunciation
of the world, the flesh, and the devil.

It is not, therefore, necessary to attempt to interpret
*Paradise Regained* as a model for the clergy only. Schultz
thinks that the renunciation of worldly learning was a
condemnation of the Anglican clergy's insistence upon pedantic information as a prerequisite for priesthood. 11 Though Milton objected to the "scorner" pipes of an ignorant clergy—perhaps because he objected to ignorance of essential truths—he would certainly have condemned such a narrow and un-Christian emphasis upon the use of learning. It is quite possible that the debate over learning for the clergy may have influenced his thinking, as Schultz argues, or that he may have intended Christ's words as a reminder of Christian duty with the particular sins of the clergy in mind. 12 God's prophetic speech in Paradise Lost, Book III, quoted earlier in this chapter, announced the precept that mankind—all of it—must renounce all human deeds (whether good or bad) as a prerequisite for salvation. Paradise Regained only repeats the scriptural injunctions against worldliness and carries into a dramatic situation and a debate the precept stated in God's speech that man must renounce all his own deeds whether good or bad. "Man" (except for the "elect," whom Milton has identified as special instruments, prophets and saints and presumably poets) includes all men; and the phrase "best make a king," with which Christ concludes his statement of preference for Hebrew literature, refers to the kingdom of heaven, which each man must recover within himself. Milton could not have failed to insist upon God's word as the only means of
salvation unless he had departed from Scripture; and the
terms of Christ's statement fulfill the dramatic anticipation
or prophecy stated in Paradise Lost.

There are other reasons, theological and dramatic,
which would have required Christ's speaking as he did once
Satan had offered Greek learning as a means for establishing
a kingdom. At the beginning of Book IV of Paradise Regained
Milton reminds the reader of the contrast between Satan's over-
confident and ill-conceived brashness in his debate with
Christ and his well planned guile against Eve in Paradise
Lost much earlier:

Perplex'd and troubl'd at his bad success
The Tempter stood, nor had what to reply,
Discover'd in his fraud, thrown from his hope,
So oft, and the perswasive Rhetoric
That sleek't his tongue, and won so much on Eve,
So little here, nay lost; but Eve was Eve,
This far his over-match, who self deceiv'd
And rash, before-hand had no better weigh'd
The strength he was to cope with, or his own.

(PR, IV, 1-9)

Satan proceeds to offer Christ empire, or the means to
the "kingdom," by showing him Rome, suggesting that
Christ's preference for Rome over Parthia is probably
correct, and offering temporal power as the means of
restoring "David's throne." Christ's reply provides
the clue to Satan's more subtle temptation of learning,
for Christ shows that he has no faith in temporal power.
Christ says,
Nor doth this grandeur and majestic show
Of luxury, though call'd magnificence,
More then of arms before, allure mine eye,
Much less my mind;

(PR, IV, 110-113.)

In refuting Satan's specious suggestion that Christ with temporal power could free the enslaved, Christ asks,

What wise and valiant man would seek to free
These thus degenerate, by themselves enslav'd,
Or could of inward slaves make outward free?

(PR, IV, 143-145.)

But because Christ also adds that when the time comes for him to "sit on David's throne,...of my Kingdom there shall be no end," Satan first misunderstands the clue and offers Christ not only Rome but all the kingdoms of the earth, and reminds Christ that these temporal kingdoms are his and are no slight gift. The circumstance of Satan's asking in return that Christ fall down and worship him is, of course, the Scriptural basis for this episode; and Milton has given to the episode an interpretation which ironically emphasizes Satan's obtuse materialism. Christ's sharp rebuke,

Wert thou so void of fear or shame,
As offer them to me the Son of God,
To me my own, on such abhorred pact;

(PR, IV, 189-191.)

leads Satan to admit that "the trial hath indamag'd"

Christ in no way and even to agree that the kingdoms of
this world are transitory. Satan says,

And thou thy self seem'at otherwise inclin'd
Then to a worldly Crown, addicted more
To contemplation and profound dispute.

Be famous then
By wisdom; as thy Empire must extend,
So let extend thy mind o're all the world
In knowledge, all things in it comprehend.

(Pr. IV, 212-215; 221-224)

Satan also recognizes after Christ's rebuke that Christ intends to rule not through power but through "perswasion as thou mean'at."(Pr. IV, 230) After extolling the glories of Greek culture, and after couching his appeal in terms which emphasize the "moral prudence" of Greek teaching, Satan recognizes with respect Christ's intention to rule himself first:

These rules will render thee a King compleat
Within thy self,...

(Pr. IV, 283-284)

The appeal of this temptation is thus much more subtle and much more devious than the appeal of Satan's earlier offers. Satan's preliminary praise of learning seems to recognize the cardinal principle of the kingdom of Christ—that it is within each man. Satan has not stopped with this principle, however; indeed, he has negated it by attempting to identify this principle with a kind of materialism which denies the validity of Christian revelation—which makes Christian revelation tributary and
subject to the knowledge which "is not coucht' in Moses's Law," the knowledge of the Gentiles who are led only by "Nature's light." Satan has also argued that Christ cannot persuade the Gentiles "without thir learning," and enunciates the principle that "Error by his own arms is best evinc't." (PR, IV, 235) This making of Christian truth subject to material "proof" is, of course, a denial of Christ, who is God's incarnate "word" and "wisdom" and "effectual light" (as God has specifically named Christ in Book III, line 170, of PL). It is Satan's way of circumventing the Scriptural "I am the way, the truth, and the life...No man cometh unto the father but by me."13

Satan substitutes for Christ and Divine Grace a human agency. The fact that this human agency is learning--by all odds the best of human agencies--is prima facie evidence that it is unsuited to the work of establishing Christ's kingdom. Christ therefore rejects pagan learning as a means to establishing the kingdom of heaven.

It should also be noted that Satan's argument, "Error by his own arms is best evinc't," is another version of "fight fire with fire" and is closely akin to the idea that the ends justify the means. This ethical fallacy lies near the center of all Satan's appeals to Christ. Christ's answers regularly establish the reverse ethical principle of the one which Satan suggests: Christ, as a man among men
on earth, and in direct contrast to Eve, climbs upward by rejecting whatever is evil and specious. Eve had in vanity and presumption fallen prey to Satan's promise that she might become a goddess by the knowledge which he promised, and had found only that she could know good by knowing evil. Christ "regains the blissful seat" by sifting out the evil which is hidden behind fair appearances. Christ's reply to Satan is therefore not a renunciation of the principles outlined in the Areopagitica but a fulfillment of them, an exercise at the highest and truest possible human level of the search for truth by weighing carefully "all manner of reason." It is by properly weighing the reason which Satan offers that Christ establishes his own kingship over himself and sets the example by which all men who earnestly wish to find truth and through truth the kingdom of God may themselves wage their own individual warfare as Christians. Satan's specious offer of Greek learning as a means to establishing the kingdom of God is dramatically and theologically important, indeed crucial, because it parallels and reverses Eve's temptation. The final episode on the pinnacle of the temple is based upon Scripture, though Milton has changed the order of events. As Milton has arranged the temptations, the final temptation, "cast thyself down," simply provides the occasion for miraculous proof that Christ has indeed "redeemed us and regained the blissful seat," for he does
stand, and angels come and minister unto him. Milton had
divine revelation for this fact—that is, Scriptural author-
ity. He so arranges the temptations that they balance the
events and prophecies in Paradise Lost which Christ's
victory resolves.

It is not therefore "learning" which Christ rejects,
but the improper and unguided use of learning. Specifically,
in the context of Paradise Regained and against the back-
ground of Paradise Lost, particularly as a fulfillment of
the pattern announced in the invocation at the beginning of
Paradise Lost, the rejection of Satan's subtle offer is a
rejection of the materialistic and immoral prostitution of
learning. In the Areopagitica Milton had warned Parliament
not to suppose that taking away the matter of evil would stop
evildoing, for sin is in the eye and heart of the sinner,
not in the apple, or its equivalent, by which Eve and her
progeny have been corrupted. Here in Paradise Regained
Milton states the same proposition in another way: "Suppose
not that man can achieve goodness by assuming the matter of
goodness," he says in effect, "for goodness is in the heart
and soul and understanding of the individual warfaring Christ-
ian."

"Why, then," we may ask, "does Christ specifically say
that Greek learning has not even the excellence of being
ture to the light of nature—that it is founded upon dreams,
and that its collected knowledge is but as pebbles gathered by children on the shore?" The answer is so cardinal a part of Christian doctrine accepted by all churches and all creeds and by every system of church government that it scarcely needs to be stated. The answer to this question is simply this: all sublunary nature, and all material things, including the insight of all human beings, were corrupted at the fall; therefore any knowledge or system of learning which relies upon the authority or the precepts or the hypotheses or the ultimate purposes of human-centered human-evolved effort is bound to be corrupt. As part of the "world" which Satan has offered in several other forms, even this highest and best and last "infirmity" must be rejected.

Later chapters will deal with particular implications of the renunciation of the world, the flesh, and the devil and the means by which the English humanists reconciled, or thought that they had reconciled, the Christian insistence upon this renunciation with classical learning and scientific investigation. It is worth pausing here long enough to note, in answer to those who think that Milton changed in his old age to narrow, sour, anti-intellectual pessimism, that Milton had outlined precisely the position which he assigns to Christ's speech in an earlier work: in a passage in which he urges his schoolmates to use their
minds to the utmost limits of their abilities, Milton concludes,

Nay, follow with the Sun as the companions of his journey and call Time himself to render an account. Compel him to divulge the plan of his unending march. But more—don't let your Mind consent to be hemmed in and fenced about by the same boundaries to which the world conforms. Nay, let it wander far beyond the ramparts of the universe and learn at last the crowning lesson of Self-knowledge, and therewith acquaintance with those Sacred Minds and high Intelligences with whom presently it is to enter into everlasting comradeship.15

Milton wrote that statement at nineteen, illustrated it in the comprehensive Nativity Ode, and reaffirmed the principle in aphoristic and condensed statement in the letter to Hartlib:

The end then of learning is to repair the ruins of our first parents by regaining to know God aright, and out of that knowledge to love him, to imitate him, to be like him, as we may the nearest by possessing our souls of true virtue, which being united to the heavenly grace of faith, makes up the highest perfection.16

The "matter" of learning includes all that man in his fallen state may make use of to "regain to know God aright," or, as Milton had stated it at nineteen, whatever may enable him to "learn at last the crowning lesson of Self-knowledge" to the end that he may enter the "everlasting comradeship" of the "Sacred Minds and high Intelligences." In the same early exercise Milton outlined
the means, which is later exemplified and in some ways simplified, certainly made more profound, in *Paradise Regained*. In outlining the benefit to be had of learning rightly directed and properly used, Milton reminded his classmates:

I believe, my hearers, it is known and recognized by all, that the great Framers of the universe, although He had founded all other things on change and decay, had intermingled in man, beyond what is mortal, a certain divine breath and as it were a part of Himself, immortal, imperishable, immune from death and destruction; which, after it had sojourned spotlessly and chastely on earth for a while, a guest as it were from heaven, should wing itself upward to its native sky and should return to its destined mansion and native land. Whence it follows that nothing can be recounted justly among the causes of our happiness, unless in some way it takes into consideration both that eternal life and this temporal life. This is the sole contemplation, according to the judgment of almost everybody, by which our mind, without the aid of the body, remote and as it were wrapped up in itself, copies the eternal life of the immortal gods with an extraordinary delight.17

Knowledge must enable each man, in imitation of Christ, to put aside whatever is not of the spirit and of Christ. It is only by putting aside the world, the flesh, and the devil as those elements exist in himself that each man may "regain to know God aright"; and it is the aim of learning, and the only proper use of learning, for each man to use learning as a means of distinguishing reality from the maze of misleading appearances which confuse fallen man. "Light after light" and "persisting" and the aid of "divine grace"—these are the
elements which Milton always considered, though, to be sure, with varying emphases as the occasion varied, from his boyhood exercises through the two late epics.

Did Milton, then, simply spend his life in repeating himself endlessly—in repeating what was perfectly orthodox and perfectly evident to every Christian reader? What was the value of restating this usual Christian position in Paradise Regained?

The answer to this question is that Milton's statement in Paradise Regained, as in Paradise Lost, takes cognizance, as did Christ's answers, of the world, the flesh, and the devil—and along the way takes cognizance also of almost all that Milton's learned friends might have read or debated. The example which Christ affords mankind is therefore "epic" in that it is a pattern of the "best and honorablest" things as well as a guide out of the labyrinthine mazes in which, without Christ's spirit and guidance, fallen man must be lost. The remaining chapters of this dissertation will attempt to make clear some of the elements which Milton combined, synthesized, and transcended in making good his preliminary statement that he intended to soar "above th' Aonian mount." For the purpose of making a tentative answer to the question concerning the particular value of the statement of Christian dogma in Paradise Regained, let us note cryptically some of the specific ways in which Milton
transcended other treatments of similar problems.

Paradise Regained is, as we have noted, a fulfillment of the invocation at the beginning of Paradise Lost: the later and shorter epic tells how Christ, as a man among men on earth, "regains the blissful seat" by setting the example of the process and law by which each man "may regain to know God aright." This simple narrative is cast in a form which also enables Milton to make good his intention to "soar above th' Aonian mount," for in the form of the epic as Homer and Virgil wrote their epics, Milton synthesizes and transcends all that the earlier epic poets had said. Homer in his invocation to the Iliad asked for divine aid in telling the wrath of Achilles and consequences of that wrath. Homer's idea that the welter of events related in the Odyssey should demonstrate the working out of the "will of Zeus" is an idea which, as Jaeger has shown, was one of the great landmarks, ethical as well as literary, in human history. Milton's idea of a benign and just God who rules by laws and who makes salvation universally available is a much higher and more universal idea; and the idea is at the same time more immediately applicable to each individual human being. Thus Milton, within Christian truth, has transcended pagan ethics and pagan learning by synthesizing and directing them toward "regaining to know God aright."
Christ's speech in *Paradise Regained* refutes the human and despotic element of the Greek heritage within the framework of a Greek epic.

So also *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* are at once more universal and more immediate and individual in their application than Virgil's account of "arms and the man" who establish a material empire to war down the proud and protect the weak. Christ's rejection of the power to enforce his kingdom and to free the enslaved transcends the Roman ethic at its best.

Christ's specific rejections (so called) of particular men and systems of philosophy have already been noted at the beginning of this chapter. Miss Pope's exhaustive and very helpful study of the traditions which prevailed in preaching and in Biblical commentary on the subject of the temptations has also been noted. In many more fundamental ways the careful reader in Milton's day might also have seen Milton's synthesis of the temptations as Platonic and Aristotelian adaptations, within the framework of the Christian story as related in Scriptures and retold in the essentially Greek epic form. If we accept the cardinal virtues as courage, temperance, and steadfastness, then Christ's refusal to take a short cut (as Marlowe's Faustus had done) by turning stones into bread as a means of preserving life—the resorting to magic, the supernatural, the extra-law,
extra-process way of behaving in his attempt to understand himself and his mission—is a new version of courage. It is the courage which refuses to ignore ultimate values and which insists upon discerning reality as a prelude to choosing and acting. This kind of "courage" is precisely the kind of heroism of unsung saints and martyrs which Milton considered most exemplary. Christ's answer is Biblical—"thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God"; but within the epic it is a recognition of the powerful and profound implications of that passage: it would be tempting God to presume that His laws are inadequate—that He must intermit the equal operation of those laws. It is only by recognizing this principle that Christ can serve as an example which will prove operative and efficient in the minds and hearts of individual men who follow his example. In this way the action and the pattern of Paradise Regained makes clear the ethical meaning to any man who wishes to understand. The ironic insight upon insight, which the learned reader might well have discerned in allusions to pagan ethical and philosophic systems, would have served further to underline Milton's meaning.

Milton's intention to be clear to even the simple seeker after truth has been discussed above; and, if his own statements are not enough, Miss Pope and Mr. Schultz have established beyond all shadow of doubt that Milton did very little
to offend either the orthodox or the sectarians. The more learned reader in Milton's day—the reader who was learned in the classics—might also have observed that Milton's Christ not only attacks the inadequacies of pagan philosophers and schools verbally; Milton's Christ also demonstrates the superiority of the Christian truth. For example, Plato's fundamental virtues as he discusses them in the Republic include Courage, Temperance, Justice, and Wisdom. The dialogue between Christ and Satan shows an awareness of Plato's discussion, and Christ's rejections regularly give the "saints' and martyrs'" insight into the fallacies inherent in even these great virtues so long as they lack the purpose of joining the "Sacred Mindes and high Intelligences." Christ first demonstrates courage, in the Christian sense of self-denial and for bearance and faith, by refusing to turn the stones into bread: "Thou shalt not live by bread alone," but by the Word of God. Christ next exemplifies Temperance by refusing to partake of the banquet. Third, he recognizes the essential lack of the virtue Justice in attempting to support Justice, by force, for Justice is an attribute of the inner man and of the soul and of harmony in the individual, for the kingdom of Heaven is within each individual. Finally Christ demonstrates true Wisdom by rejecting a prostitution of learning and of knowledge, as this chapter has tried to
show. The final episode in which Satan tempts Christ to cast himself down and be borne up by angels or to stand on the pinnacle of the Temple evokes Christ's answer based on Scripture, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God," for Christ as man among men has no longer any choice but to rely without presumption upon God's plan and providence. It would be presumption to assume that God's laws are not adequate or that their adequacy must be proved in a material fashion to Satan. It is then that angels come and minister unto Christ—even as the Scriptures have said; but Milton's climactic use of this final episode to synthesize and transcend—to go beyond the limits of the situations which Plato's virtues could possibly encompass—is his transcending by example pagan philosophy.
SECTION II

"THE BENEFIT TO BE HAD" OF STUDYING HISTORY: AN ELIZABETHAN CONVENTION
CHAPTER 3

THE "BEGINNING, END, AND REASON":
MILTON'S STATEMENT OF THE USE OF HISTORY
AND THE CHRISTIAN HUMANIST TRADITION

A part, at least, of the benefit which Milton thought was to be had of "books promiscuously read" is that errors, known, read, and collated, are of main service & assistance toward the speedy attainment of what is truest.¹

Among the masses of books to be promiscuously read, then carefully judged, Milton lists in his letter to Hartlib a number of general categories which are to be carefully studied as a part of the discipline by which the reader learns to find "what is truest" and to distinguish it from "errors." History of various kinds is, after language, the most necessary of disciplines, according to the letter to Hartlib: "Historical Physiology," the history of law, church history, the general category "choise Histories," which Milton lists in the same sentence with "Heroic Poems and Attic tragedies,"² are all of benefit in forming mind and character. Even this list implies the particular value which Milton assigned to the study of history as a discipline; and his specific statement concerning the study of political
history makes doubly clear the value which Milton thought might be derived from studies approached historically:

The next remove [after languages, the basic instruments of study] must be to the study of Politicks; to know the beginning, end, and reasons of Political Societies; that they may not in a dangerous fit of the Common-wealth be such poor, shaken, uncertain Reeds, of such a tottering Conscience, as many of our great Counsellors have lately shewn themselves, but stedfast pillars of the State.

Because the history of a subject reveals the "beginning, end, and reasons," the study of history is of value in forming the character and strengthening the Conscience, God's "umpire." To use Spenser's terms, discussed in Chapter 8, to restate Milton's idea, the study of history is a means of cultivating the "seed" of virtue which God has planted in each man. Only the man who has made some progress in "regaining to know God aright" by cultivating the God-given seed can have the kind of conscience which enables him to be more than a "poor, shaken, uncertain Reed." Proficiency in discharging one's private and public offices, each man according to his particular "calling," is therefore subordinate to the ultimate religious purpose of education, and is, at the same time, an integral part of the process by which each Christian, like Spenser's Calidore (discussed in Chapter 9), must prepare and prove himself. This very process of understanding "beginning, end, and reasons" makes it possible for the student to grow in the ability to
discern what is "truest" and what is "error," and the practice of exercising judgment opens the way for the "light unto light" promised by the Father in Book III of Paradise Lost to those who will persist in seeking truth as a means of salvation.

It must be remembered always, of course, that Milton was at one with the sixteenth-century Christian humanists from Erasmus through Spenser, Sidney, and Hooker in his emphasis upon the "use" to which all study was to be put. Milton's definition of education as "regaining to know God aright" might, in fact, have served as a statement of the purpose of the scholarship of Erasmus and his colleagues. As Erasmus wrote to Bude, "You have preferred to be understood by the learned, I, if I can, by the many; your aim is to conquer, mine to teach or persuade." Milton's most glowing hopes for the fulfillment of the Reformation under England's leadership are concrete hopes in a somewhat different form of those of Erasmus and More for a universal order in which human reason might fulfill God's laws, not as an earthly end but as a means of establishing God's peace and liberty within Christian humility, the peace and liberty to be used as a means of realizing Christ's kingdom within each man. The chief purpose of the early humanists in establishing good texts of Scriptures in the original languages and of training men to read those languages as a
means of reading the Scriptures for themselves was to enable each man to "regain to know God aright." Though the events which transpired between the time of Erasmus and More and that of Spenser and Sidney established certain fundamental differences in political theory and in the interpretation of church history, the ideals of the Christian humanists in England remained constant through the time of Milton. Therefore, even though some eminent scholars, C.S. Lewis among them, look upon the rise of humanism as an unfortunate, even disastrous, event, Milton's continuation of humanistic emphasis and purpose, and his "use" of learning as a device for understanding and teaching, must be recognized as a Puritan and English synthesis of the ideas and purposes of the sixteenth-century humanists, and Milton's idea of learning can be properly understood only within the framework of sixteenth-century humanism.

The study of the history of almost any subject or almost any discipline is therefore "useful" in Milton's sense of the term only if it leads to improvement of judgment and strengthening of conscience of a dedicated Christian. Though Milton was for his time a skilled textual critic who carefully labelled legends and hearsay evidence and cited his sources for the evidence which he did use, he nevertheless selected those matters for history "worth the noting" and even conjectured that some past ages might have refrained from writing history because of the lack of having anything worth recording:
Certainly oft-times we see that wise men, and of best abilities have forbore to write the Acts of their own daies, while they beheld with a just loathing and disdain, not only how unworthy, how pervers, how corrupt, but often how ignoble, how petty, how below all History the persons and thir actions were; who either by fortune, or som rude election had attain'd as a sore judgment, and ignominie upon the Land, to have cheif sway in managing the Commonwealth.

In this same prefatory passage, Milton invokes "divine assistance, that it may redound to his glory, and the good of the British Nation." Though he admits some legends to his stories "worth the noting," he includes these legends only because they might prove useful to poets. What he includes or fails to include must be authenticated and its degree of authenticity asserted. Whereas St. Augustine and other Christian writers chose indiscriminately almost any anecdote from any source which might illustrate or confirm a point of doctrine, Milton, though he selected from the mass of evidence what he considered worthy and exemplary, carefully stated his source and discussed the probable reliability of the source. For example, in discussing the name given England, Milton writes:

Sure enough we are, that Britain hath bin anciently term'd Albion, both by the Greeks and Romans. And Mela the Geographer makes mention of a stonie shoar in Languedoc, where by report such a Battel was fought. The rest, as his giving name to the Ile, or ever landing heer, depends altogether upon late surmises. But too absurd, and too unconscionably gross is that fond invention that wafted hither
the fifty daughters of a strange Dioclesian King of Syria; brought in doubts by some illiterate pretender to something mistak'n in the Common Poetical Story of Danaus King of Argos, while his vanity, not pleas'd with the obscure beginning which truest Antiquity affords the Nation, labour'd to contrive us a Pedigree, as he thought, more noble.

As an historian, then, and in terms of the discipline of history and the discrimination to be learned from sound history, Milton recognized a difficulty which the Elizabethans insisted upon: that, in Sir Philip Sidney's word, the historian is

so tied, not to what should be but to what is, to the particular truth of things and not to the general reason of things, that his example draweth no necessary consequence, and therefore a less fruit-full doctrine.

Milton agreed apparently with this statement of the historian's method and duty to treat "affayres orderly as they were done, accounting as well the times as the action," as Spenser also stated the problem. Milton's solution was to be both orderly and accurate and to learn the disciplines required for both, but at the same time to select what was worthy to be read. His example of the "absurd" and "gross" legend of the "fifty daughters" of the Syrian king illustrates a mistaken sense of honor based on falsehood which had led some historians to fabricate a distinguished ancient ancestry for England. Milton shows that other "surmises" are to be judged as no
more than possible when they occur long after the event, and are therefore neither good examples nor bad examples but are merely conjectures which the judicious reader should ignore. Ultimately, of course, Milton in *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* took the step which his statement in *The Reason of Church Government* anticipated: he determined to "imbreed and cherish in a great people the seeds of virtue and public civility, to allay the perturbations of the mind, and to set the affections in right tune" by means of epic poetry.

Lastly, whatsoever in religion is holy and sublime, in vertu amiable, or grave, whatsoever hath passion or admiration in all the changes of that which is call'd fortune from without, or the wily suttleties and reflexes of mans thoughts from within, all these things with a solid and treatable smoothnesse to point out and describe. Teaching over the whole book of sanctity and vertu, through all the instances of example.12

Even in this teaching of sanctity, however, the examples which Milton uses, particularly those which he assigns to Michael in instructing the fallen Adam, include not only history but the proper means of interpreting history. It is in the repeated instances of historical vision which Michael shows Adam, and in Adam's, at first mistaken, but later increasingly "deft" interpretations of these visions, that Adam becomes both prepared to face his trials in this world and reconciled to them.
In the prophetic visions by which Adam after the fall disciplines himself in the sifting of truth and of moral meaning as a guide to choice and act, always, of course, with the aid of "light unto light" provided in this instance by discourse with Michael, Milton has the advantage of Scriptural authority for correctness and authenticity. Here, therefore, Milton is only concerned with the correct interpretation of reliable evidence, the Scriptures; and Michael as Adam's teacher provides that interpretation. Michael's method is at first to point out Adam's errors, as in his false interpretations of the fair dwellers of the Tents (PL, XI, 557 ff.), and later to commend him for his improved interpretations, as, for example, his reaction to the tower of Babel. Michael says,

...Justly thou abhorr'st
That Son, who on the quiet state of men
Such trouble brought, affecting to subdue
Rational Libertie; yet know withall,
Since thy original lapse, true Libertie
Is lost, which always with right Reason dwells
Twinn'd, and from her hath no dividial being:
Reason in man obscur'd, or not obeyd,
Immediately inordinate desires
And upstart Passions catch the Government
From Reason, and to servitude reduce
Man till then free.

(PL, XII, 79-90)

Michael's statements look forward to Christ's redemption by a step-by-step re-ascending to the "blissful seat," and Christ's means, of course, are the sifting of truth,
and the establishment of "true liberty" and of "right reason" as the conditions within which and by which man may "regain to know God aright."

It is therefore clear that Milton attached great value to the manner in which one interprets history. Even without the authority of Scripture, Milton demonstrates that historical examples not only may be but must be properly interpreted by the judicious reader; and he often provides the interpretations. These sometimes take the form of general statements concerning the moral issue involved in an event, and sometimes they comment on the motives and results, "the reasons and the ends" of individual historical figures.

Milton not only looked upon history as a theoretical discipline which might improve the powers of discrimination of the young; he wrote his own History of Britain with the avowed purpose of enabling Englishmen in his own day to avoid the errors and to emulate the virtues of their ancestors. Milton says, for example, in the preface to Book III,

This third Book having to tell of accidents as various and exemplary, as the intermission or change of Government hath any where brought forth, may deserve attention more than common, and repay it with like benefit to them who can judiciously read; considering especially that the late civil broils had cast us into a condition not much unlike to what the Britains then were in, when the imperial
jurisdiction departing hence left them to the sway of their own Councils; which times by comparing seriously with these later, and that confused Anarchy with this interregn, we may be able from two such remarkable turns of State, producing like events among us, to raise a knowledge of our selves both great and weighty, by judging hence what kind of men the Britans generally are in matters of so high enterprise, how by nature, industry, or custom fitted to attempt or undergo matters of so main consequence; for if it be a high point of wisdom in every private man, much more is it in a Nation to know itself; rather than puff up with vulgar flatteries, and encomiums, for want of self knowledge, to enterprise rashly and come off miserably in great undertakings.13

In addition to the application of circumstances of a former age to the present one, and indeed as a means of showing in what particular way the earlier situation precisely applied to the one in his own day, Milton insisted upon selection and arrangement of material, and upon direct comment whenever it was necessary to make clear the application which he intended. For example, in discussing Vortigern's ill-advised invitation to the Saxons, Milton writes,

Such guests as these the Britans resolve now to send for, and entreat into thir houses and possessions, at whose very name heeretofore they trembl'd afar off. So much do men through impatience count ever that the heaviest which they bear at present, and to remove the evil which they suffer, care not to pull on a greater: as if variety and change in evil also were acceptable.14

Concerning Vortigern, who had sent for the Saxons, Milton is explicit:
But Vortigern however coming to reign, is decipher'd by truer stories a proud unfortunate Tyrant, and yet of the people much belov'd, because his vices sorted so well with theirs. For neither was he skill'd in Warr, nor wise in Counsel, but covetous, lustful, luxurious, and prone to all vice; wasting the public Treasure in gluttony and riot, careless of the common danger, and through a haughty ignorance, unapprehensive of his own.15

Vortigern's life, as Milton interprets it, illustrates the fallacy that either peace, which Vortigern sought, or popularity, which he had because his "vices sorted so well" with those of the people, are in themselves good. It is the "use" to which popularity and peace are put, "use" judged by understanding the entire matrix of "reason and end," which determines the desirability of any event or the value of any government.

Milton's use of history and his conception of the discriminative benefit of the discipline of history therefore anticipates the so-called "scientific" historian in that Milton believed in a thorough grounding in languages and in documentation and evaluation of sources. He wrote within the medieval and Renaissance tradition to the extent that he selected his events and interpreted them according to the moral laws which seemed applicable.

One of the techniques for perfecting learning which Milton suggested as a part of the discipline of the study of history is the reviewing of what has gone before:
In which methodical course it is so suppos'd they must proceed by the steady pace of learning onward, as at convenient times for memories sake to retire back into the middle ward, and sometimes into the rear of what they have been taught, untill they have confirm'd, and solidly united the whole body of their perfected knowledge, like the last embattelling of a Roman Legion.16

For the purpose of determining Milton's particular use of history as a part of the information and discipline by which one learns, the following chapters of this section will "retire back" to the Elizabethan tradition within which Milton, at least in part, formed his own theories and developed his own practice.17 That Milton transcended and expanded the narrow chronicle and limited biographical example is obvious; but the exact magnitude of his own contribution and the way in which he developed that contribution can perhaps be measured against the writing of Elizabethans who developed the Reformation tradition of Christian humanism in England. Though Milton is generally conceded to have achieved a final full synthesis of the humanist and Protestant elements of the English Renaissance and Reformation,18 the particular way in which he achieved that synthesis has not been traced in the terms proposed by this dissertation. The focal point of each of the following chapters is the bearing of several facets of the English Reformation upon the idea of learning which each facet states or implies particularly as these several ideas eventually find some sort of expression in Milton's epics.
CHAPTER 4

MILTON AND THE "REFORMING TIMES"
OF SIXTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLAND

The fundamental debt which Milton believed that he
and other Englishmen of his day owed the "reforming times"
of the sixteenth century was the debt of their having begun
the labor of making God's truth available to men—the labor
of the Protestant Reformation which it was the duty of his
own time to complete. This chapter will consider in context
some of his early reminders to Parliament that England was
the providentially ordained leader of the Protestant Reforma-
tion. He repeated from time to time throughout his life the
deep indebtedness which he felt to the Protestant reformers
of the sixteenth century. His statement in the opening lines
of De Doctrina Christiana is both typical and late:

Since the commencement of the last century, when
religion began to be restored from the corruptions of
more than thirteen hundred years to something of its
original purity, many treatises of theology have been
published....

This chapter will return at its conclusion to the rest of
the statement begun in the sentence quoted above. The point
to be noted here is that throughout his life Milton believed
that both the example and the precept of the sixteenth-century English "reformers" were of great use to him and to all other consciences in his own time.

One of the forms which Milton's tribute to his sixteenth-century predecessors took was his tribute to Martin Bucer. Milton gives as one of his chief reasons for citing the opinions of Martin Bucer on the matter of divorce the fact that Bucer had anticipated Milton's findings, though the two had worked independently. Milton writes, speaking of himself:

though he knew not that what his youth then reason'd without a pattern, had bin heard already, and well allow'd from the gravity and worth of Martin Bucer: till meeting with the envy of men ignorant in this own undertak'n calling, God directed him to the forgott'n Writings of this faithfull Evangelist, to be his defence and warrant against the gross imputation of broaching licence. Ye are now in the glorious way to high vertu, and matchless deeds, trusted with a most inestimable trust, the asserting of our just liberties. Ye have a nation that expects now, and from mighty sufferings aspires to be the example of all Christendom to a perfetast reforming. Dare to be as great, as ample, and as eminent in the fair progress of your noble designes, as the full and godtly stature of truth and excellence it self: as unlimited by petty presidents and copies, as your unquestionable calling from heaven givs ye power to be.²

The reasoning of this particular passage contains several elements which show Milton's attitude toward the "reforming times." The central idea is that "reformers" both in his own time and in the sixteenth century (and presumably in all times)
discover truth independently as individuals by going back to the "pattern" of truth which is obscured by "petty presidents and copies." Stated as a broad precept, this idea reinforces Milton's conviction that the discovery of truth is the immediate personal apprehension of God's moral laws as they apply in various human situations, always, of course, within the authority of Scriptures and by aid of the "light after light well used" which God has promised. (PL, III, 196) Therefore, the example of the sixteenth-century reformers and Milton's own experience in having independently arrived at identical conclusions confirm the truth of Milton's personal apprehension. With this confirmation, Milton conceives it to be his duty to communicate his discovery and the basis for it to his fellow latter-day "reformers."

As essential corollaries to this central idea and principle, Milton either states or implies other principles. One of these corollaries is the necessity that each man have freedom in which to work out his own conception of the truth, and freedom in which to weigh and "prove" the insights of others. Therefore, the "asserting of our just liberties" is also a part of the divinely ordained means by which fallen man must "reign to know God aright," for only by insisting upon his liberties can man come to understand the working of God's moral law.
Milton, also in his tribute to Martin Bucer, explains his reasons for returning to sixteenth-century English examples. First he deprecates the death of Edward VI as one whose incomparable youth doubtless had brought forth to the Church of England such a glorious manhood, had his life reached it, as would have left in the affairs of religion, nothing without an excellent pattern for us now to follow.

Milton then applies the lesson to be gleaned from Edward's time to the affairs of his own day:

But since the secret purpose of divine appointment hath reserv'd no lesse perhaps then the just half of such a sacred work to be accomplisht in this age, and principally, as we trust, by your successful wisdom and authority, religious Lords and Commons, what wonder if I seek no other, to whose exactest judgement, and review I may commend these last and worthiest labours of this renowned teacher: whom living, all the pious nobility of those reforming times, your truest and best imitated ancestors, reverenc't and admir'd.

Milton's reason for seeking out the example of the "reforming times" of sixteenth-century England was to find an applicable historical lesson and parallel of the sort which he also found in early British history, but with this difference: the roots of the Reformation and the problems which the "Lords and Commons" of Milton's day faced were, as Milton sees them, the second half of the same labor of reformation.

Since Milton sought examples from the "reforming times," it is the purpose of this section to examine some of the
elements of the "reform" in which he seems to have agreed with his sixteenth-century fellow reformers to whom he returned for guidance. It should perhaps be observed in passing that the wish to achieve perfection by getting back to first principles was often identified by English humanists from Erasmus to Milton with a finding of models in the past, and that perfection was sought not by evolution but by a return to the unadorned past. The sixteenth-century reformers, though not ancients, had ignored false "presidents" and had therefore recovered the true principles of early Christianity—hence they were suitable examples.

Milton refers directly in the tract Of Reformation in England to the elements of the Reformation which he most admired:

...how the bright and blissful Reformation (by Divine Power) strook through the black and settled Night of Ignorance and Antichristian Tyranny, me thinks a soveraigne and reviving joy must needs rush into the bosome of him that reads or heares; and the sweet Odour of the returning Gospell imbath his Soule with the fragrancy of Heaven. Then was the Sacred BIBLE sought out of the dusty corners where prophane Falshood and Neglect had throwne it, the Schooles opened, Divine and Humane Learning rak't out of the embers of Forgotten Tongues, the Princes and Cities trooping apace to the new erected Banner of Salvation; the Martyrs, with the unresistable might of Weaknesse, shaking Powers of Darkness, and schoorning the fiery rage of the old red Dragon.

This passage provides a general summary of Milton’s attitude toward the work of the Tudor humanists as well as of the
Protestant reformers. The insistence of the early humanists upon training in Greek and Hebrew as well as Latin played an important part in the opening of "the Schooles" and the recovery of "forgotten Tongues" to which Milton here refers and to which Spenser, Sidney, and Milton, along with most other educated Englishmen of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, owed both their introduction to learning and the emphasis and use to which they put their learning. Begun primarily as an effort to enable each man to read with understanding the Scripture in the original languages, the humanistic emphasis in England had never lost its religious emphasis.9 The Scriptures were the apex of literature, history and philosophy, as Sidney explicitly states in the Defence and as Milton states in many places, notably Paradise Regained. This particular section of the dissertation is concerned primarily with the final statement concerning Christian learning which occurs in the passage quoted above from Of Reformation in England—the statement concerning the "martyrs with the unsurpassable might of Weaknesse, shaking the Powers of Darkness and scorning the fiery rage of the old red Dragon." 9

The most considerable historian of such martyrs was, of course, John Foxe, who anticipates Milton in several important respects. In one of the prefaces to the 1563 edition of the Acts and Monuments, Foxe discusses the "Utility and Profit
of this History." In this preface, he writes:

Now, if men commonly delight so much in other chronicles which entreat only upon matters of policy, and rejoice to behold therein the variable events of worldly affairs, the stratagems of valiant captains, the roar of foughten fields, the sacking of cities, the hurly-burly of realms and people; and if men think it such a gay thing in a commonwealth to commit to history such old antiquities of things profane, and bestow all their ornaments of wit and eloquence in garnishing the same, how much more then is it meet for Christians to conserve in remembrance the lives, acts, and doings, not of bloody warriors, but of mild and constant martyrs of Christ; which serve not so much to delight the ear, as to garnish the life, to frame it with examples of great profit, and to encourage men to all kind of christian godliness.... Over and besides this, the mild deaths of the saints do not a little avail to the establishing of a good conscience, to learn the contempt of the world, and to come to the fear of God. Moreover, they confirm faith, increase godliness, abate pride in prosperity, and in adversity do open an hope of heavenly comfort. For what man, reading the misery of these godly persons may not therein, as in a glass, behold his own case, whether he be godly or godless....

To be short, they declare to the world what true christian fortitude is, and what is the right way to conquer; which standeth not in the power of man, but in hope of the resurrection to come, and is now, I trust, at hand.10

Milton reminds his reader in Book IX of Paradise Lost that the fall which he is about to record is

...argument
Not less but more Heroic then the wrauth
Of stern Achilles, on his Foe pursu'd
Thrice Fugitive about Troy Wall; or rage
Of Turnus for Lavinia dissposs'd,
Or Neptun's ire or Juno's, that so long
Perplex'd the Greek and Cytherea's Son
....
Milton also in the Reason of Church Government urg'd against Prelaty, as this dissertation has occasion elsewhere to discuss fully, speaks of the poet's cherishing "in a great people the seeds of vertu, and publick civility, to allay the perturbations of the mind by singing the victorious agonies of Martyrs and Saints..."\(^{11}\) In their choice of subjects and in their reasons for their choices and the lessons to be learned by their readers, John Milton approximately one century after John Foxe restated many of the ideas upon which both men seem to have agreed. Much more important than a possibly chance agreement in phrase or the choice of subject matter is the line of reasoning of the martyrlogiSt Foxe and the latter-day reformer Milton. As William Haller in his valuable analysis of Foxe's contributions to the Puritan Revolution has written,

The nature of Foxe's accomplishment as an historian is clear. Elizabeth's accession seemed to him an act of providence, her survival and success essential to the maintenance of the true religion. Thus the interest of the Protestant cause became one with that of the crown and the nation. Any threat to the safety and independence of both, and piety and patriotism together moved the historian to show that such had always been the case. Yet, writing in order to excite faith and loyalty in the people, he realized that the stories with which he had filled his pages, of kings defending their authority and saints suffering for their beliefs, must be made to sound convincing in spite of the great weight of tradition opposed to the idea they represented.\(^{12}\)
Haller shows in detail the manner in which Foxe managed to make his account of history sound true: first, Foxe "attempted to show that the history of the church squared at every step with the prophetic vision of St. John." In this way, as Haller explains and illustrates, the history of the church, particularly the English church after Wycliffe, is confirmed by Revelations, and Revelations by church history:

Each was used as the key to unlock the meaning of the other, leading readers to conclude that the mutual canceling out of two incomprehensibles left no mystery in either but only inescapable certainty in both.

The other device, doubtless used in all sincerity, was to contrast his own simple unvarnished account of events with the "distortions" of monkish sources. Haller credits Foxe's narrative power and his reliance upon repetitive patterns of interpretation with a large measure of his success:

But Foxe's gift for narrative was his best reliance. History as he wrote it, always came back to the story of the individual, to story after story, told with unflagging energy and conviction. Yet every individual case was charged with the whole meaning of history as he conceived it. The blood of English martyrs of yesterday was shown to be one with the blood of all the martyrs back to Nero. All history was one. God revealed himself alike in his works and in his word. The Old Testament told of Christ and the church, prefigured in the patriarchs, prophets, judges, and kings of the chosen people. The New Testament told of Christ's coming and the institution of his church on earth. Revelation foreshadowed the whole course of the church up to the Reformation and on to the end of time. The story of every saint was the story in brief of the church itself, the story always of the age-long war
of Christ and Antichrist in which every soul was involved and in which England in particular was called by God to play a very particular part.15

The use of repetitive patterns, of seeing a microcosm of the fall and redemption in each saint's life, the taking comfort from accidental correspondences as confirmations of God's special providence are all habits of mind, particularly of the mind of the religious historian, from the time of St. Augustine through that of Milton.16 Haller explains that in Milton's time both Marshall and Burges took comfort that the first day of the Parliament fell on the anniversary of Queen Elizabeth's accession as a confirmation of their purposes by divine providence. Their "historic" reasoning began by defining the Pope as Antichrist who had tried to suppress preaching and the rebuilding of Zion in England—a work which the reformers in England were under covenant to God to perform. As Henry VIII had driven the Pope out and the Reformation had begun under Edward VI only to be delayed by popish Mary, so Elizabeth had restored the true religion and had established the English crown as the bulwark against Roman oppression and silencing. It must also be remembered in relation to Foxe's influence in Milton's time that Laud had refused in 1638 to license another edition of Foxe, and that Parliament considered this act impious, an illegal effort to stop God's instruments from preaching—
even to repress, in a popish manner, the liberty of preaching—as the charge against Laud before he was committed to the Tower in 1641 proves. 17

Haller demonstrates beyond reasonable doubt, both in the article on Foxe from which the passages were quoted above and in Liberty and Reformation in the Puritan Revolution, that Milton reacted to the political and theological crises of his day in terms which can best be understood as part of the Elizabethan and seventeenth-century Puritan insistence upon freedom to preach. He has also shown that Milton throughout his life continued the interpretation of church history which Foxe had set forth and which most Englishmen in Elizabeth's day and throughout the following century repeated. 18 Milton is certainly at one with Foxe and the Elizabethan Puritan interpretation of history in many of his references to church history in the early tracts. For example, in Of Reformation Milton says:

...England (having had this grace and honour from God to bee the first that should set up a Standard for the recovery of lost Truth, and blow the first Evangelick Trumpet to the Nations, holding up, as from a Hill, the new Lampe of saving light to all Christendome) should now be last, and most unsettl'd in the enjoyment of that Peace, whereof she taught the way to others; although indeed our Wickelefs preaching, at which all the succeeding Reformers more effectually lighted their Tapers, was to his Countrey men but a short blaze soon dempt and stifl'd by the Pope, and Prelates for sixe or seven Kings Reignes; yet methinks the Precendencie which God gave this Iland, to be the first Restorer of buried Truth, should have been followed with more happy suc- cesse... 19
Milton is also at one with Foxe and the tradition of church history which Foxe established in following Revelations as the pattern within which the events are to be interpreted. In Books XI and XII of Paradise Lost Milton employs an angelic revelation of history which reflects the traditional medieval pattern of the seven ages.²⁰

It is also true, of course, as Haller has shown, that Milton continued through all his historical writing to the end of his life to blame a corrupt clergy and the repression of liberty throughout the Middle Ages upon the papacy.

Milton was not, however, a slavish follower of this tradition, but rather a follower of the Scriptural and reasonable principles which he, like the majority of other Englishmen,²¹ thought he discerned in the Puritan tradition as begun in the "reforming times" of Elizabeth and continued in his own day. This fact may be deduced from several allusions even in the early tracts. For example, Of Reformation, the very tract which he had opened with the Foxian interpretation of the Reformation, part of which is quoted above, contains an objection to Foxe's historical method:

Neither doth the Author of our Church History spare to record sadly the fall (for so he termes it) and infirmities of these Martyrs, though we would deify them. And why should their Martyrdom more countenance corrupt doctrine, or discipline, than their Treason to the Royall blood of this Realm, by diverting and intainting the right of the Crown from the true heires, to the houses of Northumberland and Suffolk....²²
This allusion to Foxe as the "Author of our Church History" occurs in a passage in which Milton condemns episcopacy. Prelates, in his view, "for neere twelve hundred yeares... have been in England to our Soules a sad and dolefull succession of illiterate and blind guides...To our state a continuall Hydra of mischiefe and molestation." The fact of martyrdom, Milton argues, does not excuse their errors: "They are to be judg'd what they were by the Gospel, and not the Gospel to be tried by them." As the passage quoted above shows, it is the Gospel which must be taken as guide to the correctness or incorrectness of the opinions of a martyr. There is also a strong hint, not treated in detail, that the laws of the land, when not demonstrably promulgated to restrict Christian liberty of conscience or of preaching and not contrary to Gospel, are a reasonably reliable guide to human situations and motives. In the prophetic description of the Paradise of Fools in Book III of Paradise Lost, Milton lists a series of martyrs whose deeds were the products of "painful Superstition and blind Zeal." (Line 452) The necessity for determining truth as a prerequisite for making any kind of choice, particularly the choice of what is worth dying for, is a function of the God-given faculty of reason functioning within its proper degree. Both the proper function of reason and the means for ascertaining truth
constitute the crux of Milton's criteria for learning, as Section I of this dissertation has attempted to show.

Milton seems to have been keenly aware from the time of the divorce tracts at latest that it is difficult to know the purity of human motives and dangerous to place trust in them. In Colasterion he says of William Prynne:

"...one above others who hath suffer'd much and long in the defence of Truth, shall after all this, give her cause to leave him so destitute and so vacant of her defence, as to yeild his mouth to bee the common road of Truth and Falsehood..." 25

Only God can discern hypocrisy, Milton reminds his reader (PL, III, 683-684); and Michael explains to the horrified Adam that perfidy, waste, and the perverse misuse of God's gifts are to be expected among human beings as a consequence of the fall. On the basis of the authority of Scripture, Milton concludes in De Doctrina Christiana that martyrdom occurs only when the true worship of God "leads to death, or imprisonment, or torments, or disgrace." 26 It is therefore a logical consequence that in choosing late the subject of his epic, Milton selected an unexceptionable subject about which both he and his audience might be certain, the redemption of man through Christ.

To return now to the sentence quoted from the opening of De Doctrina Christiana at the beginning of this chapter, Milton explains why he has decided to attempt what many
others have already done since the "reforming times," which, as Milton saw them, started "at the beginning of the last century":

If I were to say that I had devoted myself to the study of the Christian religion because nothing else can so effectually rescue the lives and minds of men from those two detestable curses, slavery and superstition, I should seem to have acted rather from a regard to my highest earthly comforts, than from a religious motive.

But since it is only to the individual faith of each that the Deity has opened the way of eternal salvation, and as he requires that he who would be saved should have a personal belief of his own, I resolved not to repose on the faith or judgment of others in matters relating to God; but on the one hand, having taken the grounds of my faith from divine revelation alone, and on the other, having neglected nothing which depended on my own industry, I thought fit to scrutinize and ascertain for myself the several points of my religious belief, by the most careful perusal and meditation of the Holy Scriptures themselves.27

This sense of religious duty, "required of a strictness" of each man to sift truth for himself by means of all the "industry" and learning at his command, caused Milton to use the tools of language, grammar, and textual validation of the humanist scholar for the purpose of ascertaining the meaning of Scripture, the Puritan's avowed purpose. It was this habit of mind and method of criticism which led Milton to the positions which he reached in theology, as Conklin has demonstrated.28 Sandys has shown that Milton's notes indicate that he also read the Greek poets as only a careful critic with "heroic" linguistic equipment could read them.29 It
seems, therefore, to have been Milton's practice to examine carefully whatever information, myth, legend, or "history" which served his purpose either for learning or for teaching and to reduce each bit to its proper "use" and "degree" within the framework of Christian truth. This statement does not imply that he wrote only theological treatises in verse; rather, he determined the disposition of parts within Christian truth which a work of art and the examples which make up a didactic work of art require. Milton seems, moreover, in the two epics, as C. S. Lewis has pointed out, to have wished not to offend—to insist upon only those truths which were essential and to ignore all those which were "indifferent." The passage quoted above from the De Doctrina Christiana therefore looks at first glance merely Puritan; the technique of scholarship which it implies might be pedantically humanistic (in the pejorative sense in which Lewis uses the term). Yet Milton scholars have for the past few years pointed out diligently Milton's heterodoxy, even his heresies, in both the De Doctrina Christiana and the late poems. Certainly the interpretation of Church history which the De Doctrina Christiana and Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained state or imply is far removed from the simple formulae of interpretation of men like Foxe, and Milton's text is free of the elaborate "shoring up" of plausible documents, authoritative arguments, allegorical annotations and "confirmations" which the Protestant
martyrology used so prolifically.

This selection of the fall and redemption of man, a subject which was unexceptionable in Milton's day, illustrates the way in which Milton transcended even those Foixian traditions and habits of interpretation which, as Haller has shown, he seems to have followed in most of his historical writing. As Professor Bush has pointed out in his survey of Milton criticism, contrary to the opinion of some scholars, Milton grew; he was not "cast." Yet the way in which he grew and the way in which his late epics show that growth is paradoxical. In choosing a Biblical subject, he might appear to unsympathetic interpreters to have been narrowing and hardening the worst of his Christian humanist and Puritan tendencies by limiting himself to such a subject and such a treatment as might be acceptable to even the narrowest and most precisionist objector to the vanities of profane learning and secular literature. C. S. Lewis has objected to the narrowing tendency of the humanist tradition; and the detractors of the Puritan tradition and those who have found in Milton most of the elements of the spoilspport hypocrite are quick to agree with the estimate that Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained are the elaborate mausoleums of dead ideas—dead and unmourned. There are, of course, other elements in the tradition from which he drew—elements which help account for the selection which he made and his way of treating it, as the following chapters of this section will show.
In choosing the subject for his epic, Milton did, to be sure, satisfy even the strictest Puritan. In his way of elaborating the subject, he did carry out many of the humanist traditions of elegance, learning, attention to style, and return to the style and subject matter and manner of pagan antiquity. Either of these alone might have been stultifying: as Lewis points out, they were stultifying in the *Christiad*. By using his epic subjects in such a way as to subordinate all human learning and all human effort to divine "use," Milton demonstrates that the only true liberty is that which the Christian enjoys, the liberty of the citizen of the kingdom of heaven who, by emulating Christ's example, has realized that kingdom within himself.

In this way, though Milton did not negate the interpretation of history which John Foxe made prevalent in England, and though Milton seems to have followed the general Foxian interpretation in much of his historical writing which touches upon the ignorance and repression of the Middle Ages, he transcends the limits of such an interpretive pattern in *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*. Since Milton and his audience could, as human beings, be confident of the heroic martyrdom of one greater man, Christ, and sure of the validity of only one "history," the Bible, Milton began with these certainties as a means of reducing all other learning to its proper subordinate "degree" of use. Thus has Milton
turned what might under other circumstances have proved in time an elaborate mausoleum into the tomb of the resurrection, and the occasion into his vision, not of Easter morning only, but of the ultimate Sabbath, when all things not depraved return to God.
CHAPTER 5

"THE TRAGICAL HISTORIES" OF THE MIRROR FOR MAGISTRATES
"MEETELY FURNISHED OF BEAUTIFUL PARTS"

As it has already been noted above, Milton planned a work which would "with a solid and treatable smoothness... paint out and describe" by means of examples "whatsoever in religion is holy and sublime, in vertu amiable, or grave, whatsoever hath passion or admiration in all the changes of that which is call'd fortune from without, or the wily suttleties and refluxes of man's thoughts from within."¹ The final epic result, as the first section of this dissertation has pointed out, is the example of Adam's learning from Raphael before the fall, from Michael after the fall, and ultimately, as the means of "regaining to know God aright," of mankind's learning from Christ's supreme example in Paradise Regained. It has been observed in Chapter 3, the first chapter of this section, that Milton applied the idea of "learning from examples" to the study of history, with the added precaution and discipline of skill in languages and in authenticating sources.²

Chapter 4 has considered Milton's use of the Elizabethan tradition of learning from the examples of martyrs, and has considered particularly the martyrrology and interpretation of history made popular by John Foxe. Milton, as the conclusion of that chapter noted, followed generally an interpretation of some phases of church history which bears a superficial resemblance to that set forth by Foxe, but Milton transcends and expands the narrow limits and
distortions of such an interpretation by his very act of subordinating all learning to Christian truth and in this way making all knowledge and all wisdom subject to its proper and highest "use."

As Chapter 4 discussed those examples which Milton described as "the victorious agonies of Martyrs and Saints," this chapter will consider a secular tradition of "learning by example"—what Milton referred to as "the wily suttleties and refluxes of man's thoughts from within."³ The particular subject of the chapter is the idea of the "mirror" of individual tragedies held up as a looking glass to each man so that every individual beholder can see vicariously the image of his own heart in the moral shortcomings which have caused tragedy to befall others. This is another aspect of the "histories" which Milton recommends for careful study and careful judging as a means of disciplining the understanding.⁴ The particular example of the "mirror" tradition under scrutiny in this chapter is one which evolved during the last half of the sixteenth century and which in influence was probably almost as pervasive, though not so direct, as Foxe's martyrology. This secular work to be considered is the Mirror for Magistrates.

Though it is not possible to cite specifically a passage in which Milton states his opinion of the Mirror for Magistrates, as it was possible for Foxe's interpretation
of church history, Milton uses the figure of the "mirror" as a reflection in which each individual can see himself; and he treats so many of the same themes which are treated in the *Mirror for Magistrates*, as this chapter will show, that the Elizabethan work provides an excellent point of vantage from which Milton's accomplishment may be seen.

Milton had doubtless read some of the *Mirror* in some form. There are interesting verbal parallels and a few parallels of images which, though not necessarily derived from the *Mirror*, certainly suggest Sackville's induction: for example Sackville's description of death's dart seems to anticipate Milton's description:

His Dart anon out of the corps he tooke,  
And in his hand (a dreadfull sight to see)  
With great triumphe eftsones the same he shooke,  
That most of all my feares affrayed me...\(^5\)

Much more important than these occasional echoes are the themes treated in the several tragedies and the morals which the judicious reader is instructed to take from the story. The title of the first tragedy might, except for the style in which it is written, have served as an illustration for Milton's *Eikonoklastes*:

The fall of Robert Tresilian chiefe Justice of Englande, and other his felowes, for misconstruying the lawes, and expounding them to serve the Princes affections.\(^6\)
Milton did not require the authority of the *Mirror for Magistrates* to persuade him that tyrannical rulers who repressed freedom of conscience and of teaching and preaching were usurpers who should not be obeyed. The conception, however, of the magistrate's duty which the *Mirror*, because it did evolve slowly, reflected and helped to establish doubtless did set the popular tone within which such discussions were understood.

The idea implicit in the "mirror" which permits a tragic figure to tell of his fall from high to low estate, crude as it often is in the Elizabethan tragic "histories," has within it the germ of one of the important facets of Milton's aesthetic theory.

After Samson's self-accusing meditation in the opening lines of *Samson Agonistes*, the Chorus approaches and, in words not quite audible to Samson, marvels at his fallen condition:

```
O mirror of our fickle state,
Since man on earth unparallel'd!
The rarer thy example stands,
By how much from the top of wondrous glory,
Strongest of mortal men,
To lowest pitch of abject fortune thou art fall'n.
(SA, 164-169)
```

At almost any time during the middle ages—certainly at any time after Boccaccio and Chaucer—and down to Milton's youth, the figure of speech of the "mirror" as a reflection
of the meaning of an event or the application of the moral of the event to the beholder would have been clear. Milton uses the figure occasionally: for example, he objects to Charles I as one who has refused to be "convinc't of his faults" even "by his own actions held as in a Mirror before his face." The context of this particular reference to Charles is worth noting because it contains one of Milton's cardinal psychological principles, based, of course, upon a religious conviction. In speaking of Charles's having quoted David's Psalms, Milton says, "Had he borrowed David's heart, it had bin much the holier theft." He carries the precept even further in De Doctrina Christiana:

Certain it is, that the editors and interpreters of the New Testament which is the chief authority for our faith, are accustomed to judge the integrity of the text, not by its agreement with the visible church, but by the number and integrity of the manuscripts. Hence, where the manuscripts differ, the editors must necessarily be at a loss what to consider the genuine word of God; as in the story of the woman taken in adultery, and some other passages.

...afterward...the authority...of the different books as contained in the manuscripts, is confirmed by the internal evidence implied in the uniform tenor of Scripture, considered as a whole; and, lastly, the truth of the entire volume is established by the inward persuasion of the Spirit working in the hearts of individual believers....Thus, even on the authority of Scripture itself, every thing is to be finally referred to the spirit and the unwritten word.

This statement of sound scholarly principles of textual criticism and linguistic skill applied with Milton's keen
sense of reverence and high calling to the analysis of Scripture, all exercised within his cardinal principle, freedom of conscience, led Milton to the interpretation which he outlines in the De Doctrina Christiana. The idea that the ultimate test must be the impact of a work as a whole upon the "hearts of individual" human beings is, as Chapter 6 will show, central to Milton's aesthetic theory, as it had been to Spenser's and Sidney's. The idea of permitting historical figures to tell their own tragic stories and to point to the moral law which explains the tragic fall is a dramatic device developed, or perhaps one should say evolved, in the Mirror for Magistrates. Though the Mirror for Magistrates is characteristic rather than excellent, a brief survey of its history may serve to supply an understanding of the "beginning, end, and reason" of one important facet of Milton's aesthetic theory.

Those who today for any reason proceed beyond Sackville's Induction stop long before they have completed their tortuous pilgrimage through the "tragic falls" of the several editions of the Mirror. Nevertheless, these versified historical exempla of the Mirror were natural, perhaps inevitable, in Tudor England. As Professor Bush once observed, "the naive mingling of ancient, Medieval, and Renaissance elements in one capacious medieval punch bowl" was a "characteristic manifestation of the average Elizabethan mind." Professor
Bush urbanely regrets that "veracity will not permit a more alluring adjective" than "characteristic." C. S. Lewis, even though he seems to regret the very existence of the Mirror and expresses contempt for the "applied poetry" of this "disastrous" and "composite monument" of what he dismisses as "the Drab Age," agrees with Professor Bush that the Mirror is characteristic:

In a way, just because it (The Mirror for Magistrates) is so much worse than Tottel's Songs and Sonnets, 1557, it reveals the movement of taste more clearly than Tottel—as a delict shows the set of the tide more clearly than a ship under sail.12

Twentieth-century tolerance and contempt, even though scholarly, are necessarily based upon a comparison between the Mirror and the later masterpieces of Spenser, Marlowe, and Shakespeare, among other Elizabethan writers. If we can suspend for a moment our literary memories of the works of authors who wrote after 1579, (the date of the publication of Spenser's The Shepherd's Calendar—also a date before which almost all of the tragedies of the Mirror had been written)13—if we can imagine ourselves as Englishmen of the first twenty years of Elizabeth's reign—we may perhaps be able to understand the appeal which the Mirror made during those years. This appeal was not only to the "average" or "characteristic" (in the sense of "symptomatic") Elizabethan mind, but to such "choice wits" as Sir Philip Sidney, who
praised the **Mirror** along with Chaucer, Surrey, and Spenser:

I account the **Mirror of Magistrates** meetely furnished of beautiful parts.14

The fact that Sidney praised so few English poets makes his praise all the more noteworthy and reminds us again that there was little to praise and also that the canons by which poetry was then judged were somewhat different from those which C. S. Lewis, *ex post facto*, now applies.

The appeal which the **Mirror** made to Elizabethans seems, therefore, to have been well nigh universal. The vexed and uncertain bibliographical problems and those which grow out of attribution of authorship of the several tragedies must of necessity be omitted entirely or, where-ever allusion to one of these problems may be required, must be referred to Miss Campbell's edition of the **Mirror**. Many of these very bibliographical problems and to some extent the problems of authorship of the several "lives," grew out of the efforts of publishers to keep pace with public demand. Such a response inevitably reflects something of popular taste and of changing conceptions, and in turn influences theories of literature and history. The reflection and influence of the **Mirror** were perhaps in the final analysis not so "disastrous" as Mr. Lewis thinks. First, it must be noted that the **Mirror for Magistrates** continued an already well-established historical and literary tradition, and, second,
that the Mirror projected or evolved within this convention a theory of literature and history, a theory within which Spenser, Sidney, and Shakespeare, along with other Elizabethans, wrote and were understood. This same theory was the background for Milton's theory of learning from history. Whatever twentieth-century opinion of "applied" poetry may be (and, again, the phrase is C.S. Lewis's), the tradition which produced such "drab" writing also made possible the drama and poetry which we now refer to as "golden."

Even the bare statement of the circumstances under which the eight editions of the Mirror appeared between 1555 and 1587 indicates something of the evolution. The compilation was first undertaken as a supplement to Boccaccio and Lydgate. Lydgate's Fall of Princes had been printed twice (1494 and 1527), and there are handsome manuscripts and many allusions throughout the fifteenth century to attest the popularity of the work before it was printed.15 When the Catholic printer Wayland undertook the continuation, probably in 1555, Mary's Lord Chancellor suppressed it, as William Baldwin relates in the 1559 edition.16 Although Baldwin does not list the Lord Chancellor's reasons for suppressing this first (1555) edition, it has been surmised that the "examples" would perhaps have resembled conditions which prevailed during Mary's reign, and that a parallel "fall" of Mary might be anticipated.17 Elizabeth, it will be remembered, was also sensitive to any suggestion that a ruler
might be deposed. The performance of Shakespeare's Richard II on the eve of the Essex rebellion was thought to suggest a precedent for the deposition of Elizabeth; and the rebels, who had subsidized the performance, evidently intended to imply such a parallel. It seems likely that Mary in 1555 was equally sensitive; and the fact that the Lord Chancellor suppressed the work after it was already "part of it printed . iiii yeares agoe," as Baldwin says, attests to the power which historical examples were generally conceded to exert.

In the 1559 edition, Baldwin clearly states the circumstances which had first led him in 1555 to "usurpe Bochas rowme, and the wretched princes complayne unto me"—that is, the conditions under which he accepted the printer's (presumably Wayland's) suggestion that he compile a continuation of Lydgate:

....but because it was a matter passyng my wyt and skyll, and more thankles than gaineful to meddle in, I refused utterly to undertake it, excepte I might have the helpe of suche, as in wyt are apte, in learning allowed, and in judgemente and estymacion able to wield and furnysh so weighty an enterpryse.

Baldwin also states the motive which impelled these learned men to undertake the "thankles" labor. After proclaiming the Godlike function of "office," Baldwin continues:

....Ye be all Gods, as many as have in your charge any ministration of Justice. What a fowle shame wer it for any now to take upon them the name and office of God, and in their doinges to shew them selves divylys? God can not of Justice, but plage such shameles presumption and hipocrisy, and that with shamefull death, diseases, or infamy. Howe he hath plagued evill rulers from time to time, in other nations, you may see
gathered in Boccas booke intitled the fall of Princes, translated into English by Lydgate: Howe he hath delyt with sum of our countreymen your auncestors, for sundrye vices not yet left, this booke named A Myrrour for Magistrates can shewe: which therefore I humbly beg of your honors, beseeching you to accept it favorably. For here as in a looking glas, you shall see (if any vice be in you) how the like hath bene punished in other heretofore, whereby admonished, I trust it will be a good occasion to move you to the soner amendment. This is the chiefest ende, whye it is set furth, which God graunt it may attaine.21

This hope that historical examples may furnish inducements to just and honest behavior on the part of officials apparently had a negative as well as a positive application even within the text of the 1559 edition to which it was prefaced, for two of the titles which appear in the index were not printed despite the fact that the prose links indicate that the edition had been prepared for them.22 There is also strong evidence that other tragedies (including Sackville's contribution) were written before 1559.23 Again it is impossible to do more than conjecture the cause of these omissions, or of later inclusions, but it seems likely that those "tragedies" which seemed at the moment to parallel political events in contemporaneous England were withheld until later editions.

As Miss Campbell has shown, the nineteen tragedies of the 1559 editions were increased to twenty-seven (plus prose links) in the 1563 editions for which Marsh, presumably because of the additions, had obtained a new license. The 1571 edition rearranged the contents of the 1563 edition.
Higgins's contribution of the tragic falls of legendary rulers of Britain appeared in 1574 under the title "The First Part." Blenerhasset's so-called "Second Part," which covered the period between the conquest of Britain by Caesar and the coming of William the Conqueror, appeared in 1578. This edition, as it had nothing to do with the subject matter of the earlier editions of the Mirror, has also a separate bibliographical history. It was printed by Richard Webster, whereas the earlier editions had been printed by Thomas Marsh. In 1587 Henry Marsh, to whom Thomas Marsh had assigned his patents, reprinted the Mirror which Baldwin and Higgins had compiled. This 1587 edition added new stories by Higgins and one (that of Wolsey) by Churchyard. In 1610 Richard Niccols rewrote and recombined most of the earlier material. Although this brief recital of facts leaves out of account the perplexing and perhaps insoluble bibliographical difficulties which the several editions, issues, and variants pose, the popularity of the Mirror both as an individual work and as a genre is evident, both from the number of editions and from the additions of "histories." 14

Much more important than the fact of continued popularity (and doubtless one of the reasons for that popularity) was the attitude toward "tragedy" which these successive editions evolved. The medieval (and predominantly Catholic) framework within which Lydgate had written and within which Wayland's
request to Baldwin seems to have been conceived, was that of contempt for the things of this world, and presumably a pious St. Augustine-like concentration on the promise of a life hereafter. 25 Baldwin recalled in the preface to the 1559 edition that some four years earlier the printer had been persuaded "to procure to have the storye [of Lydgate] contynewed from where as Bochas lefte, unto this presente time, cheifely of suche as Fortune had dalyed with here in this ylande: which might be as a myrroure for al men as well noble as others, to shewe the slyppey deceytes of the wavering lady, and the due rewarde of all kinde of vices." 26 Even in the 1559 edition, however, the emphasis has been shifted to something which resembles a Protestant, even a Calvinistic, combination of the same elements. The title page reads, "A Myrroure for Magistrates, Wherein may be seen by example of other, with howe grevous plages vices are punished: and howe frayle and unstable worldly prosperitie is founde, even of those, whom fortune seemeth most highly to favour." 27 The section of Baldwin's "Dedication" of this 1559 edition which we have already quoted clearly states a concept of tragedy entirely congruent with that which is implicit in Shakespeare's tragedies and histories:

....For here as in a looking glas, you shall see (if any vice be in you) how the like hath bene punished in other heretofore, whereby admonished, I trust it will be a good occasion to move you to the soner amendment. This is the chiefest ende, whye it is set furth, which God graunt it may attaine. 28
The precept within its theological and psychological framework was set forth near the end of the century by Sir John Davies, himself a lawyer and magistrate:

Why did my parents send me to the schooles  
That I with knowledge might enrich my mind?  
Since the desire to know first made men fooles,  
And did corrupt the rootes of all mankind?

And when their reasons eye was sharpe and cleere,  
Even then to them the Spirit of lies suggests  
That they were blind because they saw not ill:

Even so by tasting of that Fruite forbid,  
...to give Passion eyes, made Reason blind.

But then grew Reason darke, that she no more  
Could the faire Formes of God and Truth discerne;  
Battes they became that Eagles were before.

In this batlike condition, Sir John Davies mourns, man learns so little and forgets so much, is so horrified by the sin-blotted image of his own mind and so much taken up with the outward fair "show" of things outside himself, that it is only affliction which makes man look within himself:

If ough can teach us ough, Afflictions lookes,  
(Making us looke into our selves so neare)  
Teach us to know our selves, beyond all bookes.

Thus Davies's statement is consonant with Baldwin's: man's reason, sharp and clear before the fall, has come as a result
of the fall to the hard necessity of learning through adversity and affliction. Baldwin also anticipates the corollary which is derived from man's blindness—that is, the human susceptibility to "appearance" as opposed to "reality," which often (as in the speeches of Lear's daughters in Shakespeare's tragedy) mislead "misweening man." Edmund, Duke of Somerset, for example, confesses that his "chiese fault was folly" in that he did not discern the "sleuyghtes" of Suffolk. Most of the tragedies in the 1559 and 1563 editions of the Mirror are consonant with the conclusion of Edgar in Shakespeare's Lear:

The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices
Make instruments to plague us.
(V, iii, 170-71)

As Miss Campbell has shown, the medieval contempt for this earth, and the effort in most medieval "vision" and "mirror" exhortations to ignore the vagaries of fortune and to keep one's eyes steadfastly upon the hope of a life hereafter, was in the Mirror almost from the beginning supplanted by the Protestant and Elizabethan conception of tragic justice operating within a theological framework. Within this theological framework each man—each individual soul—had a responsibility to God, no less than to his fellow men, to exercise his "office" or "vocation" as a sacred trust from God. This exercise required that one know and understand; and learning required both the
imitation of excellence (to the extent that we in our fallen state can comprehend or recognize excellence) and at the same time the sharpening and quickening power of affliction. As Davies was later to point out, only through affliction can the human mind be made to take home to itself the lessons which it may learn. The vicarious learning through the affliction of others (as related in history and tragedy) and the imitation of excellence (in terms of harmony and a pleasing and therefore instructive narrative technique) constitute the peculiar opportunities—and duties or "vocation"—of the poet.

There are many obvious medieval and early Tudor conventions which the Mirror seems to project (in a somewhat modified idiom) to the later writers of Elizabeth's reign. The idea of the vision, for example, was characteristically medieval; but the innovation of permitting each tragic figure to recite his own history is a dramatic invention which probably contributed to later dramatic writing. There were many "mirrors" also in the decades which preceded the first edition of the Mirror for Magistrates, but the particular emphasis upon seeing not a "fair field full of folk" nor even clear-cut instances of the episodes which make up life, but rather the image of one's own heart in the folly and misdeeds of other men—this emphasis is Elizabethan, and looks forward to Shakespeare, Hooker, Davies, and in some respects to Milton.
The several characters who speak for themselves from the pages of the *Mirror for Magistrates* sometimes show a peculiar blend of medieval contempt for the world with plaints against Fortune, only to shift the emphasis of the moral warning in the last few lines. For example, Henry, Duke of Buckingham, after complaining about fickle Fortune and the unreliability of human beings who should be trustworthy, ends his account of his own tragic demise with this moral:

Byd kynges, byd kesar, by all states beware,  
And tell them this from me that tryed it true.  
Who reckles rules, right soone may hap to rue.  

Sackville hints at this among other ideas in his opening lines, in which the dead Buckingham addresses the author:

Who trustes to much in honours highest trone  
And warely watche not slye dame Fortunes snare:  
Or who in courte will beare the swaye alone,  
And wysely weygh not howe to wyeld the care,  
Beholde he me, and by my death beware:  
Whom flattering Fortune falsely so begilde  
That loe she slue, where earst full smooth she smyle.  

And Sackevylle sith in purpose nowe thou hast  
The woful fal of prynces to discryve,  
Whom Fortune both uplyft, and gayn downe cast,  
To shewe thereby the unsuerty in this life,  
Marke wel my fal, which I shal shewe belive.  
And paynt it furth that all estates may knows:  
Have they the warning, and be mine the woe.  

For noble bloud made me both prince and pier  
Yea pierles too, had reason purchast place...
The fall from high to low estate, the emphasis upon Fortune, might well have been spoken by Chaucer's monk; the emphasis upon individual reason as the quality which assures what measure of security and happiness which this world affords looks forward to the Protestant emphasis.

John Dolman's account of Lord Hastings also shows a curious blend of moral purposes. The title indicates one of the constituent parts of the blend: "Howe the Lord Hastynge was betrayed by trusting to much to his evyl counsayler Catesby, and vilanously murdered in the tower of London by Richarde Duke of Glocestre."\(^3^3\) There are disquisitions on the evils of adultery, the evil and the folly of betraying one's own sense of right and wrong to please a prince. The evil Gloucester figures as a boar of whom Hastings is warned in a dream—a fact which gives rise to a disquisition on the meaning of signs.\(^3^4\) The general emphasis, however, is upon moral law and the moral order which that law makes effective. Of his own part in agreeing to the death of others whom Gloucester killed, Hastings says,

My selfe I slew, when them I damned to death.
At once my throate I ryved, and refte them breth.
For that selfe day, afore or neare the hower
That wythered Atropos nippd the spryngyn flower
With wyolent hand, of theyr foorth runnyng lyfe:
My head and body, in Tower twynd lyke knyfe.

By this my paterne, all ye peeres beware.
Oft hangeth he hym selfe, whoe others weenth to snares.\(^3^5\)
A more positive statement of the way in which an individual must obey the moral law occurs in his admonition to nobles to seek to rise by virtuous means:

Beware to ryse by serving princely lust. 36
Surely to stand, one meane is rysyng just.

The final resolution of the welter of medieval, legal, ethical, and Protestant questions and discussions might well have inspired Milton's agreement, though certainly in more acceptable English:

Yet thinke we not, this sure foresettyng fate. 37
But Gods fast provydyence for eche pryncely state.

The "wily suttleties" of the inward thoughts of the several heroes and villains who tell their stories are too intricate to be traced in detail, but the examples cited above indicate the composite and often very complicated examples which these tragic dramatic monologues provide. Perhaps, as Miss Campbell suggests, the very uncertainty of the authors as to the precise turn which politics and church government might take kept the early contributors, at least, to the well-beaten highroad of Tudor political orthodoxy. There is a prevailing emphasis upon the moral motives of each character as a part of the moral law which he illustrates both by example and, usually, by precept.

The emphasis upon the training of magistrates, and the increasing Calvinistic emphasis upon the ruler or official
as an instrument of God, a crucial link in the divinely-ordered chain of being, is to be observed not only in Eliot and Ascham, who will be discussed in Chapter 8, but also in Sidney and Spenser. Eventually not magistrates only but every human being who discharged any function whatever was considered to owe this same kind of magisterial responsibility to God, the great "taskmaster" of all men. The Mirror articulated and integrated, though crudely and imperfectly, the elements which eventually vested the highest vocation of teaching-through-art in the poet. The eloquent and spacious conception of poetry which Sidney and Daniel defended and which Shakespeare and Spenser practiced and passed on doubtless depended to some extent upon the kind of articulation which the Mirror somewhat stuffily and incompletely achieved. Even the metrical experiments of the Mirror are generally conceded by literary historians—even by Lewis in a somewhat backhanded way—to have contributed something to Spenser and the later Elizabethans. Certainly Sackville was much admired then as now.

The outstanding fact about the men who are credited with having written the more literate of the tragedies is that they were with one exception trained in law. As Miss Campbell traces the biographical details of each man, she notes that most of the authors had already written or translated one or another treatise which is concerned with law. (I do not include Churchyard, who was a soldier and a hack writer, though some critics have commended his "Jane Shore"; nor do I include Higgins, whose contributions seem
narrowly, even precisionistically, mechanical). George Ferrers, Thomas Chaloner, Thomas Phaer, Sackville, and Dolmon (whose poetic gift C. S. Lewis considers the greatest of all the contributors) were trained in law and were men of affairs. Baldwin, though a clergyman, was preoccupied with the idea of justice and was devoted (as has been noted) to the ideal of the learned and just magistrate. Baldwin's Treatise on Moral Philosophy, 1547, was replete with such precepts as Aristotle's "There cannot be in a ruler a worse thing than ignorance," Seneca's "Law is the queene of immortalitie," and Hermes's "Law is the fynder and trier out of trueth." He translates Plato as saying "God is the cause that lawes be made." (Book III, cap. iii-vi)

Most of the compilers and contributors to the early editions of the Mirror were men who were well trained in law and well seasoned in administrative work. The preponderance of legally trained magistrates among the early contributors helped to set the tone and eventually to determine the emphasis of the theory of tragedy which emerged in the Mirror. This theory bears a close resemblance to the stare decisis fashion in which English lawyers prepared their briefs and arrived at their decisions. This reliance upon a concrete example or "case" rather than upon a set theory, and especially the hard-headed lawyer-like manner of searching for causes, certainly seems to have influenced Ferrers and Dolmon. In both their methods and their conclusions these
men (and occasionally Baldwin also) anticipate, though they nowhere equal, Hooker. It has already been noted that the tragedies in the _Mirror for Magistrates_ are largely dramatic monologues in which each person is permitted to tell not only the events and the pathos of his fall, but also the meaning. Jack Cade, whose story is thought probably to have been written by Baldwin, begins and ends his account of his treason with a recognition of the moral law which applies:

It may be well that planets doe encline
And our complexions move our myndes to yll,
But such is Reason, that they brynge to fine
No worke, unsayed of our lust and wyl:
For heaven and earth are subject both to skyl.
The skyl of God ruleth al, it is so strong,
Man may be skyl gyde thinges that to him long.

The sentiment if not the diction anticipates Shakespeare's "The fault, dear Brutus, lies not in the stars but in ourselves." The account ends with a warning against treason:

And therefore Baldwin warnes man follow reason
Subdew theyr wylles, and be not Fortunes slaves.

These tragedies proceed on the assumption that a man is free to fall though sufficient to stand, and also on the psychological assumption that even vicarious adversity clears the reason and makes the human heart see its own image in another's suffering.

The visions which Michael with the aid of the drops from the well of life shows Adam in Book XI, and Michael's verbal
accounts of historic events in Book XII after Adam's mortal sight is unable longer to look directly into the heart of events are excellent examples of the "skyl" of the angelic teacher, as Milton conceived of him. Michael's training Adam in the correct interpretation of the meaning of the events which he has witnessed or heard shows that Milton and the authors who contributed "tragical histories" to the Mirror shared many assumptions concerning the function of history and the use of history by the poet. Milton believed with these earlier authors that history should teach by example properly interpreted, that the judicious interpretation of history must be brought home to each man by discourse in which, preferably, he himself participates, as Adam did both in his conversation with Raphael before the fall and with Michael after the fall, and that the lesson to be learned from history, is the "pattern of virtue"--the pattern, that is, of God's moral law in its manifold forms and applications and despite the false appearances by which fallen man is likely to be misled.

Milton's use of examples of tragic fall "from high to low estate" far outsoars the somewhat lower than "middle flight" of the tragic "histories" recounted in the Mirror for Magistrates. Aside from Milton's prosody, his learning, his conception of art as a high calling and his own particular vocation, Milton also penetrates much more deeply into the "wily suttleties" of "thoughts from within" than did the
authors of the Mirror. To return, by way of example, to the quotation from Samson Agonistes cited at the beginning of this chapter, Milton concludes the speech of the Chorus with a statement which is the key here as elsewhere to the particular kind of order and disposition of parts of his poems:

Strongest of mortal men,  
To lowest pitch of abject fortune thou art fall'n.  
For him I reckon not of high estate  
Whom long descent of birth  
Or the sphere of fortune raises;  
But thee whose strength, while vertue was her mate,  
Might have subdu'd the Earth,  
Universally crown'd with highest praises.  

(SA, 168-175)

Dolman, Baldwin, and Sackville all three paid tribute to the idea of rising by virtue rather than by any means which would offend a decent conscience; but the kind of "rising" which the Elizabethans implied certainly included rising in this world. By enabling his hero Samson to attain the humility of a dedicated Christian, Milton reiterates the Christian paradox, the irresistible might of "weaknesse," the victory over self and therefore over the changes of fortune from without and the deceitful seductions of "wily subtleties" from within.
CHAPTER 6

WHAT LITERATURE BEST SERVES THE CHRISTIAN?
AN ELIZABETHAN CRISIS

Among the questions which will probably never be definitively answered is why, except on a partisan basis, there seem to have been no contemporaneous moral or aesthetic objections raised to the sensationalism of Foxe's Acts and Monuments or to some of the horror-for horror's-sake passages in the Mirror for Magistrates.¹ A number of possible explanations may be adduced, the most likely of which perhaps is that both the martyrology and the Mirror were, as Chapters 4 and 5 have shown, very popular indeed and very "legal" and legitimate in appeal. Most Elizabethans apparently accepted the brutal spectacles of gory public executions as a necessary curb to potential criminals, as the warnings in the ballads composed for such occasions indicate;² and Mirror for Magistrates and Acts and Monuments pointed out the same kind of moral warnings. It is possible therefore that the "tragedies" of the Mirror were unconsciously identified with usual civil procedures and the stories in Acts and Monuments with the glorification of the English Church as the beacon light of the Reformation, the "renewal of primitive brightness."³
Certainly one important reason for the unquestioning acceptance of both the martyrology and the *Mirror* is that the "histories" which both contained were considered to be "fact" rather than "feigning," and that their purpose, frequently stated, as we have seen, in very bald terms, was to teach by example.

Whatever the reasons for the tolerance accorded these popular Elizabethan anthologies, other kinds of literature did not enjoy similar amnesty either during Elizabeth's reign or the sixty years which followed her death. Despite the literary glories now called "Elizabethan," the largest single body of writing between 1558 and 1660 was religious or grew out of religious disputes. One of the fundamental questions implied in much of this writing is the age-old question of what literature is suitable, or, stated in another way, what learning is fitting and profitable. Plato asked the question in the *Republic*, banished the poet from his ideal community, then somewhat ambiguously readmitted him on promise of good behavior. Milton's discussions of the problem in *Areopagitica* and later in *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* seem at first glance to reverse Plato's order by first admitting and then later in life rejecting Greek literature, but a careful reading of the epics shows that he did not reject but rather subordinated to Christian truth the "uses" to which all learning and all experience must be put, as
Chapter 2 has shown. Chapter 6 will consider as one important part of the Elizabethan tradition of learning the controversy over allowable literature which rose during Elizabeth's reign and which in some ways had reached the point of definition if not of final solution by the end of the century. Finally, Milton's statement concerning the "benefit to be had of books promiscuously read," and, of course, carefully judged, will be discussed in relation to the Elizabethan background which is the subject of this chapter.

The Elizabethan controversy over "feigning," "vanities," and "imitation" was, like Melchizedek, without beginning or ending of days. The controversy dilated in the course of some twenty-five years to touch upon almost all of the political, religious, and intellectual issues of Elizabeth's reign. The context of the controversy—the sources and the results—extended backward in time through the sixteenth-century sermons and essays on learning to the Church Fathers (Chrysostom, Lactantius, Cyprian, and especially St. Augustine) and ultimately back to Cicero, Aristotle, and Plato; and this same context projected forward in time into the syntheses which Milton achieved in the seventeenth century. A catalog, however epic, of the many contributions in sermons, tracts, plays, prefaces, legal documents, and administrative orders would still lead on, "forever and forever as we move" to include still more. Though most of the contenders on both
sides seem ultimately to have based their arguments upon
the authority of Scripture, often underpinned by allusions
to the Church Fathers and history, the controversy turned
on such a variety of applications as to generate confusion.
Out of the welter of documents which bear more or less
directly upon that confusion, this chapter will consider a
few of those texts which led to Sidney's *Defense of Poesy*.

The poetry controversy of Elizabeth's reign was but a
small segment of an argument which seems to be as old and
as universal as poetry itself—the problem, that is, of
the usefulness, morality, and propriety of literature.
This Elizabethan segment of the controversy began in earnest
with attacks upon "Dicing, Dauncing, Vaine playes, or
Enterluds, with other idle pastimes &c., commonly used on
the Sabbath day," and, as the attackers invariably pointed
out, "reproved by the Authoritie of the word of God and
auntient writers." Such attacks upon all forms of vice,
idleness, and Sabbath-breaking might have been heard in
almost any pulpit in England at almost any time—even Chaucer's Pardoner had made good use of such an attack—but the
inclusion of "Vaine playes, or Enterluds" in these attacks
from the pulpit became a standard part of such attacks on
sin only after plays began to attract large city audiences.
By the end of the year 1577, both the Theater and the Curtain,
large playhouses located outside the jurisdiction of the
London authorities, offered plays almost every afternoon;
and to these performances flocked Londoners of all classes and conditions. The complicated but well-worn story of the political and economic implications of the Elizabethan drama concerns us here only to the extent that this history was the occasion for attacks which included not only dramatic performances but, by extension, the poetry in which plays were written and the music which accompanied most of the performances. The first systematic attack of which we have the text, though more moderate than later blasts from preachers and pamphleteers, set forth the principles and most of the arguments on which later attacks were based—principles which, as we shall see, were tacitly accepted by most of the defenders. I refer to John Northbrooke's *Spiritus est vicarius Christi in terra*, which was printed first about 1577, approximately the time at which London burghers began to resent the popularity of the dramatic performances which attracted their apprentices and provided a breeding place for unrest and extravagance.

The subtitle of Northbrooke's *Treatise*, which I have already quoted, includes "Dauncing, Vaine playes, or Enterluda" in the "reproof" for the reason that these diversions are "idle pastimes" and also for the reason that they are "commonly used on the Sabboth day." It is Northbrooke's reasoning which concerns us, for his attack did not extend (except perhaps by implication) to poetry, and he even exempts
school plays specifically. Because Northbrooke's Treatise
was both detailed and systematic, it set forth the theologi-
cal framework within which this and later discussions were
written; and this framework, though justified by numerous
references to "antient writers" both pagan and Christian,
was grounded primarily in the Christian Bible. The sense
of mission, of being required by God ("of a strictness," as
Milton was later to write) to recall the English to their
proper Godfearing function as bearers of the truth of
Reformation, gives Northbrooke's writing a sense of urgency
and even of power which often characterized later explicitly
theological arguments; and the basis for these later arguments,
as we shall see, was the same one which Northbrooke had
outlined. For example, the following passage, which is one
of the many in which Northbrooke stated his "mission" and
that of England in Biblical terms, was later used by both
attackers and defenders of poetry from Gosson and Sidney
through the time of Milton.

Age. Indeede, if they doe consider the dangerous
times that we are in, they have little cause to use those
follies, for instead of playing, they would use pray-
ing; insteade of dauncing, repenting; for joye, sorowe; 5,10
for laughing, mourning; for myrth, sadnesse; for pride,
patience, for wantonnesse, wofulnesse, &c. Is it now
thinks you) a time to be mery, die, daunce, and playe,
seeing before our eyes how the bloudie Papistes murthar
and slaughter in all places rounde about us our poore
brethren that professe the gospel of Jesu Christ: Luc.19,
Christ wept over Jerusalem for his eminent and imminent 41
destruction, and doe we laugh at our brethren's destruc-
tion?
Christ sayde to the Jewes: Suppose ye that those Galileans were greater sinners than all the other Galileans, because they have suffered such things? I tell you nay; but, excepte you amende your lives, ye shall all likewise perishe. So I saye to thee, Englande: Dost thou suppose that those Frenchmen which were cruelly murdered, and unaturallye slaughtered by the bloodye and unmercifull Papistes in Fraunce, were greater sinners than thou art? If I tell thee nay; but, excepte thou, England, amende thy manners and bring forth better fruiter of the gospell, thou wilt likewise perishe also: for thou drawest iniquities with cordes of vanitie and sinne, as with carte roapes...

God graunte to open the eyes of Englande, that it maye see his sinnes, and be ashamed thereof, and fall to repentance, and to rente their heartes, and not their garmentes, and turne to the Lord God...

The particular formula by which Northbrooke and most of the later attackers would have Englishmen "amende" their lives to avoid "perishing" was, of course, the formula which they gleaned from what seems at this distance a rather narrow and precisionist interpretation of Scripture. Recreation, within this interpretation, was to consist primarily of religious exercise (particularly of listening to sermons):

Age. ...God be mercifull to this realme of Englands, for we begynne to have ytching eares, and lothe that heavenly manna, as appeareth by their slow and negli-gent comming unto sermons, and running so fast, and so many continually unto playes, &c....Why, then, shoule not Christians abolishe, and punishe such filthie players of enterludes, whose mouthes are full of filthinesse and wickednesse?"

The condemnation of all "idle pastimes," and the inclusion in this category of all exercises, intellectual as well as
bodily, which did not make ultimately for the pious worship of God was also the basis on which the defenders of poetry built their arguments: that is, the defenders justified poetry as an intellectual and spiritual exercise which refines both the language and the understanding of man and therefore enables man to worship God correctly. This "reason" for liberal studies was certainly not new: Erasmus, Colet, and More had at the beginning of the century emphasized the religious purpose of liberal studies, as has already been noted in Chapter 4. Northbrooke's "reproof" narrows considerably the definition of "religious," however, by insisting upon specific Scriptural sanction for all activity and particularly for all recreation; and defenders of poetry were, as we shall observe, somewhat hampered in their replies to even the most violent and unreasonable "reproofs" by the fact that after 1577 no Englishman seems to have questioned the absolute and final authority of Scripture—a fact which gave advantage to narrow and precise arguments based on Biblical condemnation of "vanities." Northbrooke's condemnation of all dramatic representations of religious topics, for example, though it drew support from the long-standing Tudor prohibition of religious and political topics in drama, was justified in the text of the treatise solely on the basis of Biblical injunctions against "profaning" God's truth.
It is not to be wondered, therefore, that Northbrooke's treatise evoked no replies, for he had so carefully and so precisely documented his arguments from Scripture that a reply would have had to question either his interpretation of Scripture or the validity of Scriptural authority in the matters which Northbrooke treated. It may also well be that his Treatise attracted very little notice except among the burghers who already agreed with him. It was Gosson's comparatively slight and somewhat equivocal Schoole of Abuse (1579) which certainly provoked Lodge's reply of 1579 and which apparently also was at least a part of the immediate occasion for Sidney's Defense. Perhaps it was Gosson's effort to attract a fashionable audience which made him vulnerable to attack. The title page of the Schoole of Abuse makes clear both his intention to attack poetry and music as well as the drama and his hope that his attack might appeal to a learned and "gentlemanly" audience. The subtitle of the Schoole of Abuse reads, "Conteyning a plesaunt invective against Poets, Pipers, Plaiers, Iesters, and such like Caterpilleres of a Commonwelth; Setting up the Flagge of Defiaunce to their mischievous exercise, and overthowing the Bulwarkes, by Prophane Writers, Naturall reason, and common experience: a discourse as plesaunt for Gentlemen that favour learning, as profitable for all that wyll follow vertue." The dedication to Sidney, the Euphuistic style, and the epilogue to
the "Gentlewomen, Citizens of London," all bear out Gosson's intention to appeal to a fashionable audience; yet the arguments, though less exact than those of Northbrooke and much more sweeping, were ultimately grounded not in "Naturall reason," "common experience," or "Prophane Writers," despite the proliferation of examples which the Euphuistic style required, but rather in the same kind of illiberal religious arguments which Northbrooke had documented from Scripture. Gosson even included a blanket excuse for having failed to include Scriptural documentation:

This have I set downe of the abuses of poets, pipers and players, which bring us to pleasure, slouth, sleepe sinne, and without repentance to death and the devill: which I have not confirmed by authorities of Scriptures, because they are not able to stand uppe in the sight of God; and sithence they dare not abide the feilde, where the worde of God doth bid them batteile, but run to antiquities (though nothing be more ancient then holy Scriptures) I have given them a volley of prophan writers....

Gosson also exhorted the "Gentlewomen, Citizens of London," "Be ever busied in godly meditations" as a means of escaping the "mischievous exercies" of poetry and music. Though he allowed that some few players were "sober, discrete, properly learned, honest householders," and that two plays, one of them his own, were "good playes and sweete playes," nevertheless even these good plays and honest players were likely to mislead audiences into vanity. Though Gosson later in the same year, in An Apologie of the Schoole of Abuse against
Poets, Pipers, Players, and their Excusers which he printed with the Ephemerides of Phialo, stated that he had not "banished" poetry, "condemned" music, or "Sørbdæ" recreation but had rather "touched but the abuses of all these," the disclaimer seems absurd in the light of the Schoole of Abuse. Though the arguments are somewhat equivocal in that Gosson, who had obviously intended to attach as many strings as possible to his bow, had seemed here and there to "allow" individual works, he had nevertheless closed even these loopholes by pointing out that these "mischievous exercises" almost inevitably would lead to abuses and must therefore be eschewed in favor of more Godly or more warlike deeds. Despite the rather plucky defence of Gosson which William Ringler has constructed, Gosson's "true-confessions" approach to his subject, and his effort to try his hand at pleasing a gentlemanly audience while reiterating the usual religious and Scriptural arguments against the theater and the allied arts of poetry and music, appear at this distance to have been the casting about of an illiberal and unsuccessful hack writer. So Lodge considered him, at least; and so Gosson's later contributions to attacks upon the stage seem to prove, for Gosson's pamphlet entitled Playes Confuted in five actions, Proving that they are not to be suffered in a Christian common waale, by the waye both the Cavils of Thomas Lodge, and the Play of Playes (1582) condemned out of hand not only "abuses" but
all "counterfeiting." This pamphlet, though it was primarily concerned with the attacks upon the stage and therefore lies outside the scope of this chapter, indicates the hardening and the narrowing of the religious opinion in terms of which the arts came to be judged by at least one considerable segment of the population. Though Gosson's attacks have been labelled "Puritan," Gosson spent most of the rest of his life as a successful clergyman in the established church; and his aesthetic principles, if they contributed to his popularity among his well-to-do parishioners, would explain at least a part of the complaint of Spenser and Daniel, among others, that poetry was held in low esteem.

Lodge's reply to Gosson, though largely a personal attack upon the "confessing" former playwright as one who used "divinity to cover...knavery," anticipated Sidney's much more orderly and dignified Defense in that he defended poetry as a promoter of virtue, a divine gift of which the Biblical Psalms are perhaps the highest and best fruits, and an honorable and ancient art much valued by pagan and Christian philosophers, and by men of action and educators. Lodge attempted to include in his Reply point-by-point answers to Gosson's contentions, an attempt which led to the personal attacks so characteristic of most of the later pamphlet warfare, such as those which grew out of the Admonitions controversy,
the Martin Marprelate controversy, and the personal and sometimes incidentally literary fringe battles of the sort which Nashe and Harvey fought through pamphlets some ten years after Lodge wrote his Defense. It should also be noted that Lodge, who was still a student at Lincoln's Inn when he composed the reply to Gosson, seems to have used as his chief source of apt citations and pertinent arguments a treatise entitled Praenotamenta which served as a preface to a 1502 edition of Terence. It is, of course, possible that Lodge's immediate source was some derivative treatise now lost, or perhaps even notes; but the significant fact is that the arguments and citations which had been current in France at the beginning of the century were still pertinent in a point-by-point refutation of an attack made almost eighty years later in England. This fact bears out the statement made in the introduction—that the controversy concerning allowable literature is as old as poetry itself. Lodge and Sidney, particularly Sidney, made clear the fact that the ultimate defence of poetry must be stated in terms which are profoundly Christian and universal.

It should also be noted, by way of contrast with Sidney's Defense, that even such a systematic moral treatise as that by Stubbis (The Anatomy of Abuses, 1583, which resembles Northbrooke's treatise in that it is a dialogue concerning the moral diseases of Ailgna) and Bablington's encyclopedic
treatment of the Ten Commandments (1588) continue the narrow Scriptural "reproofs" already noted in Northbrooke and paralleled, at least in fragments, in most of the sermons which were concerned with one or another "abuse." Though only incidentally concerned with poetry or even books, these sermons and sermonizing essays apply the letter of the Scriptural text to other "abuses," such as excesses of dress, Sabbath-breaking, idleness, any kind of "feigning" or masking, and, of course, attending the theater. This close application of the letter of the Scripture in combination with the frequently repeated injunction to serve God by listening to preaching would be likely, as we have already observed, to supplant all literature not immediately concerned with the text of the Bible.

Sidney in the Defense therefore rendered invaluable service not only to the language and to poetry but also to religion itself by enlarging and humanizing the manner in which Christian morality as the Elizabethans understood it might be applied to literature. The very oration in which the Defense was cast was both an example and a reminder of a tradition of eloquence which certainly included sermons and subject matter from "the book of God" but which also included human learning from "the book of nature" as a necessary medium for refining and expressing all manner of thought. The formal and balanced organization of the subject was an
example and a reminder of the rhetorical tradition which
considered the harmonious and graceful order of ideas and
language as a reflection of the harmonious order of the
universe. Sidney's emphasis upon the esteem both among
pagans and Hebrews in which poetry had formerly been held
as the mother of knowledge and the tutor of virtue was a
reminder of the reliance of English institutions upon first
principles: that is, the "renewal of primitive brightness"
of the Reformation. The very discussion of genres of poe-
try and the strictures upon the absurdities and crudities
of contemporaneous English drama lifted the criticism of
the stage--only a minor part of Sidney's aesthetic treatise--
to an entirely different plane--a plane in which the morality
and usefulness of a play is to be judged by the harmony
and beauty which the play achieves. By achieving harmony
and beauty, the play imitates God and approaches the excellence
of the best of all literary examples, the Bible. Sidney
developed the theory in terms of the Scriptures which the
precisionist detractors of poetry applied overnarrowly:

And may not I presume a little farther, to shew
the reasonableness of this word vates, and say that
the holy David's Psalms are a divine poem? If I do,
I shall not do it without the testimony of great
learned men, both ancient and modern. But even the
name of "Psalms" will speak for me, which, being inter-
preted, is nothing but songs; then that it is fully
written in meter, as all learned Hebricians agree,
although the rules be not yet fully found; lastly and
principally, his handling his prophecy, which is merely
poetical. For what else is the awaking his musical
instruments, the often and free changing of persons, his notable prosopopeias, when he maketh you, as it were, see God coming in his majesty, his telling of the beasts' joyfulness, and hills' leaping, but a heavenly poesy, wherein almost he sheweth himself a passionate love of that unspeakable and everlasting beauty to be seen by the eyes of the mind, only cleared by faith? But truly now having named him, I fear to seem to profane that holy name, applying it to poetry, which is among us thrown down to so ridiculous an estimation. But they that with quiet judgments will look a little deeper into it shall find the end and working of it such, as, being rightly applied, deserveth not to be scourged out of the Church of God. 25

I do not, of course, mean to suggest that Sidney originated either the specific arguments which he used in the Defense or the liberal religious emphasis of enlightened Elizabethan aesthetic theory. Both Ascham and Elyot had, for example, applied a theory of imitation which resembled Sidney's. Ascham in the fifth section of The Scholemaster opened his discourse with an appeal to the principle of imitation:

Imitation is a facultie to expresse livelie and perfite lye that example which ye go about to follow. And of it selfe it is large and wide: for all the workes of nature in a maner be examples for arte to follow.... all languages...be gotten...onelie by Imitation....I never knew yet scholer that gave himselfe to like, and love, and followe chieflie those three Authors /Plato, Aristotle, and Cicero/ but he proved both learned, wise, and also an honest man, if he ioyned with all the trewe doctrine of God's holie Bible, without the which the other three be but fine edge tooles in a fole or mad mans hand. 26

Nor do I mean to suggest that Sidney was either more learned or more devoted to his ideal of truth and to his notion of
the means of arriving at truth and expressing it than were many of those precisionists who employed other means. No one can doubt the earnestness and sense of mission of Northbrooke or Stubbes, or the learning of John Rainolds and William Gager, or the curious combination of wit and dedication which characterizes some of the Marprelate tracts. Yet all these other tracts seem empty and hollow and unconvincing when compared to Sidney's Defense. I do suggest that the reason for the comparative fullness and conviction of Sidney's Defense is that it does not so much teach us as it reminds us of a truth. The germ of that truth is contained in the fact that Sidney as a man and the tract as a work of art are in themselves examples of that earnest imitation of excellence upon which the ethical and aesthetic system of the English depended. Sidney in the Defense recaptured a learned and humane tradition which annexed to the Protestant cause and to English institutions the "best that had been said and thought." Hooker a few years later stated the precept of the method which Sidney affirmed and exemplified:

Thus we see how even one and the selfsame thing is under divers considerations conveyed through many laws, and that to measure by any one kind of law all the actions of men were to confound the admirable order, wherein God hath disposed all laws, each as in nature, so in degree, distinct from the other.
Wherefore that here we may briefly end: of law there can be no less acknowledged, then that her seat is the bosom of God, her voice the harmony of the world: all things in heaven and earth do her homage, the very least as feeling her care, and the greatest as not exempted from her power, both angels and men and creatures of what condition soever, though each in different sort and manner, yet all with uniform consent, admiring her as the mother of their peace and joy. 27

So also Sir John Davies defined in poetry the manner in which man by imitating the excellence of God attunes himself to that system of laws which is God's operative and effective manifestation in the universe and in the life of man. 28

Certainly Sir Philip Sidney did not recapture this tradition single handed. His treatise was not published until 1595, though there is abundant evidence that it had circulated widely in manuscript. Certainly Daniel's Musophilus and his Defense of Rime, to name only two works which deal with the value of poetry, could never have been free to explore what Professor Osgood has called the idea of "poetry as a means of grace"--a method, that is, of arriving at truth and understanding value--had not someone replaced the negative and excluding test question, "Does Scripture authorize precisely this literary statement?" with the more ethical and spiritual harmony which Scriptures proclaim and, in the highest literary sense, illustrate. Sidney's Defense is therefore a kind of "summa" which synthesizes into a workable and expanding system the several elements of Elizabethan aesthetic theory which grew out of the Protestant Reformation.
It raised the level of the argument, grounded the authority for the argument in a reasonable and humanistic interpretation of Scripture, and provided in the form of a Ciceronian oration an example of the balance and harmony which imitate the order of God. All of these qualities gave tremendous weight to the Defense in its own time. Added to this weight was the fact that Sidney, the epitome of the Protestant Christian aristocrat, a "true poem" in his own life and person, exemplified the Ciceronian ideal of eloquence, a good man speaking. This particular aspect of Sidney's influence by example will be considered in the next chapter.

Milton even in his occasional allusions seems to take for granted the principles which Sidney set forth. He records in a commonplace-book note that Tertullian forbids every "wary and prudent Christian from venturing to witness a dramatic poem, artistically composed by a poet in no wise lacking in skill." Milton notes that in the epilogue of the very same work, Tertullian, despite his prohibition, uses all the flowers of rhetoric to direct the minds of Christians to religious spectacles. After noting that Cyprian and Lactantius "rolled the same stone," and that Lactantius's arguments were "no whit stronger" than those of Tertullian, Milton says:

He does not even once seem to have reflected that, while the corrupting influences of the theater ought to be eliminated, it does not follow that it
is necessary to abolish altogether the performance of plays. This on the contrary would be quite senseless; for what in the whole of philosophy is more impressive, purer, or more uplifting than a noble tragedy, what more helpful to a survey at a single glance of the hazards and changes of human life? In the following chapter the same writer seems to be desirous of removing from social life the whole art of music. 29

Areopagitica is even more explicit and systematic. After pointing out that Moses, Daniel, and St. Paul were all "skilfull in all the learning of the Egyptians, Caldeans, and Greeks" from having read the books of these nations, and that Paul had even inserted in holy Scripture "the sentences of three Greek Poets, and one of them a Tragedian," Milton points to the harm done the Church by the effort to exclude learning. He disposes of the vision of St. Jerome by taking the whole story and pointing to its contradictions:

And perhaps it was the same politick drift that the Divell whipt St. Jerom in a lenten dream, for reading Cicero; or else it was a fantasm bred by the fever which had then seis'd him. For had an Angel bin his discipliner, unlesse it were for dwelling too much upon Ciceronianisms, & had chastiz'd the reading, not the vanity, it had bin plainly partiall; first to correct him for grave Cicero, and not for scurrill Plautus whom he confesses to have bin reading not long before; next to correct him only, and jet so many more ancient Fathers wax old in those pleasant and florid studies without the lash of such a tutoring apparition; insomuch that Basil teaches how some good use may be made of Margites a Sportfull Poem, not now extant, write by Homer; and why not then of Morgante an Italian Romanze much to the same purpose. 30

Having cast doubt upon the reliability of Jerome's interpretation, since an angel did not see fit to correct all others
who had read, Milton then proceeds to cite several other visions which have certainly as much authority as St. Jerome's, and concludes characteristically with the "unapocryphall vision" of St. Peter: "Rise, Peter, kill and eat, leaving the choice to each mans discretion. Wholesom meats to a vitiated stomach differ little or nothing from unwholesome; and best books to a naughty mind are not unapplicable to occasions of evill." Milton does not, of course, mean to imply, any more than Sir Philip Sidney did, that all books are equally good: he simply insists that the Christian who is sufficient in himself will find that "knowledge cannot defile, nor consequently the books, if the will and conscience be not defil'd." Milton's summary is explicit:

I conceive therefore, that when God did enlarge the universall diet of mans body, saving ever the rules of temperance, he then also, as before, left arbitrary the dyeting and repasting of our minds; as wherein every mature man might have to exercise his owne leading capacity...God committs the managing so great a trust, without particular Law or prescription... 32

Christian liberty requires that each man exercise his own discretion and that every mature man judge carefully and make proper use of what he reads.

It would be possible to multiply Milton's allusions and illustrations, and to show even more convincingly the way in which Milton has combined all manner of learning in his poetry, particularly in Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained.
in such a way as to illustrate this "use" in the highest of all literary forms available to human art— the Christian epic. The illustrations already quoted indicate the manner in which Milton, as the inheritor of the best of the Elizabethan synthesis of the Protestant Reformation and English Christian humanism, was able to begin where many of his predecessors might have been hampered or stopped. Most important of all his heritage from the Protestant, Reformation, and Humanist tradition was the reliance on principle, on sound scholarship, on right reasons, and on law in its high ethical sense. The most important part of that tradition, and the one upon which Milton insisted as a corollary of the "use" which must be made of Christian liberty, which had made men free to use their own discretion, was the proper consulting of principles and laws rather than unmitigated authority superstitiously construed. As Sir Philip Sidney's attempt to define the Protestant and humanist ideal of the "use" of literature to free and judicious Christians transcended the efforts of other defenders both in statement and in impact, so Milton's use of that tradition, even amid the narrowing zealotry of war and partisan politics, preserved the best of the Christian and humanist tradition and fused that tradition with his own powerful system of thought and sublime poetry.

Sidney's statement of the relationship of poetry to learning is very close to Milton's own conception of the
exalted ideal of the poet "with his garland and singing
robes about him" 33:

This purifying of wit, this enriching of memory, enabling
of judgment, and enlarging of conceit, which commonly
we call learning, under what name soever it come forth,
or to what immediate end soever it be directed, the
final end is to lead and draw us to as high a perfec-
tion as our degenerate souls, made worse by their clay
lodgings, can be capable of. 34

This statement anticipates Milton's ideal of the purpose of
learning, "to regain to know God aright." In the same passage,
Spenser also outlines the reasons for the supremacy of poetry
as example and discipline. He anticipates Milton at the same
time that he summarizes and expands the Protestant and Reforma-
tion framework both in his definition of poetry as "art of
imitation," "aspeaking picture," and in placing at the very
top of the hierarchy of the kinds of poetry those poets "who
did imitate the unconceivable excellencies of God," including
the writers of Psalms, the Songs of Solomon, Ecclesiastes,
Proverbs, "Moses and Debora in their hymns," and the author
of Job. "Against these none will speak that hath the Holy
Ghost in due holy reverence." In this way Sidney makes the
sanction of Scripture serve the cause of poetry and puts on
the defensive those who narrowly and superstitiously search
the words only and not the spirit of Biblical literature.

In outlining the various kinds of knowledge which men
seek, Sidney notes the fault into which Milton's Adam later
falls in his conversation with Raphael. After observing that
the desire for learning in the human mind is likely to take many forms, he says:

For some, that thought this felicity principally to be gotten by knowledge and no knowledge to be so high or heavenly as acquaintance with the stars, gave themselves to astronomy; others, persuading themselves to be demigods if they knew the causes of things, became natural and supernatural philosophers; some an admirable delight drew to music; and some the certainty of demonstration to the mathematics. But all, one and other, having this scope—to know, and by knowledge to lift up the mind from the dungeon of the body to the enjoying his own divine essence.

Having granted the good will of initial intention to those who wish to learn, Sidney then asserts the superiority of poetry as example and discipline which best imitates the harmony of God:

But when by the balance of experience it was found that the astronomer looking to the stars might fall in a ditch, that the inquiring philosopher might be blind in himself, and the mathematician might draw forth a straight line with a crooked heart, then, lo, did proof, the overruler of opinions, make manifest that all these are but serving sciences, which, as they have a private end....all earthly learning being virtuous action, those skills that most serve to bring forth that have a most just title to be princes over the rest.

Sidney claims this highest honor among the disciplines for poetry because the poet combines the precept and general law of the philosopher with the example which the reader may imitate:

Now doth the peerless poet perform both: for whatsoever the philosopher saith should be done, he gives a perfect picture of it by someone by whom he presupposed it was done; so as he coupleth the general notion with the particular example. A perfect picture, I say for he yieldeth to the powers of the mind an image of that whereof the philosopher bestoweth but a wordish
Therefore, for Sidney as for Milton, the function of literature is to imitate the harmony of God by "painting" forth with "solid and treatable smoothnesse" the perfect picture which other men may imitate. So conceived, poetry is superior to Nature, provided, of course, the poet has chosen the correct precept and apt examples. For Sidney as for Milton, the highest examples and the most trustworthy are reliable, and therefore Scriptural, imitations of "the unconceivable excellencies of God." As Sidney and Milton saw it, Milton's choice of subject for Paradise Lost, Paradise Regained, and Samson Agonistes therefore assures the poet of the highest degree of excellence as it assures him of the highest degree of freedom; for, according to the Elizabethan and Reformation tradition, all knowledge, all "degrees" of excellence, all experience and all the uses of experience may be properly reduced to order only within Christian truth. This choice of subject and the reason for its assuring both freedom and excellence would be clear from Sidney's Defense even if we lacked Milton's specific statements. As Chapter 2 has attempted to show, Christ's rejection of pagan learning and literature is not a rejection but a subordination to proper degree and proper "use" within a universal system of values; and the "solid and treatable smoothnesse" of the supreme
example of self-denial and self sacrifice, Christ, denies only the Satanic distortion which places pagan learning above its proper place in the hierarchy of Christian "use." Only by following Christ's example can man humbly and piously realize the kingdom of God within himself and recover the lost paradise which Michael prophesied to Adam.
CHAPTER 7

"AN AUTHENTICAL PRESIDENT TO AFTER AGES":
SIR PHILIP SIDNEY
AND FULKE GREVILLE'S "DEDICATION"

The preceding chapter has considered Sir Philip Sidney's idea that poetry is the highest form of learning, that the "ending end of all earthly learning" is "virtuous action," and that out of this virtuous action man becomes "himself a passionate lover of that unspeakable and everlasting beauty to be seen by the eyes of the mind, only cleared by faith."¹ The ultimate moral and religious purpose of both action and admiration is, as both Sidney and Milton describe it, the imitation "of the unconceivable excellencies of God." In his systematic treatment of the function of poetry in relation to the other disciplines and "degrees" of learning, Sidney points out that the poet is not "bound to tell things as things were" but rather "coupleth the general notion with the particular example" in such a way as to make a "perfect picture" of the complete action to be imitated. In this connection, Sidney defends the "feigned" example because it "may be tuned to the highest key of passion" and thereby "move" the heart and mind to voluntary emulation of virtue. This moving of the heart to imitation, and the good deeds performed as a result of this emulation, constitute for both
Sidney and Milton a kind of sacrament—an outward and visible expression of man's having partaken inwardly of the harmony of God's order. Such participation is a "mystery" only in that God's grace, the granting of "light unto light" to fallen man, is the only possible condition on which fallen man can partake of this harmony. The workings of God's "seed" within man are thus made manifest; and the example of the man who has achieved, even for a moment or in one situation, this participation in divine order serves in its turn to reclaim from the chaos of a sinful world those who are "moved" to the emulation of the virtue of "good deeds."

As Milton points out in commenting upon the correctness of the choice even of martyrs, the man who has performed the good deeds is not to be considered the measure of virtue; for all fallen men are fallible and must fail to achieve participation in God's harmony unless aided by divine grace. It is therefore the virtue which is to be imitated, not the man. Milton in De Doctrina Christiana has set forth this relationship between good works and imitation and ultimate salvation in legal terms.

The primary efficient cause of good works, as has been stated above, is God.

The PROXIMATE CAUSES OF GOOD WORKS are naturally, in ordinary cases at least, good habits, or, as they are called VIRTUES; in which is comprised the whole of our duty toward God and man.
This statement is substantiated by Scripture and related to the idea that "a good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things (Matthew xii, 35)." Milton here, as in most of his other writings, warns against "certain temporary virtues, or semblances of virtues" which are "discernible even in the wicked." The importance of this outward and visible sign of the "good treasure of his heart" of the doer of good deeds extends to every part of Milton's interpretation of Scripture: for example, his insistence that Christ's sacrifice has released mankind from the whole Mosaic law and has replaced that law with the goodness of Christ, or Christian liberty. That liberty, properly exercised, leads to an understanding of the spirit which, though it agrees with Scripture in ultimate moral and religious meaning, must sometimes take precedence over the narrow letter of interpretation in doubtful texts upon which man's knowledge of Scripture is based.

This entire theological framework, within which good works are conceived as outward manifestations of inner grace working on the heart and spirit of man, is, as the preceding chapter has shown, related to the idea of imitation of good examples as a means of achieving "the ending end," or "virtuous action." Thus "virtuous action" becomes, not an end in itself, but a part of God's plan and the divine order in which all things go out from God and return to Him if not depraved.
This relationship between fallible human good works and God's plan for salvation is implied in the Renaissance courtesy-book ideal of the "virtuous discipline" attained by the whole man acting in imitation of a Christian ideal. This particular aspect of the idea of imitation will be discussed in the following chapter. The subject of this particular chapter is the fusing of this ideal of the virtuous man as the whole man acting out of the free flowing of the "inner treasure of his heart" in one notable Renaissance example. The purpose of this illustration is to give one concrete example of the way in which these theological and ethical ideas fused. So much of the idea was apparently taken for granted by Ascham and Spenser, no less than by Sidney and Milton, that the way in which the example of a good man operates to "enable" the spirit of the imitator is likely to be vague in the absence of a concrete example.

The biography of Sir Philip Sidney as set down by his friend and admirer, Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke, is included in this section with the other kinds of "history" which Milton recommends for study and judgment. This particular example illustrates several facets of the idea of "virtuous action" as a kind of sacrament within God's harmonious order. Sidney was generally considered the epitome of the Christian gentleman acting out of the God-given "treasures of his heart." Fulke Greville's tribute goes beyond respect and admiration: it is a celebration of the virtue which Sidney
illustrated as the means or "inabling" of his own spirit to partake of God's excellence. Thus Sidney's example as it took effect in the life of Fulke Greville enabled him to partake of the divine harmony by imitating truth and excellence; and Fulke Greville's tribute in the form of a book treasures up the essence of that "mould" in a form which leads others to emulate it.

Perhaps the most significant part of Fulke Greville's so-called "Life of Sidney," at least the most significant part for this dissertation, is the attitude of the biographer, the reasons for which he and his age honored Sidney. Fulke Greville's memorial furnishes both precepts and examples which make these reasons clear. The book, published under the title The Life of the Renowned Sr. Philip Sidney, is not the story of Sidney's life, nor was it so labelled by Greville; neither, as Greville explicitly stated, was the account intended to convey the significance and worth of Sidney's life. Only a little more than one-half the text concerns Sidney; yet the entire text and Greville's collected literary efforts which this text was intended to introduce are dedicated both to Sidney's memory and to the living truth which that memory exemplified.

Writing probably about 1620, Greville entitled his manuscript "A Dedication to Sr. Philip Sidney" and took pains in the text that not only his poems and plays were "dedicated" in the conventional literary sense to Sidney but that his own
life and work had been dedicated to those ideals for which Sidney had been loved. After first noting that his dedication to Sidney can have no motive other than his devotion to Sidney's memory (as a dedication to an "honorable magistrate yet living" might, by contrast, have some ulterior or selfish motive), Greville states the cause of his admiration for Sidney:

...But besides this self-respect of dedication, the debt I acknowledge to that gentleman is farre greater, as with whom I shall ever account it honour to have been brought up: and in whom the life it self of true worth—by way of example—far exceed the pictures of it in any moral precepts....For that this representing of vertues, vices, humours, counsells, and actions of men in faigned and unscandalous images [in and through poetry] is an inbling of free-born spirits to the greatest affaires of States: he himself hath left such an instance in the too short scene of his life, as I fear many ages will not draw a line out of any other man's sphere to parallel with it.

For my own part, I observed, honoured, and loved him so much; as with what caution soever I have passed through my dayes hitherto as among the living, yet in him I challenge a kind of freedome even among the dead....and will therefore stir up my drooping memory touching this man's worth, powers, wayes, and designes: to the end that in the tribute I owe him, our nation may see a sea mark, rais'd upon their native coast, above the levell of any private Pharos abroad: and so by a right meridian line of their own, learn to sayl through the straits of True Vertue, into a calm and spacious ocean of humane honour. 10

Thus Greville first repeats the essence of Sidney's Defense—that is, that poetry "is an inabling of free-born spirits to the greatest affaires of States"—and anticipates Milton in that he pays tribute to Sidney as a man who has made "of his own life a true poem," the harmonious example of which serves
as a beacon to guide other Englishmen "through the straits of True Vertue into the calm and spacious ocean of humane honour."

It should also be noted that in this same opening passage quoted above, Greville states his intention of reviewing Sidney's "Nort, powr, wayes, and designes" as a means of drawing Englishmen of 1620 and later back to the "strait" way which leads to life. It is not therefore surprising that Greville touches only very briefly upon the qualities of mind and spirit of Sidney's immediate forebears: Sir Henry Sidney was, as Greville points out, "a man of excellent natural wit, large heart, sweet conversation," and a governor who sought the prosperity of his country above his own private gain. Greville cites as proof Sir Henry Sidney's excellent government of Ireland and Wales. Sir Philip's mother was possessed of a "large ingenuous spirit" which more than matched the nobility of her descent. Sir Philip was "the extension of their strength, and the very acme and perfect type of it." Greville then proceeds with equal brevity to a general statement concerning Sir Philip's childhood:

...though I lived with him and knew him from a child, yet I never knew him other than a man: with such staidness of mind, lovely and familiar gravity, as carried grave and reverence above greater years. His talk ever of knowledge, and his very play tending to enrich his mind: so as even his teachers found something in him to observe and learn above that which they had read or taught.
This love of learning enabled Sidney to travel with honor at fourteen and gained for the boy the admiration of the scholar Languet, a biographical fact with its moral causation (that is, Sidney's thirst for knowledge and industry to learn on the one hand and Languet's desire to teach on the other) which is the occasion for Greville's pausing long enough to point the lesson to be gleaned from Sidney's childhood and youth:

...God creates those in His certain and eternal mouldes, out of which He elects for Himself; where kings choose creatures out of Pandora's tun, and so raise up worth and no worth... 14

The excellence of the "mouldes" or forms of Sir Philip's early desire to perfect himself in knowledge was therefore looked upon as a token of God's favor both to Sidney and those "mouldes"; and the "mould" of Sir Philip's moral and intellectual background was another corroboration of God's favor and of the operation of God's law. This pattern of commenting upon the principle of behavior or mind which Sidney illustrated in his life or his opinions is therefore Greville's method of showing Sidney's "worth, powers, wayes, and designes" and of relating them to Divine Grace and to the moral choices of man.

Greville next proceeds to summarize the action of the Arcadia, first for the purpose of illustrating the sound precepts of monarchy and government which Sidney's romance sets
forth in "lively images," and then to remind the reader again that even this excellent moral work was very much inferior to "that unbounded spirit."

...But the truth is: his end was not writing, even while he wrote: nor his knowledge moulded for tables or schooles; but both his wit and understanding bent upon his heart, to make himself and others, not in words or opinion but in life and action good and great.

In which architectonical art he was such a master, with so commending and yet equall waies amongst men, that wheresoever he went, he was beloved and obeyed... the whole minising of the business, not by usurpation or violence, but--as it were--by right and acknowledgment, falling into his hands as into a naturall center.

By which onely commendable monopolie of alluring and improving men, loke how the same drawes all windes after it in faire weather: so did the influence of his spirit draw men's affections and undertakings to depend on him. 15

Having reminded his reader in this conclusion to the first chapter that Sidney's "onely commendable monopolie of alluring and improving men" was both the core of Sidney's life and the subject of this treatise, Greville proceeds in the second and third chapters to illustrate the manner in which Sidney's spirit "drew men's affections and undertakings to depend on him" by citing the honor in which William of Orange had held Sidney and Sidney's opinions. Then by citing the tributes of Leicester and Walsingham to Sidney's tact, judgment, and ability as a leader and governor, he demonstrates that wise men had been drawn to his example. He cites also
the esteem in which Henry of Navarre, Don John of Austria, the "then king of Scotland" all held Sidney, and the reputation for learning and discrimination which Sidney enjoyed among learned men in universities "abroad and at home."

...it will be confessed by all men, that this one man's example and personal respect, did not only encourage Learning and Honour in the Schooles, but brought the affection and true use thereof both into the Court and Camp. Nay more, even many gentlemen excellently learned amongst us will not deny, but that they affected to row and steer their course in his wake....his very waies in the world did generally add reputation to his prince and Country, by restoring amongst us the ancient majestie of noble and true dealing: as a manly wisdome, that can no more be weighed down by any effeminate craft, than Hercules could be overcome by that contemptible army of dwarfs. 16

So uncompromising was Greville's insistence upon "noble and true dealing" and upon the ideal that the heart and tongue must both go "one way" that he makes fairly frequent invidious comparisons between the age in which Sidney lived and that time in which he writes. Some forty years later, for example, in speaking of the relationship between Sidney and Languet, Greville comments upon the "differences between the reall and large complexions of those active times and the narrow salves of this effeminate age." 17 Again at the beginning of the second chapter, Greville deprecates the fact that true worth is honored very little among those "which now live." Throughout the book Greville emphasizes the logical ethical conclusion that if man is to improve and
reform himself, he must recognize and shun that evil which he finds in his own time and in his particular surroundings. He was apparently so unwilling to compromise the didactic and moral purpose of his writing that he was reconciled to posthumous publication. At least, so his statement concerning his reluctance in abandoning the idea of a biography of Elizabeth would, as we shall see, imply. Even at the cost of offending the men of his own time, Greville insisted upon the moral and ethical superiority of the life and example which he treats: "the greatness which he affected was built upon true worth; esteeming fame more than riches, and noble actions far above nobility itself." 19

Greville therefore begins the next section of his treatise with a statement of regret that Sidney "never was a magistrate, nor possessed of any fit stage for eminence to act upon," then proceeds to show the remarkable powers of understanding, judgment, resourcefulness, and courage which Sidney achieved in spite of this lack of opportunity. First, Greville shows that even in his early youth Sidney had made a polite diplomatic mission in which he had been engaged to congratulate the new Emperor Rudolph into an occasion for studying and strengthening the Protestant cause among the German states:

And though to negotiate with that long-breathed Nation proves commonly a work in steel, where many stroaks hardly leave any print; yet did this master Genius quickly stir up their cautious and slow judgements to be sensible of the danger which threatened them hourly, by this fatal conjunction of Rome's under-mining superstitions with the commanding forces of Spain.
In the remaining pages of his account of Sidney, Greville discusses in detail Sidney's efforts to defend the Protestant cause. Again and again Greville emphasizes the principles on which Sidney based his defense. This principle is that Englishmen must govern their own affairs, both private and public, in such a way as to imitate God's "moulds" and therefore to be a worthy vessel of His reformed and true religion.

Chapter 5 summarizes Sidney's arguments against Elizabeth's marriage with the Duke of Anjou in such a way as to emphasize the threat to Protestantism in general and to England in particular in terms which parallel Mary Tudor's marriage to Philip of Spain. It is not upon any superstitious formula, such as "history repeats itself," that Sidney bases his argument. The similarity in Mary's marriage, Elizabeth's proposed marriage, and Solomon's foreign marriages is a parallelism of moral issues; and because the same moral issues are involved Sidney expects similar moral and political consequences. For example, Greville summarizes one section of Sidney's argument:

....in the practice of this marriage, he foresaw and prophesied, that the very first breach of God's ordinance, in matching herself with a prince of diverse faith, would infallibly carry with it some piece of rending destiny, which Solomon and those other princes justly felt, for having ventured to weigh the immortal wisdom in even scales, with mortall conveniency or inconveniency.

10. The next step must infallibly have been--as he conceived--with our shipping to disturb or beleaguer the Netherlands by Sea, under colour, or pretence of honor unseasonably taken, even when the horse, and foot of France should threaten their subsistence by land...
The remainder of this section, which is too long and too complicated to quote, projects the possible consequences of this injustice to the Low Countries by showing the overweening power which France would enjoy if Holland's trade and industry should be added to France—if, in other words, as a consequence of a marriage which betrayed the Protestant cause as Solomon's marriages had in ancient times betrayed the cause of God's earlier chosen people, the result would be an inevitable chain of international disasters which would proceed from this first breach of God's law down through a long chain of immediate causes and results. Sidney also traces in somewhat less detail the possible result of a Netherlands-Spanish alliance and the possibility that the Dutchers might turn to piracy. Any one of these three possible results illustrates the penetration, and also the moral and religious basis, of Sidney's analysis.

Chapter VI, though ostensibly on a completely different subject, is actually a different application of the same principle—that is, the necessity for a proper observation of the moral law:

Thus stood the state of things then: and if any judicious reader shall ask, Whether it were not an error for Sir Philip being neither magistrate nor counsellor, to oppose himself against his sovereign's pleasure in things indifferent? I must answer, That his worth, truth, favour, and sincerity of heart, together with his real manner of proceeding in it, were his privileges. Because this gentleman's course in this great business was, not by murmur among equals, or inferiors, to detract from princes; or by a mutinous
kind of bemoaning error, to stir up ill affections in their minds, whose best thoughts could do him no good; but by due address of his humble reason to the Queen her self, to whom the appeal was proper. 22

Both here and later in his tribute to Elizabeth, Greville makes this respect for the legal privileges of all estates, and particularly the respect for the right of the individual subject to appeal to the sovereign, the basis of much of his high praise for Elizabeth. Not in this work only but in most of his poetry which touches even remotely upon public affairs (as, for example, in the several poems concerning monarchy in which both kings and people are urged to observe "place" and not to create anarchy by upsetting God's natural order and balance inherent in the customary system), and especially in the Short Speech for Bacon, Greville takes pains to affirm this right and even obligation to appeal to the sovereign:

This court hath no intent to discourage the meanest subject of his lawfull appeal unto his Prince: for that were to disinherit the People of law, and the King of the intelligence of the oppressor that might fall upon his people. 24

Greville's inclusion of this apology for Sidney's action in the matter of Elizabeth's projected French marriage is therefore clearly a part of Greville's entire theory concerning government and ethical choice. In this as in his other opinions and actions, Sidney demonstrated his devotion to truth and to public welfare. It should be observed that Fulke Greville's
point is not so much to glorify Sidney in himself as to praise him because he was able to understand the particular application of God's moral order to this historical situation. Or, to put the matter another way, Sidney is to be emulated not because he or any other man is good in himself but rather because he has been able to partake of God's divine moral order; and in the act and speech which illustrates that partaking, Sidney was able to point the way in which others may also partake of it.

It should also be remarked that Greville may well have had one eye at least upon the scandals which had plagued James's court, and also perhaps upon the arguments over royal prerogative, and that in his old age Greville looked back upon Elizabeth's tact and Sidney's outspoken and downright Protestantism as a kind of golden age. Whatever his consciousness of decayed times may have sprung from, Greville underlined the necessity for mutual respect by prince and subject for the rights and privileges under law of all estates. In reporting Sidney's conversation with Elizabeth after the tennis-court dispute, Greville says:

...Sir Philip, with such reverence as became him, replied: First, that place was never intended for privilege to wrong: witness her self, who how sovereign so ever she were by throne, birth, education, and nature; yet was she content to cast her own affections into the same moulds her subjects did, and govern all her rights by their laws.

Once more, Greville draws the moral to be learned from Sidney's
action and speech:

This constant tenor of truth he took upon him; which as a chief duty in all creatures, both to themselves and the soveraignt above them, protected this gentleman--though he obeyed not--from the displeasure of his soveraign. Wherein he left an authentical president to after ages, that howsoever tyrants allow of no scope, stamp, or standard, but their own will; yet with princes there is a latitude for subjects to reserve native and legall freedom, by paying humble tribute in manner, though not in matter, to them. 27

In the context of seventeenth-century political attitudes toward the soveraign, Greville seems to anticipate the regicides, including Milton, in his insistence that a loyal subject must obey God's moral law first, and then the will of the prince; and that if the prince does not conform himself also to the law within his own "degree" and function, that prince is a tyrant.

Chapter VII returns to the primary problem, as Sidney saw it, which confronted his religion and his country--the threat of Spain in conjunction with the Papacy. The miscarriage of his plan to undermine Spain's commerce and sources of gold from the Americas by founding colonies and fortified places strategically, the story of which miscarriage Greville recounts, did not dismay Sidney nor long discourage him:

Whereupon, when Sir Philip found this and many other of his large and sincere resolutions imprisoned within the pleights of their fortunes, that mixed good and eviltogether unequally, and withall discerned how the idle-censuring faction at home had won ground of the
active adventurers abroad; then did this double depression both of things and men lift up his active spirit into an universal prospect of time, States, and things: and in them made him consider...of repropounding some other forrain enterprise, probable and fit to invite that excellent princesse's mind and moderate government, to take hold of. The placing of his thoughts upon which high pinnacle, layd the present map of the Christian world underneath him. 16

Even as Christ also upon a high pinnacle rose above the specious appearances of the temptations which Satan propounded, so Sir Philip Sidney rose above the pettiness and shortsightedness about him and arrived at the analysis which Greville reports. This analysis shows inspired penetration of the past, the present, and the future of the European religious and political settlement. Sidney achieved this accuracy of analysis not through magic or supernatural agency but through understanding the moral causation, God's moral laws, as they applied to European politics of his time. Chapters VIII, IX, and X record Sidney's analysis in a fashion which Greville intended, no doubt, as exemplary to men of succeeding times; and in this connection, it is perhaps worthy of note that Pepys some years later (on January 2, 1667-8, to be exact) recorded the purchase of Greville's Life of Sidney after Lord Crewe had shown him "a place...which do foretell the present condition of this nation, in relation to the Dutch, to the very degree of the prophecy." The phrase "the very degree of the prophecy" indicates perhaps that Greville's
faith in the accuracy of Sidney's methods and conclusions 
was confirmed, at least in the opinions of Lord Crewe and 
Pepys, though Pepys's interest in all manner of curiosities 
and the current popularity of Nostradamus in our own time 
by way of comparison, would perhaps cast doubt upon Pepys's 
seriousness.

Greville concludes the section which concerns Sidney 
directly by recounting Sidney's courageous Christian death, 
in itself a confirmation of the piety, devotion, and stead-
fastness of his life. The transition to this final scene 
of Sidney's life upon earth at the beginning of Chapter XII 
reiterates the purpose of this dedication to Sidney and pre-
pares for the inclusion of material on Greville's own life 
and writings and also for the digression concerning Eliza-
abeth's prowess as a prince and ruler:

Thus shall it suffice me to have trod out some 
steps of this Britane Scipio, thereby to give the 
learned a scantling for drawing out the rest of his 
dimensions by proportion. And to the end the abrupt-
ness of this treatise may suit more equally with his 
fortune, I will cut off his actions, as God did his 
life, in the midst; and so conclude with his death... 
So that he shewed the world, in a short progress to a 
long home, passing fair and well-drawn lines; by the 
guide of which, all pilgrims of this life may conduct 
themselves humbly into the haven of everlasting rest. 30

Thus Sidney's manner of meeting death no less than his manner 
of conducting his life was presented by Greville as a guide 
to other men. Sidney's valor on the field of battle, his
consideration for his fellow soldiers, his patience in
suffering and his resolution in meeting death with the
comforts of a religion and with musical reminders of God's
divine and eternal harmony, even the final exhortation to
his brother that his death be considered only as another
confirmation of the vanities of this world--these events
constituted the holy dying of a great Christian and the
final crown and confirmation of the worth of his life.

The remaining pages of this dedication to Sidney include
Greville's account of his own efforts to emulate the princi-
pies and acts of the model whom he has recommended that
other men should follow. These efforts include not only
what he had written "in his youth and familiar exercises
with Sir Philip Sidney," but his efforts to follow Sidney's
plan for foreign and military exploits. The digressions
upon Essex, whose gallantry and bravery he admired, and upon
Elizabeth, whose keeping of laws and customs and balancing
of elements and persons was a model of princely practice,
as Sir Philip Sidney's life and thought was a model of scholar-
ly and gentlemanly practice, are not so much digressions as
they are repetitions of patterns and "scantlings" already
treated in Sidney's life.

In conclusion, and in fairness to Greville, we must
remember that Greville has written in his dedication to Sidney
a record of his personal reconciliation to his own limitations
and disappointments. Inspired by Sidney's example and Christian reconciliation to disappointed hopes and ambitions, Greville recognizes that the true hero and patriot is the man who achieves Christian humility and Christian breadth and timelessness of vision. The Christian will make full use of whatever opportunity, however much below his hopes and expectations, which his time and station and the accidents of mortal life afford him, and he will not complain because his best efforts are misunderstood or perverted. Greville was himself a capable and generally honored public servant during most of his adult life; and he might have recorded his triumphs, or his efforts to aid learning (he established a chair of history, among other generous acts). The emphasis which Greville gives the dedication underlines his lifelong effort to "guide" his own life "through the confused labyrinth of his own desires" by emulating Sidney.

Like Sidney, Greville died of a wound; and also like Sidney, he lingering for almost a month. These parallels were only accidental; but the inscription which Fulke Greville is supposed to have written for himself repeats the reason and meaning of his devotion to Sidney:

Fulke Grevill
Servant to Queene Elizabeth
Counciller to King James
Frend to Sir Philip Sidney
Trophaeum Peccati. 31
Even the "frend of Sidney," the apex of his good fortune in this world, must, like Sidney himself, view his own death as a memorial to sin from which only Christ's love can redeem him. But within the round of this earth's space and within the compass of human life, that man who can emulated Sidney as a guide through the "labyrinth" is likely to prove not only the champion of truth and good government, but also, and much more important, worthy of Christ's love and redemption.

Such, at least, was Greville's opinion of the meaning of Sidney's life; and Greville spent his own life as a living dedication to the ideal which Sidney exemplified. The practice and imitation perhaps more even than the verbal tribute and literary dedication are the "trophies" which Sidney himself would have valued most highly, for both Sidney and Greville agreed that the end of judicious learning as well as the means is, in Sidney's phrase, the "imitation of the inconceivable excellencies of God." The greatest tribute, therefore, which could be paid to Sidney is that he led men to the way and the means, or the "mould" and pattern of imitating God.

It is also interesting to note that Fulke Greville's nephew Robert, the Lord Brooke to whom Milton pays tribute in the Areopagitica, seems also to have held a similar view
of virtuous action, or at least so his heroism and Milton's tribute to him would indicate:

...yet I for honours sake, and may it be eternall to him, shall name him, the Lord Brooke. He writing of Episcopacy, and by the way of treating of sects and schisms, left Ye his vote, or rather now the last words of his dying charge, which I know will ever be of dear and honour'd regard with Ye, so full of meeknes and breathing charity, that next to his last testament, who bequeath'd love and peace to his Disciples, I cannot call to mind where I have read or heard words more mild and peacefull. He there exhorts us to bear with patience and humility those, however they be miscall'd, that desire to live purely, in such of God ordinances, as the best guidance of their conscience gives them, and to tolerat them, though in some disconformity to our selves. 32

Milton then speaks of Lord Brooke's treatise as commanding respect because both his life and his death indicate that his words should be carefully considered: his example, that is, argues that he had achieved some understanding of God's moral order. Here again Milton implies the idea formally stated in De Doctrina Christiana that God is the "primary efficient cause of good works," and that virtues, as exemplified in good deeds, are the "proximate causes." The value of Lord Brooke's actions and of his advice is to be measured by the "degree" to which he attained Christlike humility, the extent to which he partook of God's moral order and the harmony and understanding which that order gave him.

The value of any life, the meaning of a "history" of that life, is to be measured, as the first section of this
dissertation has shown, by the degree of Christian excellence which that life attains. The scale of values and "degrees" within the Christlike pattern are to be measured by the "scantling" of the supreme example of "the greater man" Christ, through whose supreme example we may "regain to know God aright" and may come to imitate his "unconceivable excellocies."
SECTION III

"ONLY GOOD MEN, BY THEIR GOVERNMENT AND EXAMPLE,
MAKE HAPPY TIMES IN EVERY DEGREE AND STATE":
THE COURTESY BOOK AND THE PROTESTANT EPIC
CHAPTER 8

"GENTLE AND VIRTUOUS DISCIPLINE":
SPENSER'S PROTESTANT AND EPIC SYNTHESIS OF THE TRADITION
OF COURTESY IN THE FAERIE QUEENE, BOOK VI, PROEM

As Section II of this dissertation has shown, Milton
hoped that the Lord and Commons of his own time would "row
and steer" in the "course" of the Englishmen of the "re-
forming times" of the sixteenth century to the end of com-
pleting the Reformation. Milton urged the example of these
earlier English reformers because, as Fulke Greville said
of Sidney, "This constant tenor of truth" which they took
upon them is the "chief duty in all creatures."¹ The
immediate political end of following such examples is,
again in Fulke Greville's words, to "adde reputation to
his...Country, by restoring amongst us the ancient majestie
of noble and true dealing,"² but this earthly purpose is
of course subordinate to the ultimate end of following a
good example, "by the guide of which all pilgrims of this
life may conduct themselves humbly into the haven of ever-
lasting rest."³ Public good works for Fulke Greville, and
for Sidney and other Elizabethan "reformers" whose examples
in plain dealing both Milton and Fulke Greville extoll,
are therefore dependent upon Christian integrity,
upon the free flowing of good works and good understanding from a mind and heart in harmony with God's order; and the ultimate end as it was also the *sine qua non* of all good works was personal salvation, "regaining to know God aright."

Though this Reformation and humanist idea of imitation has a long ancestry which goes back certainly as far as Aristotle, Milton and the Elizabethans before him squared the principle with Scripture. Milton summarizes the theological basis for this idea of imitation both in the systematic *De Doctrina Christiana* and in the tract *Of Education*; and most of his statements concerning the "use" of poetry reflect the same theory of imitation.

After his discussion of faith, or the knowledge of God, in Book I of *De Doctrina Christiana*, Milton treats of worship, or the love of God, in Book II. He defines the principle within which imitation is included:

> **GOOD WORKS ARE THOSE WHICH WE PERFORM BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD WORKING IN US THROUGH TRUE FAITH, TO THE GLORY OF GOD, THE ASSURED HOPE OF OUR OWN SALVATION, AND THE EDIFICATION OF OUR NEIGHBOR.**

Milton cites and collates passages of Scripture to prove that it is the grace of God which is in man, to paraphrase I Corinthians, 15:10, which enables him to perform good works; and he also demonstrates that all works, whatever their
appearance, must be tested in the light of God's truth.
In this conception of good works, as Chapter 7 has shown,
the works flow out of the fullness of spirit of the man
who enjoys Christian liberty:

For the works of believers are the works of the Spirit
itself; and though such can never be in contradiction
to the love of God and our neighbor, which is the sum
of the law, they may occasionally deviate from the let-
ter even of the gospel precepts, particularly of those
which are merely special, through a predominating re-
gard to the law of love; as was shown by Christ himself
in the abolition of sabbatical observances, as well as
on several other occasions.5

Thus the grace of God working through the spirit of the
free Christian, who has achieved a harmony with God's order
by means both of God's grace and exercise of right reason,
"light unto light—well used," flows out into good works
which are voluntary and of the Spirit of Truth.

From the standpoint of the learner, specifically of the
schoolboy, Milton's definition of the end of learning in Of
Education summarizes the same idea but places the emphasis
somewhat differently:

The end then of Learning is to repair the ruines of
our first Parents by regaining to know God aright, and
out of that knowledge to love him, to imitate him, to
be like him, as we may the neareast by possessing our
souls of true vertue, which being united to the heavenly
grace of faith makes up the highest perfection. But
because our understanding cannot in this body found it
self but on sensible things, nor arrive so clearly to
a knowledge of God and things invisible, as by
orderly conning over the visible and inferior crea-
ture, the same method is necessarily to be follow'd
in all discreet teaching. 6

Milton conceived of "the reforming of Education" apparently
as a necessary part of the completion of the religious Re-
formation, "one of the greatest and noblest designs that
can be thought on, and for the want whereof this Nation
perishes." 7 He objected to old scholastic traditions as an
"asinine feast of sowthistles and brambles" and advocated
the encouragement of the learner with "goodly prospects,
and melodious sounds on every side, that the Harp of Orpheus
was not more charming." 8 He anticipated benefit to the
nation in that kind of "compleat and generous Education"
which he outlined is:

...that which fits a man to perform justly, skilfully
and magnanimously all the offices both private and
publick of Peace and War." 9

For Milton as for Sidney and Fulke Greville, this public
and political benefit is a result of the magnanimity of the
Christian who has made some progress by "conning over the
visible and inferior creature" toward "regaining to know God
aright." There can be no public benefit until the individual
learner has achieved his own inner Christian harmony: "Seek
ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all
these things shall be added unto thee." 10
Though this chapter and the following one will discuss the combination of these and other ideas in the Protestant epic as Milton and Spenser conceived the epic "doctrinal and exemplary to a Nation," it should perhaps be noted here that Milton's idea of the manner in which poetry instructs is based upon a facet of this same idea of imitation as the "possessing our souls in vertue" by coming to a proper knowledge of God "and out of that knowledge to love him, to imitate him, to be like him." The poet makes possible the imitation of God's excellence because he can present the whole book of sanctity and vertue through all in instances of example with such delight to those especially of soft and delicious temper who will not so much as look upon Truth herselfe, unless they see her elegantly drest, that whereas the paths of honesty and good life appear now rugged and difficult, though they be indeed easy and pleasant, they would then appeare to all men both easy and pleasant though they were rugged and difficult indeed.12

Milton shows in the very way in which he records his musings upon his own life's work the same reliance upon a theological framework into which all other learning fits:

...what the mind...hath liberty to propose to her self, though of highest hope and hardest attempting, whether that Epick form whereof the two poems of Homer, and those other two of Virgil and Tasso are a diffuse, and the book of Job a brief model: or whether the rules of Aristotle herein are strictly to be kept, or nature to be follow'd, which in them that know art, and use judgement is no transgression, but an enriching of art. And lastly what K. [King] or Knight before the conquest might be chosen in whom to lay the pattern of a Christian Heroe.13
His ultimate choice, whatever his "musings" earlier in life, seems natural, perhaps inevitable, for the "pattern of a Christian Hero" is, of course, most perfectly presented in Christ himself.

For all that Milton's writing was, as Thomas Newton pointed out, thoroughly "original,"\textsuperscript{14} and despite the fact that Milton squared all his theories of aesthetics and of learning with Scriptures, he partook of the habits of mind of his own age, and particularly, as the preceding chapters of this dissertation have tried to show, of many of the ideas of the "reforming times" of the sixteenth century. This idea of imitation which is so closely linked to Milton's theory of learning and to his theory of the function and "use" of poetry is very similar indeed to the ideal of education developed in the sixteenth century by such men as Elyot, Ascham, and Spenser, and reinforced by less systematic but tacit and influential agreement of such men as Sidney and Fulke Greville. This concern for the education of the whole man in "gentle and virtuous discipline" both as a religious matter and as a means of training men as good magistrates in the civil society of the nation chosen as the vessel of religious reformation was one of the primary concerns of the Elizabethans as it was later for Milton. The usual label applied to treatises which attempt such reformation of education is "courtesy book," but the chief concern was for the religious and ethical development of a Christian from whom good works would flow. As Ruth Mohl in her essay "The Theme of Paradise
Lost" has shown, Milton continued the tradition of the
courtesy or conduct books of the Renaissance—the tradition
in which Spenser had also written his epic, The Faerie
Queene. It should be observed, however, that Milton was
probably emulating not the details or specific recommendations
of the earlier writers of educational tracts, but rather
the "reforming spirit" of the sixteenth-century Englishmen
as he thought of them. Milton followed them not in details
or techniques, but rather in the exercise of his own reason
as to the best means of training up men who would be good
public servants because they were enlightened Christians
acting in the spirit of God's truth. Whatever his manner of
continuing this tradition, the tradition is worth observing,
particularly as it influenced that part of Spenser's
Protestant epic which is concerned with conduct or "Courtesy"
as the synthesis and the means of learning or acquiring
the several "morall virtues." In fact, since Spenser does
represent the outstanding attempt among Elizabethans to
synthesize this ethical ideal of education in an epic, and
since Milton paid tribute to that epic and to the manner
in which Spenser taught by examples, Spenser's treatment of
the subject must be the focal point for the combination of
the several threads of the Elizabethan tradition of Christian
learning which is one part of the subject of this disser-
tation.

Among the most incandescent of the "reforming" spirits
of the sixteenth century, and perhaps the one to whom later
English writers on conduct owed most, was Roger Ascham.
His awareness of England's role as God's chosen vessel of reformation is well known:

We have cause also in England to beware of unkindness, who have had in so few years the candle of God's word so oft lightened, so oft put out, and yet will venture by our unthankfulness in doctrine and sinful life, to leese again light, candle, candlestick and all.

God keep us in his fear; God graft in us the true knowledge of his word, with a forward will to follow it, and so to bring forth the sweet fruits of it; and then shall he preserve us by his grace from all manner of terrible days. ¹⁶

He was so much committed to the idea of learning from concrete examples that in this as in his idea of England's role in the Reformation, he anticipates Milton's reasons no less than his conclusions. Ascham even considered it a serious fault of the Cambridge system of teaching, a fault happily corrected in "his own time," that students read "the precepts of Aristotle without the examples of other authors." ¹⁷ He defines "Imitatio" in a sense in which Milton implies its use:

Imitation is a faculty to express lively and perfectly that example which ye go about to follow. And of itself it is large and wide; for all the works of nature, in a manner, be examples for art to follow. ¹⁸

He cites Erasmus's wish that other scholars would follow Macrobius's example "to write out and join together, where the one doth imitate the other" the use which two or more authors have made of the same theme or similar materials, the better to understand the fashion in which good authors
have followed examples. Even in this Ascham anticipates Milton's insistence upon the spirit of a work and the purpose of the entire work rather than an over-narrow construction of limited texts. ¹⁹

Spenser's explanation of the plan of The Faerie Queene included in the letter to Raleigh reads as if it were an answer to Ascham's wishes concerning the "examples" from other authors to accompany Aristotle's precepts. The purpose of the book is, of course, that of the conduct or courtesy books:

The generall end therefore of all the books is to fashion a gentleman or noble person in gentle discipline: Which for that I conceived should be most plausible and pleasing, being coloured with an historicall fiction, the which the most part of men delight to read, rather for variety of matter, then for profile of the ensample: I chose the historye of king Arthure, as most fitte for the excellency of his person...In which I have followed the antique Poets historicall, first Homere, who in the Persons of Agamemnon and Ulysses hath ensampled a good governour and a vertuous man, the one in his Ilias, the other in his Odysseis: then Virgil, whose like intention was to doe in the person of Aeneas: after him Ariosto comprised them both in his Orlando: and lately Tasso disservered them againe, and formed both parts in two persons, namely that part which they in Philosophy call Ethice, or vertues of a private man, coloured in his Rinaldo: The other named Politice in his Godfreido. By ensample of which excellente Poets, I labour to pourtraict in Arthure, before he was king, the image of a brave knight, perfected in the twelve private morall vertues, as Aristotle hath devised, the which is the purpose of the first twelve books. ²⁰

Spenser then proceeds to explain why he has chosen to set forth in an epic poem doctrine by "ensample" rather than by precept. The purpose of his letter and the terms in which it is couched make clear his purpose of instructing
through poetry; and both the letter to Raleigh and the text of *The Faerie Queene* make clear Spenser's Christian ethical doctrine. The Red Crosse Knight as the champion of Holiness who must rescue Una's parents from the dragon. Satan, of course—is an illustration of the precept, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness..." The prerequisite is, of course, a strengthening in the understanding of truth, as Ruskin pointed out:21 Holiness is impotent without Truth; or, as Milton writes in *De Doctrina Christiana*.

The first of those attributes which show the inherent nature of God, is TRUTH.22

Milton also points out.

No one, however, can have right thoughts of God, with nature or reason alone as his guide, independent of the word, or message of God.23

Professor Greenlaw has treated Milton's use of Spenser's legend of Temperance in such a way as to indicate Milton's recognition of Spenser's essentially religious purpose.24 Even chastity and friendship, the subjects of Books III and IV of *The Faerie Queene*, may easily be interpreted as examples of the way in which God's grace manifests itself in the virtuous acts of those who are filled with Christian love and who act freely in Christian brotherhood, continence, and high-minded purposefulness. Though Milton considered justice to be the virtue, or habit of mind, which was the queen of the virtues,25 justice is nevertheless an attained habit of mind, the ability and will to judge properly
according to degrees. The prerequisite for the exercise of justice is the ascertaining of truth, as Milton's Raphael advises the un fallen Adam and as Michael tries to instruct the fallen Adam. The final exemplar of this ascertaining of truth before passing judgment is, of course, Christ. Even the Scriptures, as Milton affirms in the De Doctrina Christiana, are to be carefully examined to determine the meaning of the spirit of the whole as a prerequisite to judgment, as Chapter 6 has shown.

The particular Book of The Faerie Queene which is pertinent to this dissertation is that which follows the tradition of the conduct books and which is primarily concerned with learning -- the legend of Sir Calidore in Book VI. Though all the virtues involve all the other virtues by the very definition of Christian integrity and liberty and by the manner in which good deeds flow from the heart of the virtuous man, nevertheless the one virtue which is most immediately concerned with the means of learning and understanding, as Spenser treats the several virtues, is Courtesy.

The seven introductory stanzas of Book VI clearly indicate Spenser's fulfillment of the Reformation and Christian humanist idea of didactic poetry. The first stanza records the poet's delight in the "spacious" land
of Faery:

That I nigh ravisht with rare thoughts delight,
My tedious travell doe forget thereby;
And when I gin to feel the decay of might,
It strength to me supplies, and cheers my
dulled spright.

(F.Q., VI, Proem, 1)

This statement in itself might be a statement that the poet
delights in chivalric adventure, but the opening lines of
the second stanza make clear the interpretation which
Spenser had intended:

Such secret comfort, and such heavenly pleasures,
Ye sacred imps, that on Parnasso dwell,
And there the keeping have of learnings treasures,
Which doe all worldly riches farre excell,
Into the mindes of mortall men doe well,
And goodly fury into them infuse;
Guyde ye my footing, and conduct me well
In these strange waiues, where never foote did use,
Ne none can find, but who was taught them by the Muse.

(F.Q., VI, Proem, 2)

If the language echoes Chaucer, 26 the idea of the sacred
learning which poetry conveys is Christian and Neo-Platonic
and looks forward to Milton's invocations for divine guidance
in writing "things unattempted yet." The third stanza of
this "Proem" continues the idea:

Revele to me the sacred nursery
Of vertue, which with you doth there remaine,
Where it in silver bowre does hidden ly
From view of men, and wicked worlds disdaine.
Since it at first was by the Gods with paine
Planted in earth, being deriv'd at first
From heavenly seedes of bounty soveraine,
And by them long with carefull labour nurst,
Till it to ripenesse grew, and forth to honour burst.

(F.Q., VI, Proem, 3)

This idea of a "bowre" secluded from the world in which the
"seedes" of virtue, planted by God's grace in this unlikely earthly soil, grow only with careful tending is a reminder of the Biblical injunctions against worldliness and a statement of the theme of Book VI of The Faerie Queene -- the manner, that is, in which the "seedes" are to be cultivated so that they may "to honour burst."

The fourth stanza states Spenser's adherence to the historical and religious primitivism of the English Reformation. "Courtesie" is identified as one of the greatest and fairest of the virtues,

Which though it on a lowly stalk doe bowre,
Yet brancheth forth in brave nobilitie,
And spreads it selfe through all civilitie:
Of which though present age doe plenteous seeme,
Yet being matcht with plaine Antiquitie,
Ye will them all but fayne showes esteeme,
Which carry colours faire, that feeble eyes misdeme.

(F.Q., VI, Proem, 4)

He reiterates the idea, and prepares to apply the meaning to Elizabeth and to Elizabeth's "Faery Land" which attempts to recapture the primitive simplicity of what Fulke Greville was to call "plain dealing" and Milton "primitive brightness." Chapter 4 of this dissertation has had occasion to discuss the manner in which Elizabethan Englishmen identified the crown with the Protestant cause and with the defense of the Reformation, and the manner in which both were identified with the recovery of "antiquity."
In the fifth stanza Spenser contrasts the reality of simple primitive courtesy with the false appearance of
"forgeries"

Fashion'd to please the eies of them, that pas,
Which see not perfect things but in a glas:
Yet is that glasse so gay, that it can blynd
The wisest sight, to thinke gold that is bras.
But vertues seat is deepe within the mynd,
And not in outward shows, but inward thought defynd.

(F.Q., VI, Proem, 5)

The virtue Courtesy is therefore a Christian virtue which
is a part of the kingdom of heaven; and the kingdom of
heaven is within each soul.

The final two stanzas of the "Proem" pay tribute to
Queen Elizabeth as the model and exemplar of true courtesy.
As Spenser conceives the virtue, he says that it "meriteth
indeed a higher name," and draws an implied analogy between
the fact that Courtesy spreads through all civility and
the manner in which Elizabeth as a model of the virtues is
also "uplifted" from "low to high." In other words, the
virtue which Elizabeth exemplifies, her return to the
primitive past and to primitive Christianity, is the source
of her greatness. The final tribute to Elizabeth as the
source of virtues and the end of virtuous action and honour
is therefore a tribute to God's plan which Elizabeth
carries out—and for a Protestant the highest tribute which
could be paid Elizabeth:

Then pardon me, most dreaded Soveraine,
That from your selfe I doe this vertue bring,
And to your selfe doe it returne againe:
So from the Ocean all rivers spring,
And tribute backe repay as to their King.
Right so from you all goodly vertues well
Into the rest, which round about you ring...

(F.Q., VI, Proem, 7)
This pattern of the "ring" in which all virtues go out from the earthly exemplar, the Queen, and return to her corresponds, of course, to God's effective manner of working in the universe: all things go out from God and return to Him if not depraved. Elizabeth therefore, to use Milton's terms, constitutes the "sensible" object which man by "conning over" can use as a means of emulating the virtues which will assure his own salvation and, through that salvation, his own complete development.

Spenser's choice of Queen Elizabeth as his "ensample" does not, as we shall see, invalidate his Christian purpose or his sincerity, but his choice does determine the chivalric idiom in which he expresses his purpose. The twelve cantos of Book VI reiterate the touchstones of simplicity, of direct appeal to the Christian light, and particularly the necessity for defining one's "inward thoughts" as a means of realizing the kingdom of God which is within each human mind.

Spenser's choice of Queen Elizabeth as the catalyst and "ensample" is also typical of the Elizabethan tradition of Christian learning. Elkin Calhoun Wilson in England's Eliza has summarized the various elements which contributed to the religious, patriotic, and chivalric idealization of Elizabeth, and has shown briefly the manner in which Spenser has applied most of these elements in the Faerie Queens. As Wilson observes, Elizabeth was regularly represented as the epitome of all the virtues, as Astrea, or divine justice, and heavenly mercy. Spenser, among others,
so represents her in Book V, canto i, stanza v, and again as Mercilla in Book V, canto x. At the same time and as another aspect of these qualities of justice and mercy, Elizabeth was often represented as a Biblical restorer and saviour of her people in that Elizabeth had established true religion and had saved England from the superstition, of Catholicism and the tyranny of Philip II and of Spain.  

The ideals of justice and Protestant reform were often combined in such a way as to celebrate Elizabeth as God's chosen vessel to lead her people by virtuous example back to the golden age; and allusions to Elizabeth as Judith or Deborah often combine the idea of the golden age with the Protestant notion of returning to primitive unembellished Christianity. Yet this emphasis upon Protestant and golden-age simplicity did not preclude the transferring of many of the old formulae of worship of the Virgin Mary to the praise of the Virgin Queen. Dowland's songs are but one example of this transfer. Less obvious but probably more powerful because of traditional associations were the continuation of the symbols of purity and beauty which had been used in the worship of the Virgin Mary and which were now transferred to the extolling of Elizabeth. The rose, for example, had been used for centuries as such a symbol; now to the idea of purity and beauty characteristic of the Virgin Mary were added the political overtones of the peace which the Tudor settlement had procured—the twining of the Lancastrian and Yorkist roses. Above all Elizabeth
was the Queen of peace; and the idea of peace was both the aim of her policy and the test, religious as well as political, of the rectitude of her reign. Symbolic representations of Elizabeth which combine religious and political allusions were therefore considerably more than abject flattery: they were often symbolic Christian "en-samples" of the ethical and political virtues which Protestant England must live by. Milton's vision of England as a kind of young David is both a summary of this tradition and an example of the kind of imagery which the tradition employed:

Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant Nation rousing herself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks: Methinks I see her as an Eagle musing her mighty youth, and kindling her undazzl'd eyes at the full midday beam; purging and unsaling her long abused sight at the fountain it self of heav'ly radiance; while the whole noise of timorous and flocking birds, with those also that love twilight, flutter about, amaz'd at what she means, and in their envious gabble would prognosticat a year of sects and schisms.  

The "invincible locks" recalls, of course, the Old Testament hero who was God's champion, Samson, the Hebrew Hercules whose ultimate victory over himself and then over his enemies was so different in its implications from the apotheosis of Hercules—a victory which foreshadowed Christ's victory over Satan, as Milton's Paradise Regained and Samson Agonistes both illustrate. The combination of this figure with the reference to the eagle recalls the psalms in praise of God's help to those who follow in His ways, particularly
Psalms 103:5, "So that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's." The whole idea of recovering sight after blindness, consciousness after sleep, strength after weakness, light after darkness is a reminder of the duty of each man to attempt to "regain to know God aright by repairing the ruins of our first parents" and an affirmation of Milton's faith in the unadorned simplicity of the early Christians. This simplicity and the beginning allusion to the Samson-Hercules heroic figure is a reminder of the Golden Age conceived in Protestant and Christian terms. In just such patterns as this one of Milton's, the Elizabethans, particularly Spenser, made pagan learning serve to corroborate Biblical truth— even that truth which requires ascetic plainness.

It is within the framework of this prevailing attitude toward Elizabeth as an embodiment of virtue and a chosen vessel of the Lord as saviour of her Protestant people that Book VI must be interpreted, for of all the virtues which Spenser treated, "Courtesy," as he conceived it, is a Christ-like, humble, selfless virtue. It is also within this pattern of the working out or realizing of the virtue "Courtesy" that Spenser establishes the Elizabethan ideal of the manner in which a Christian learns. The glorification of a remote and idealized simple past, the rejection of an overelaborate present, and the embodiment of excellence as well as hope for the future in the person of the Queen; these are some of the elements which Spenser harmonizes
by means of his idealization of Elizabeth. Pastoral elements are likely to partake of the imagery and to command the reverence of the Psalms no less than the learning of those who know the pastoral poems in Greek and Latin. Native elements and highly idealized Platonic elements and images not only alternate: they merge and are one, as Wilson points out, in terms of the prevailing attitude toward Elizabeth. Wilson has clearly demonstrated the fact that Spenser shared this attitude and gave it its most memorable and perhaps its most influential statement in the Faerie Queen and in the April eclogue of the Shepheardes Calender and in Colin Clouts Come Home Againe. What he has not done and what no other scholar has as yet done is to demonstrate the psychological process by which Spenser expected his readers to learn and in terms of which he hoped to teach; and it is one hypothesis of this dissertation that Milton, though he (along with most other Englishmen of his day) rejected the reigning sovereign as example and catalyst, nevertheless followed the Elizabethan epic tradition, and that this tradition is centered about the idea of teaching. A careful examination of the action as well as the images of Book VI of the Faerie Queen is therefore a necessary part of defining this Christian, Protestant, and didactic epic tradition.
CHAPTER 9

"ENSAMPLES": THE SEVERAL EPISODES OF BOOK VI AS A CODE OF CHRISTIAN LEARNING

Among the few likely historical identifications of Spenser's characters in The Faerie Queene is that of Calidore with Sir Philip Sidney. Upton's reason for deciding upon this identification is more important than the naming of the person and is in fact quite consonant with Fulke Greville's tribute to Sidney discussed in Chapter 7, and with Spenser's tribute to Elizabeth as an exalted Queen because she was the true mirror of virtues. Upton writes:

Methinks by no far-fetched allusions, we might discover pictured out to us that truly courteous knight Sir Philip Sidney, in the character of Sir Calidore; whose name leads us to consider the many graceful and goodly endowments that heaven peculiarly gave him. 1

Fulke Greville, as Chapter 7 has shown, based his commendation of Sidney on the "goodly endowments" of "the president of noblesse and of chevalree" and the use which he had made of them. For the purpose of this dissertation, the qualities rather than the individual man are important. It must be remembered that Spenser specifically warns in the letter to Raleigh against judging poetry by the methods of the "historiographer," and he has specifically said that he "shadows" Elizabeth in several characters and in a variety of episodes. The meaning of this warning is clear: Spenser uses whatever examples illustrate the
lesson at hand, but he does not attempt a running historical parallelism between the episodes in *The Faerie Queene* and the events of Elizabeth's life or of Sidney's. If an episode illustrates a point, he uses it; if an episode connected with some other facet of his experience, either direct or vicarious, illustrates another idea, he is likely to connect that episode with his character who represents the virtue exemplified. Josephine Waters Bennett, after a good deal of conjecture on the order of composition of the earlier books of *The Faerie Queene*, points out that Spenser's way of composing Book VI was obviously eclectic.²

Out of the controversy concerning the possible identities of Calidore there has emerged one conviction on which most of the contenders on both sides would agree. Everyone agrees that courtesy to the Elizabethans meant the complete man, the gentlemanly and ethical ideal, acting and thinking as the champion and protector of virtue. Ray Heffner has suggested that Spenser meant both Sidney and Essex and that the Blatant Beast (whom Jonson is reported to have said Spenser intended for the Puritans) is actually bigotry in any form, which Sidney in general and Essex in particular opposed in favor of something like Milton's and Lord Brooke's idea of Christian liberty to speak from one's heart.³ The one salient point is that Spenser did intend to present the accomplished and complete champion, and that his adventures do have something to do with the manner in which the Christian gentleman learns and the use which he makes of that learning, as this chapter will attempt to show.
The framework for Calidore's adventures has already been discussed briefly in the preceding chapter. Just as the "Proem" of Book VI makes clear the essential doctrine on which the sixth Book is based and illustrates the manner in which chivalric and pagan elements are made to communicate Christian truth, so also the final stanza of the "proem" foreshadows the pattern on which the action of the several champions of "Courtesey" is to be constructed:

Then pardon me, most dreaded soveraine,
That from your selfe I doe this vertue bring,
And to your selfe doe it returne againe:
So from the Ocean all rivers spring,
And tribute backe repay as to their King.
Right so from you all goodly vertues well
Into the rest, which round about you ring,
Faire Lords and Ladies, which about you dwell,
And doe adorne your Court, where courtesies excall.  
\textit{(E.Q.,VI,Proem,vii)}

The idea of the "ring" is the pattern within which the several actions take place. The allusion to rivers in the final stanza of the "proem" echoes, as Upton long ago pointed out, Ecclesiastes 1:7.\textsuperscript{4} At the same time the likening of Elizabeth to the ocean and her courtiers to rivers is a reminder of Plato's water cycle,\textsuperscript{5} and of the economy of nature which Drayton celebrated in the \textit{Polyolbion}.\textsuperscript{6} The notion that the sovereign should be the source of goodness to whom goodness returns is a correspondence to the theological notion that God is the source of all excellence and that all things not depraved return to God. Just as a gardener causes his plants to grow by fitting their culture to the procession of the seasons,
so man, if he would learn, must understand the several "degrees" of emanation from God and must by "orderly conning over" of the sensible objects and examples which lie within his ken come to learn those truths which will enable him to avoid depravity, or, in Milton's phrase, "to regain to know God aright."

Milton later, in making use of this article of Christian belief, constructs his epic and the universe which it describes as well as the theological pattern of man's fall and Christ's "regaining the blissful seat" on the idea that all things descend from God and ascend again to Him. Even more important for the purpose of this dissertation is the fact that Milton insists upon man's recognizing this Christian "ring" or Jacob's ladder as the pattern within which man both before and after the fall must learn. Before the fall, as Chapter 1 has shown, man learns by proceeding from center to circumference in full confidence of his way and of the reliability of his observations. After the fall, as Michael's instructions and Christ's example in Paradise Regained make clear, man must still rely upon this pattern of God's providence and ascend upward by "inwardly defining" his own thoughts, just as Christ overcomes Satan in an ascending order of understanding, as Chapter 2 has shown.

The paradox that victory can come through renunciation is also related to the idea of "degree" and of "use" as these related ideas were apparently universally understood
by Elizabethans. Later chapters will consider particular aspects of these ideas as they established the tradition within which Milton wrote, but to illustrate the particular point in relation to both Spenser and Milton, let Shakespeare's Friar Lawrence speak:

The earth that's nature's mother is her tomb;  
What is her burying grave that is her womb,  
And from her womb children of divers kind  
We suckling on her natural bosom find,  
Many for many virtues excellent,  
None but for some and yet all different.  
O mickle is the powerful grace that lies  
In herbs, plants, stones, and their true qualities:  
For nought so vile that on the earth doth live  
But to the earth some special good doth give,  
Nor aught so good that strain'd from that fair use  
Revolts from true birth, stumbling on abuse:  
Virtue itself turns vice, being misapplied;  
And vice sometimes by action dignified.  
Within the infant rind of this small flower  
Poison hath residence and medicine power:  
For this, being smelt, with that part cheers each part;  
Being tasted, slays all senses with the heart.  
Two such opposed kings encamp them still  
In man as well as herbs, grace and rude will;  
And where the worser is predominant,  
Full soon the canker death eats up the plant.  
(Romeo and Juliet, II, III, 9-30)

Here, too, is the "ring" pattern in terms of the earth as womb and grave of all growing things, and the related idea that each created thing has a "use" which must be properly fulfilled if it is not to prove deadly; and finally there is the application to "grace and rude will" as the two "opposed kings" ruling in men even as "poison" and "medicine" in the flower. Even the imagery which Friar Lawrence employs is similar to that used by Spenser and Milton to describe the process by which man cultivates the divinely
planted seed, or "grace." The relationship of this passage to the theme of the play, civil strife settled only by the death of the lovers, is too obvious to require comment. Whereas Friar Lawrence's statement is a comparatively bald outline of aphorisms, Spenser's is a series of "examples" which illustrate how each man cultivates the grace within himself by "telling o'er" the points of husbandry; and Milton's development of related ideas in *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* is a direct appeal to the fountainhead of all wisdom and all use within degree, the "greater man" whose debates with Satan illustrate the manner of determining "truth" as the basis for action and choice.

Canto 1 of Book VI illustrates the manner in which Spenser conceived of the operation of virtue in this "ring" pattern. Though the entire Book, and particularly the Mount Acidale scene, also illustrate this same idea, Canto 1 serves as an example which illustrates the several facets of Spenser's idea of imitation within "degree." It is therefore worthy of detailed observation and analysis.

The encounter between Calidore, the first of several champions of Courtesy whom Spenser introduces, and Artegall, the champion of Justice, serves the dual purpose of providing a transition, or perhaps "link" would be a better term, between Book V and Book VI and also an example of the courteous encounter of two knights; and the use which Calidore makes of the occasion is central to the purpose of the entire book: Calidore wishes to learn as much as
possible before he undertakes his quest. First he inquires courteously concerning Artegaill's quest, and then concerning the Blatant Beast. Calidore's identification of the Blatant Beast follows the heraldic pattern of identifying the ancestry of the opponent and echoes the epic and heroic conventions in its epithets which indicate function and outstanding characteristics:

Of Cerberus whilome he was begot,
And fell Chimaera in her darksome den,
Through fowle commixture of his filthy blot;
Where he was fostred long in Stygian fen,
Till he to perfect ripenesse grew, and then
Into this wicked world he forth was sent,
To be the plague and scourge of wretched men:
Whom with vile tongue and venemous intent
He sore doth wound, and bite, and cruelly torment.

(F.Q., VI, 1, 8)

Here the Blatant Beast, only one aspect of which is roughly equivalent to a personified Scandal, is described as the very antithesis of the courtesy of speech which Calidore and Artegaill illustrate in their instructive verbal exchange. Like Milton's Melancholy in L'Allegro, who boasts the same origin, the Blatant Beast has been spawned monstrously in hell as one of Satan's devilish instruments for harrying and confusing "wretched man" in this "wicked world." The function of this beast is to make more difficult fallen man's required task of separating appearance and reality. In theological terms, the beast, like one described in Daniel or in Revelations, uses his "thousand
tongues" to pervert the God-given faculty of speech or discourse in such a way as to confuse rather than to inform—
to "make the worse appear the better reason," as Milton's Belial was later to do. Spenser here states the principle upon which Milton also insisted—that an action in itself or in its outer appearance may be essentially evil even though it may have many characteristics which are usually associated with good or virtuous actions: here the "thousand tongues" agree, just as Milton's "Devil with Devil damn'd/
Firm concord holds.": what determines goodness or badness is the purpose for which the tongues agree and the devils concur. That purpose is well planned strategy to secure evil, to increase Satan's kingdom by "depraving" those things which proceed from God and which should, according to God's laws, return to Him. Artegaill, the champion of Justice, is not depraved:

But I that knew my selfe from perill free,
Did nought regard his malice nor his powre,
But he the more his wicked poyson forth did poure.
(F.Q., VI, i, 9)

The danger lies not in the external threat but in the internal weakness of the one who does not, like Spenser's Artegaill and Calidore and Milton's Christ, know himself "free" of the "perill." The episodes of Book VI proceed to indicate the fashion in which each man can come to that knowledge of the heaven-planted "seedes" of virtue in himself which make him "free." The ultimate religious
significance, of course, is that the virtuous man enjoys Christian liberty.

The first illustration of this self-knowledge is Calidore's first encounter with Briana's Senescal, Maleffort, who has bound the Squire and is shamefully using the Squire's "Damzell" when Calidore challenges him. The Squire has attempted to flee from Maleffort.

For little bootes against him hand to reare,  
(F.Q., VI, 1, 16)

The result of the Squire's attempt to flee has been disastrous. Calidore steadfastly and coolly stands his ground and pursues Maleffort to Briana's castle as soon as Maleffort begins to waver. There he kills both Maleffort, the "lumpe of sin," (stanza 23) and the porter and scatters Briana's other retainers. Briana, the instigator of the whole shameful custom which has bred this conflict, then berates Calidore bitterly:

False traytor Knight, (sayd she) no Knight at all,  
But scorne of armes that hast with guilty hand  
Murdred my men, and slaine my Seneschall;  
Now comest thou to rob my house unman,  
And spoile my selfe, that can not thee withstand?  
Yet doubt thou not, but that some better Knight  
Then thou, that shall thy treason understand,  
Will it avenge, and pay thee with thy right:  
And if none do, yet shame shall thee with shame requight.  
(F.Q., VI, 1, 25)

Calidore immediately replies by showing the fallacy of Briana's argument.
Much was the Knight abashed at that word;
Yet answert thus; Not unto me the shame,
But to the shamefull doer it afford.
Bloud is no blemish; for it is no blame
To punish those, that doe deserve the same;
But they that breake bands of civilitie,
And wicked customes make, those doe defame
Both noble armes and gentle curtesie.
No greater shame to man then inhumanitie.
(F.Q., VI, 1, 26)

Though "abashed," Calidore carefully disposes of each of
Briana's arguments in a manner later followed by Milton's
Christ. The incurring of "shame," the defamation of
"armes," and the traducing of "curtesie" are not to be
judged by any overt act as a separate entity, but rather
by the circumstances and motives which evoke the act.
Calidore therefore does precisely what the "president of
Chivalrie," Sidney, did in his defense of poetry and
what Milton did in the passages in which Christ makes clear
the fallacies in Satan's arguments: Calidore raises the
level of the argument by enlarging the framework and thus
showing the fallacies in Briana's accusations. Briana's
primary error from which all her others inevitably proceed
is her effort to gain Crudor's love at the expense of
humane behavior. Calidore urges her to "foregoe" the evil
custom of requiring ladies' tresses and knights' beards,

And doe in stead thereof mild curt'sie showe
To all, that passe. That shall you glory gaine
More then his love, which thus ye seekes t'obtaine.
(F.Q., VI, 1, 27)
Just as the details of Satan's speech and many of his isolated arguments are valid in *Paradise Regained*, Briana's accusations appear on the surface to be technically within the chivalric code. To establish the fallacy in her arguments, Calidore must make clear the source of the trouble, which is Briana's misdirected and wrongly used love for Crudor. Calidore bears patiently and with consummate courtesy the jibes against his exhortation, and observes all the rules and customs of chivalric courtesy in awaiting the arrival of Briana's champion. Despite Crudor's initial boasts and insults, Calidore after he has gained victory over Crudor spares his life on the condition that he improve his behavior toward errant knights, swear to aid ladies, and

...take Briana for his loving fere,
Without dowre or composition;
But to release his former foule condition.

(FQ, VI, i, 43)

The "foule condition" is the provision which Crudor has stipulated as the price of yielding his love to Briana, the requirement that she exact ladies' tresses and knights' beards. It is only after Calidore has so magnanimously provided for Briana that she is

All overcome with infinite affect,
For his exceeding courtesie, that pearst
Her stubborne hart with inward depe effect,

(FQ, VI, i, 45)
As Calidore has insisted that Crudor take Briana "withouten dowre or composition" on the principle that courtesy and good deeds are not "for hyre," so he practices what he preaches and refuses all reward. He does recompense the wronged Squire and his "damzell," remains long enough to let his wounds heal, and then "to his first quest he passe[y] forth along."

Just as the "Proem" to Book VI makes clear the pattern and states the ethical and religious intention which Spenser attaches to his legend of courtesy, so the first Canto illustrates both that pattern and the means by which Spenser furnishes "ensamples." The subject and the legend are cast in chivalric terms. Literary sources and anecdotes from contemporary England are all subordinated to the ethical and religious purpose of the book. This first Canto of Book VI, the encounter between Calidore and Crudor with its surrounding circumstances, is a positive example of the manner in which "lowly" courtesy must spread by a kind of beneficent contagion: even Briana reforms as a result of Calidore's strict observance of the ethical and religious core of courtesy. Though Calidore also behaves according to the chivalric code of manners which Crudor and Briana profess, the manners are in Calidore, as they are not in Crudor or Briana, an "outward and visible sign of inward grace,
a natural flowering of the "seedes" planted by God and properly cultivated by the virtuous knight. The ring or "Jacob's-ladder" pattern operates first in the courteous and instructive discourse between Artegall and Calidore, and then in the brave and moderate steadfastness and prudence which brings Calidore victory. Courtesy consists of well-informed, prudent, courageous observance of the golden rule,

Who will not mercie unto others shew,
How can he mercy ever hope to have?
(FG, VI, 1, 42)

To this rule Calidore adds Christian mercy, even to Crudor when Crudor asks mercy, and uses the grant to reform the people who have delayed his quest for the Blatant Beast. Thus the flower of courtesy, sprung from a lowly "stalke," "spreads it selfe through all civilitie," and Calidore in Canto 1 provides an "ensample" of the "going out" of the virtue courtesy from Elizabeth and her court. What begins in conventional courtly terms ends in a statement of the golden rule and Christian mercy.

In setting forth this "ensample," Spenser makes use of a series of contrasts. The contrast between Calidore's gracious kindness and Crudor's spiteful, arrogant pride is a surface justification, at least. There is also a sharp contrast between Calidore's smooth and charming speech and Briana's harsh, berating, nagging tone in stanzas 27 and 28.
The idea that good use of language is indicative of good character and of virtue goes back to Cicero's idea of the good man speaking, and was shared by both Milton and Ascham. Spenser does not labor the point but lets the characters speak for themselves. Perhaps most significant of all the contrasts is that between the meek Calidore and the assured, cruel Crudor, for Calidore wishes to learn and meekly recognizes his own limitations, whereas Crudor proceeds ruthlessly according to his preconceived and prideful notions.

This first canto also illustrates another characteristic of the virtuous man: because he is aware of his own limitations and of his need for learning, he is constantly groping forward amid many interruptions and distractions. Even Calidore's quest for the Blatant Beast is a quest for something which he must learn about. As the champion of courtesy, he must constantly dispose of interruptions without ignoring his humane duty toward those whom he encounters in the way, and yet without being permanently deflected from his main business. Each of the interruptions constitutes another problem in sifting truth.

Calidore's other adventures illustrate this constant sifting of truth and falsehood, always with sturdy respect for the necessity for truth as the condition for action. In his encounter with Tristram in Canto ii, he must decide whether or not Tristram has been justified in killing the boorish
The chivalric code technically condemned an encounter between a knight and one who had not been knighted; and, of course, murder is a crime under most circumstances. Calidore decides that Tristram's action is that of a good man whose action flowed from a virtuous mind and heart because Tristram had killed the boorish knight who would yield to no lesser persuasion in an effort to protect the desolate lady whom the boorish knight was harassing. It is within the Christian framework of truth and humanity that the free Christian champion acts out of the free flowing of his heart: this is the only true application of the idea of courtesy as a recognition of that which is due each "degree." Codes and even legal systems are mere artificial "props" unless the soul is moved freely from its own divine "seed" of virtue to act nobly.

This same necessity for truth as a prerequisite for choice and act is illustrated repeatedly throughout the entire twelve cantos. Calidore illustrates positively the manner in which even under the most trying and exasperating circumstances one must behave with self-restraint, even self-negation, if he is to arrive at the truth. When Pastorella must be rescued from the "brigants," for example, Calidore is not permitted the clean-cut luxury of a showdown fight with a dragon or an opposing champion. He must first wheedle the despicable Coridon into leading him to the
vicinity of the "brigants'" island hideout, then must restrain him from killing the thieving shepherds, who are the only ones through whom Calidore can find Pastorella, and finally must overcome vastly superior numbers by using a Ulysses-like intelligence as well as his good right arm. Negatively the failure to ascertain truth before deciding or acting is shown to be disastrous in the effort of Timias to rescue Mirabella.

Throughout Book VI Spenser reiterates the theme of the necessity for basing all action upon truth, and upon the necessity for sifting truth, for separating appearance from reality as a necessary precaution which must precede choice and action. In Canto vii, which Spenser seems to have planned as a negative illustration to set forth the idea that ignoble deeds betray baseness regardless of the rank of the person who commits them, Spenser presents the reversal of the "ring" pattern. Turpina's hypocrisy and cowardice "deprave" two knights who might otherwise have achieved virtue. Spenser begins the episode with a statement of the precept:

Like as the gentle hart it selfe bewrayes,
In doing gentle deedes with franke delight,
Even so the baser mind it selfe displayes
In canred malice and revengefull spight.
For to maligne, t'envie, t'use shifting slyt,
Be arguments of a vile donghill mind,
Which what it dare not doe by open might,
To worke by wicked treason wayses doth find,
By such discourteous deedes discovering his base kind.

(FG, VI, vii, 1.)
Turpine persuades two inexperienced and precipitate young knights to undertake "vengeance" against Arthur for the supposed wrongs which Arthur has done to Blandina. They commit their first error, and a serious one, in being tempted by the reward which Turpine promises them. Virtue, being of God, is not for hire. The knights commit their next serious error in taking Turpine's word at face value and in acting upon his statement rather than upon truth. Arthur, on the contrary, even with all the evidence against Turpine, has tested the truth of the accusations against him before he undertook punitive and preventive action at the Castle of the Ford. After shouting an insulting challenge to Arthur, the two inexperienced knights attack Arthur. One tilts at Arthur and misses; the other shatters his lance and receives his death blow from Arthur. Just as Arthur is about to dispatch the second of his attackers, the youth begs mercy and explains Turpine's duplicity. Arthur spares his life, but requires that he bring Turpine back to Arthur. The young knight fetches Turpine by promising the coward to show him Arthur dead. When Turpine and his hireling henchman return, they find Arthur asleep unarmed and unattended, since the Salvage has gone to the woods to gather fruits and nuts. Turpine suggests that they murder Arthur, but the foolish young man, though
mistaken and rash, is not a traitor: he will keep his word. He holds Turpine. The Salvage on his return wakens Arthur as he swings his club. Arthur starts up; Turpine falls to the ground, turning craven again. Arthur berates him and hangs him up by the heels to advertise his disgrace. The position is symbolic of Turpine's reversal of the "ring" which should return to the source of virtue and goodness but which, if depraved, returns to the source of all evil.

As we have already observed in Chapter 7, Milton codified the theological framework within which the examples, both real and fictional, of the Reformation humanist Christian tradition were apparently interpreted. Truth is the outstanding characteristic of God, according to Milton's De Doctrina Christiana, and, conversely, nothing is true which is not of God. Also, as Chapter 6 has shown, the idea of Christian liberty and of virtue as the free flowing from the heart of a good man of the words, choices, and acts, all as a manifestation of God's grace, is an integral part of Milton's theological system and of the idea of the function of poetry and history, Milton's effort to outline only the minimum essentials of Christian doctrine, and his practise in his poetry of insisting upon only the essentials which Scripture insisted upon is perhaps partly responsible
for the fact that the Christian theology which he outlines is entirely consistent with the theory and practise of Spenser and Sidney and Fulke Greville. Certainly all three authors insisted upon the same use of examples and the same theological manner of "using" examples.

There is one clear example in Spenser's Book VI of *The Faerie Queene* of this fundamental agreement. Though less central to the purpose of either writer than the quest for truth as a prerequisite for virtuous action (which, of course, can be virtuous only if it brings the protagonist back to God within the "ring" or pendant circle in which all things descend from God and return to Him if not depraved), this example is sufficiently out of the way to demonstrate the pervasiveness of the tradition. The episode is that of Calidore's encounter with the wounded Alidine and his lady Priscilla. After having carried the wounded Alidine on his own back to the castle of Alidine's father, Calidore faces the necessity for reconciling Priscilla with her own family. Calidore accomplishes this gentlemanly act of saving the lady's reputation by telling what is essentially true but technically only a partial truth. He explains to Priscilla's father that he has rescued Priscilla from "feare of a discourteous knight" and avows that Priscilla has been "guiltlesse innocent"
since first he saw her. As a glance at the notes in the Variorum edition of Spenser indicates, the fact that Calidore, one of whose outstanding characteristics was the hatred of "leasing," should tell anything less than the whole truth on all occasions has bothered more than one commentator. Yet within the idea of Christian liberty, the spirit of truth is the criterion. Milton in the De Doctrina Christiana even goes so far as to affirm that there are no absolute denunciations of falsehood in Scripture, but only of "such violations of truth as are derogatory to the glory of God, or injurious to ourselves or to our neighbor." He connects this statement with the necessity for refraining from evil surmise and from slander. Spenser's illustration in the episode of Calidore's saving Alidine and Friscilla is an example of precisely this theological point, and it is so presented as to indicate that Calidore has indeed acted in the spirit of Christian truth.

Most of the episodes of Book VI illustrate a chain or "ring" of concomitant precepts concerning the performance of virtuous acts. To use the illustration of Tristram again, Calidore's recognizing Tristram's worth and granting his request that he be dubbed a squire acts as a release for Tristram's virtue. Tristram, in turn, will begin his own "ring" which will eventually return both Tristram and his trophies and honors back to the source of virtue. The baby
whom Calepine recues from the bear and whom Matilde passes off for her own child will become a powerful champion one day, Spenser promises, and hints in the word play ("be got" rather than "begot") at the remote consequences of good which every humane and reasonable deed may have. The rescue separates Calepine from Serena and the Salvage and leaves him lost and unarmed in the forest (Canto iv), but even this misfortune is temporary, Spenser shows.

Spenser usually indicates the qualities of a virtue in action by an example which contrasts the real with the apparent virtue. Thus the rescue of Calepine and Serena is an illustration of natural goodness operating almost entirely by instinct in contrast to Turpine's sophisticated depravity and cowardice. The "Salvage" man

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{cared not for dint of sword nor speere,} \\
\text{No more then for the stroke of strawes or bents:} \\
\text{For from his mothers wombe, which him did beare,} \\
\text{He was invulnerable made by Magicke leare.} \\
\text{(FG, VI, iv, 4)}
\end{align*}
\]

This natural goodness causes the "Salvage" to perform all the knightly deeds out of the goodness of his heart: he protects ladies in distress, serves his lord faithfully, is brave and self-sacrificing and resourceful. Though Spenser regrets the absence of the final crown of excellence which good discipline and good company would confer upon this noble creature, he recognizes the "degree" of nobility in the "Salvage":
What an easie thing is to descry
The gentle bloud, how ever it be wrapt
In sad misfortunes foule deformity
And wretched sorrowes, which have often hapt?
For howsoever it may grow mis-shapt,
Like this wyld man, being undisiciplynd,
That to all vertue it may seeme unapt,
Yet will it shew some sparkes of gentile mynd,
And at the last brake forth in his owne proper kynd.

That plainely may in this wyld man be red,

For certes he was borne of noble blood,
How ever by hard hap he hether came;

(FQ, VI, v, 1 and 2)

Serena states the criterion for judging the proper "degree"
of nobility and worth. She says in speaking of the "Salvage":

Amongst wilde beasts in desert forrests bred,
It is most strange and wonderfull to fynd
So milde humanity, and perfect gentle mynd.

(FQ, VI, v, 29)

The "Salvage" is known entirely by his works, for, as Serena says, he can "but by tokens speake." His works indicate the basis on which he is to be judged, and give religious and ethical emphasis to Spenser's statement concerning courtesy as a recognition of "degree":

What vertue is so fitting for a knight,
Or for a Ladie, whom a knight should love,
As Curtasie, to beare themselves aright
To all of each degree, as doth behove?
For whether they be placed high above,
Or low beneath, yet ought they well to know
Their good, that none them rightly may reprove
Of rudeness, for not yeelding what they owe:
Great skill it is such duties timely to bestow.

(FQ, VI, ii, 1)
This statement in itself might imply the petrified manners which still exist in diplomatic precedence. Spenser’s idea subordinates rather than contradicts such formal ideas of courtesy. Spenser’s meaning is not diametrically opposed to codes and systems of manners: he rather considers codes and systems artificial props unless they flow naturally from the soul:

 Thereto great helpe dame Nature selfe doth lend: 
 For some so goodly gratious are by kind, 
 That every action doth them much commend, 
 And in the eyes of men great liking find; 
 Which others, that have greater skill in mind, 
 Though they enforce themselves, cannot attaine.

 Yet praise likewise deserve good thewes, enforst with paine. 

(EP, VI, ii, 2)

Spenser frequently uses the same analogy or correspondence which Milton’s Raphael uses in indicating the manner in which Adam must learn, the analogy of the growing plant whose ultimate fruit serves a "use" for the higher orders of being. Calidore, Tristram, the Salvage, Pastorella, and particularly the Mount Acidale episode serve to combine this figure of speech of the growing plant with the pattern of the "ring." The growing plant is the product of the God-given "seed" of virtue which must in this world be carefully tended if it is to grow at all; and the "ring" is the understanding of "degree" in the scale of Christian as opposed to worldly values.
Certain implications of the Mount Acridale episode are clear only in the light of other parts of Book VI. One of these aspects, the one which most nearly concerns this dissertation in that it anticipates Milton's example of Christ's arguments with Satan in Paradise Regained, is that of victory over self, or Christian humility as the prerequisite for understanding truth or achieving harmony with God's moral order. The hermit from whom Serena and Timias seek a cure for their wounds inflicted by the Blatant Beast illustrates another aspect of natural courtesy, that which includes Christian "discipline" and therefore transcends the natural but undisciplined goodness of the "Salvage Man." The hermit is an old knight who has in his old age deliberately chosen his hermitage and a life of humble service to others in preference to the "forged showes" of a courtier's life. He behaves so courteously to his guests and with such "entire affection and appareance plaine" that he betrays his noble origin:

...he had bene a man of mickle name,
Renowned much in armes and derring doe:
(FG, VI, v, 37)

It is his disciplined mind and articulate good sense which find a cure for the inwardly "unsound" wounds upon which the Salvage man's herbs, so efficacious in healing Calepine's wounds, had had no effect.
So taking them apart into his cell,  
He to that point fit speaches gan to frame,  
As he the art of words knew wondrous well,  
And eke could doe, as well as say the same.  

In vaine of me ye hope for remedie,  
And I likewise in vaine doe salves to you applie.

For in your selfe your onely helpe doth lie,  
To heale your selves, and must proceed alone  
From your owne will, to cure your maladie.

First learne your outward sences to refraine  
From things, that stirre up fraile affection;  
Your eies, your eares, your tongue, your talk restraine  
From that they most affect, and in due terms containe.  

(FQ, VI, vi, 6-7)

The hermit then explains the origin of the Blatant Beast by whom the two have been wounded. Though the ancestry of the Beast differs from that given at the beginning of Book VI, the idea of monstrousness is still the same. The only way in which they may cure their wounds, the hermit advises, is to avoid "occasion," to

Abstaine from pleasure, and restraine your will,  
Subdue desire, and bridle loose delight,  
Use scanted diet, and forbearre your fill,  
Shun secrecie, and talke in open sight:  
So shall you soone repaire your present evill plight.  

(FQ, VI, vi, 14)

Having heeded this advice, Serena and Timias, Spenser records in the following stanza, were in "short space" healed.

The advice of the hermit, combining as it does Christian forbearance and self-restraint with social prudence, is the
only defence against the devilish instruments which distort and vilify and malign; and the advice comes from the man who combines natural goodness of the sort exemplified by the Salvage with discipline, simple courtesy, and learning. In Milton's terms, they must overcome Satan's works in themselves before they can arrive at their own fulfillment.

The cure of Timias and Serena, begun in Canto v and completed at the beginning of Canto vi, is a statement in religious and ethical terms of the Christian idea of self-realization by self-renunciation. It involves the relationship between deeds and words, and of both deeds and words to noble origin or "degree," or, in other words, self-fulfillment.

Spenser, throughout Book VI, makes clear by contrast and comparison the essential balance which the ascertaining of truth requires—a balance which is to be gained only in the light of repeated Christian self-examination, "light unto light," and with the help of Christian grace. As Spenser presents this idea, he permits it to emerge in his several characterizations. The ascertaining of truth does not depend solely upon intellectual method, though both intellect and method may be profitably employed, as by the Hermit, Calidore, and Arthur. On the other hand, intellect and method can be misapplied as by Blandina and Briana. Neither is truth to be found only by following one's instincts. The Salvage man, for all his natural goodness, is limited; even Tristram, who had the benefit of some training along with
his natural goodness, must be further disciplined; and Mirabella's natural instincts have led her to reveal her shallowness and lack of perception of truth which her penance may help her to attain. Though court life may be corrupt, so may the life of savages in the forest. The cannibals into whose hands Serena falls are as selfish and brutal as it is possible to imagine: they even permit Serena to sleep so that her "battil," or flavor and texture, will be better when they eat her; and their calculation of the prospective juicy tastiness of the several parts of her anatomy are as bloodcurdling as anything which any hypocrite could devise. Good deeds and good words should go hand in hand, as Homer's Phoenix tells Achilles. Spenser adds the Christian provision that if deeds and words are to be properly called good, they must be performed and spoken within a framework of truth. The very pattern of opposites, extremes, variations of deceptive patterns and of deceptively easy formulae which Spenser presents becomes an "ensample" of the way in which the true Christian champion must sift truth as a prerequisite for right action. Even as the Lady in Comus is placed in the ironic position of recording her doubts of court life in a speech addressed to the disguised arch-hypocrite, Comus, so Spenser in the several episodes of Book VI indicates that one may place his trust neither in the fashionable and sophisticated court nor in the natural wilds of the woodland nor in any other
condition of life or pattern of human behavior, but rather he must judge each person and each situation according to the Christian criteria of purpose and motive within Christian truth.

In the Mount Acidale episode, Spenser affords a beatific vision of perfection which is at the same time a positive statement of the principle used by the hermit to cure Timias and Serena. Here balance is not necessary because here is God's perfection symbolically set forth. Mount Acidale, like the Garden of Adonis, is magically free of all "noysome" things, and the tall "trees of honour" which surround it bud in winter as well as in summer. On the open plain atop this lofty mount Calidore watches, himself unseen,

An hundred naked maidens lilly white,
All raunged in a ring, and dauncing in delight.

All they without were raunged in a ring,
And daunced round; but in the midst of them
Three other Ladies did both daunce and sing,
The whilst the rest them round about did hemme,
And like a girlond did in compass stemme;
And in the middest of those same three, was placed
Another Damzell, as a precious gemme,
Amidst a ring most richly well enhaced,
That with her goodly presence all the rest much graced.

(Fg, VI, x, 11 and 12)

Spenser's emphasis, as Lewis has pointed out, is upon the "order excellent." As soon as the group of dancers became aware of Calidore's presence, they disappear; and in a
discourse with Colin Clout, to whose piping the maidens have been dancing, Calidore learns the meaning of the scene which he has witnessed: Colin says to Calidore,

Then wote thou shepheard, whatsoever thou bee,
That all those Ladies, which thou sawest late,
Are Venus Damzels, all within her fee,
But differing in honour and degree:
They all are Graces, which on her depend,
Besides a thousand more, which ready bee
Her to adorne, when so she forth doth wend:
But those three in the midst, doe chiefe on her attend.

(FG, VI, x, 21)

Colin then identifies them as the "daughters of sky-ruling Jove" begotten of Eurynome, the "sister graces" of Milton's L'Allegro, Aglaia, Thalia, and Euphrosyne:

These three on men all gracious gifts bestow,
Which decke the body or adorne the mynde,
To make them lovely or well favour'd show,
As comely carriage, entertainement kynde,
Sweet semblance, friendly offices that bynde,
And all the complements of curtesie:
They teach us, how to each degree and kynde
We should our selves demeane, to low, to hie;
To friends, to foes, which skill men call Civility.

Therefore they alwaies smoothly seeme to smile,
That we likewise should mylde and gentle be,
And also naked are, that without guile
Or false dissemblance all them plaine may see,
Simple and true from covert malice free:
And eske themselves so in their daunce they bore,
That two of them still froward seem'd to bee,
But one still towards shew'd her selfe afore;
That good should from us goe, then come in greater store.

(FG, VI, x, 23 and 24)

Thus do the graces, handmaidens of Venus, move in the "ring" from which goes out goodness and to which goodness returns
after the manner of the heavenly dance of the uncorrupted
stars. By identifying the graces as the daughters of
"sky-ruling Jove" and Eurynome, "the Oceans daughter," and
by making these offspring of sea and sky the sources of Venus's
beauty and charm, Spenser has combined the elements of water
and air to serve love in this timeless, seasonless ideal
vision of Mount Acisala. The fourth maid who has merited
the honor of being included as a fourth grace is the "country
lass" who has moved Colin Clout's song. Her qualifications for
being numbered as a fourth grace include the same virtues
which Milton later insisted upon as the prerequisites both
for virtue and for the writing of poetry:

Another grace she well deserves to be,
In whom so many Graces gathered are,
Excelling much the means of her degree;
Divine resemblance, beauty soveraine rare,
Firme Chastity, that spight no blemish dare;
All which she with such courtesio doth grace,

She made me often pipe and now to pipe space.
(FG, VI, x, 27)

So Spenser combines the ideal of inspiration, love, courtesy,
understanding of "degree" in all the senses demonstrated
throughout Book VI, all under the general end of "wisdom"
of which Meliboeus has spoken but which can be realized in
no earthly state and only comprehended by special divine grace.
Spenser then in the next stanza achieves one of those Elizabethan
emulsions—the word "synthesis" will not do because the elements which he held together were to separate after Elizabeth's time into conflicting and dissonant opposites. Having connected in this Mount Acidale episode all the elements of courtesy as a means of establishing that harmonic balance of deed and word, inspiration and harmony, discipline and the cultivation of the heavenly gift or "seed of virtue," Spenser then in the following stanza brings the "ring" pattern back to Elizabeth as the source from which this virtue has proceeded and to whom with honor its exemplars must return:

Sunne of the world, great glory of the sky,  
That all the earth doest lighten with thy rayes,  
Great Gloriana, greatest Majesty...  
(FG, VI, x, 28)

As the three graces were the daughters of air and water, Elizabeth as the "sunne of the world" is the element of fire, the light which causes the growth of the virtue as the sun brings about the combination of earth, air, and water in growing plants. Upon this "sun" depends the worthiness of the "fourth grace," the chaste maid who has inspired the poet to "harmonious numbers." The symbolic "ring" of Venus's naked maidens, whom

... none can them bring in place,  
But whom they of them selves list so to grace.  
(FG, VI, x, 20)

represents the same pattern. In this way Spenser further unifies the several episodes, and more particularly the
variations on the virtue courtesy and the means by which man may cultivate the God-given seed in himself. The sudden blossoming of Tristram, even the future glories of the babe whom Galepaine rescued from the bear, redound to Elizabeth's credit within the pattern of the "ring." Milton's later invocations to the Heavenly Muse and to Urania in Books I, III, and VII of Paradise Lost are explicitly Christian and go directly to the Holy Spirit rather than to an earthly monarch, or "astrea redux," but show much the same kind of combining of images and ideas:

Hail, holy light, offspring of Heav'n first born...
  . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .

...as with a Mantle didst invest The rising world of waters dark and deep, Won from the void and formless infinite. Thee I re-visit now with bolder wing
.

With other notes then to th' Orphean Lyre I sung of Chaos and Eternal Night Taught by the heav'nly Muse to venture down The dark descent and up to reascend ...thee I revisit safe, And feel thy sovran vital Lamp...
  . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .

Yet not the more Cease I to wander where the Muses haunt Clear Spring, or shade Grove, or Sunnie Hill Smit with the love of sacred song...

. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .

Then feed on thoughts, that voluntarie move Harmonious numbers....
  . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .

Thus with the Year Seasons return, but not to me returns Day, or the sweet approach of Ev'n or Morn, Or sight of vernal bloom, or Summers Rose, Or flocks or herds, or human face divine...
Milton has rejected the courtly-love element and the human agency of the sovereign; the age in which he wrote could not longer have comprehended the seriousness of such idioms even if Milton had not consciously rejected them in favor of a directly Biblical subject. All of Spenser's other elements are present, however—intensified, made more glorious, more profound, more direct, more simple and sensuous and immediate; and one who comes to the reading of Milton with a background of having read Spenser will be quite at home with Milton's synthesis of classical and Biblical elements and his images of growing things and prayers for enlightenment, even his insistence upon discourse as the proper way for man to learn both before and after the fall.

The beatific vision of the Mount Acidalie episode illustrates the ideal of the "ring," the principle "That good should from us goe, then come in greater store," and by implication, that Christian humility is the only condition under which one is vouchsafed this vision. Spenser in the final episodes of Book VI, the rescue of Pastorella from the "brigants" and reunion with long-lost parents, and Calidore's final completion of his quest, the binding of the Blatant Beast, returns to the human ethical "use" of learning in this far from perfect world. Calidore in Canto xi
has to use all the ingenuity, all the discipline, all the courage, and all the tact which his love and his many exercises in the virtue courtesy have developed in him. When he learns from the escaped Coridon of Pastorella's desperate situation, he has to persuade the cowardly shepherd to lead him back and, what is more difficult, to remain with him. When the two find some of their sheep and then the thieves sleeping, Calidore must restrain Coridon from murdering them in order that he may gain entrance to the stronghold. Then he must fight, virtually singlehanded, against overwhelming odds. He finally delivers the sheep to Coridon and takes Pastorella away after comforting her for her harrowing experiences.

Pastorella has meanwhile had to undergo mental as well as physical torture. She has had to fend off the attention of the lustful captain and has had to keep her sanity and her presence of mind during the battle over her which occurs as a result of the captain's unwillingness to increase the booty by selling her into slavery. Pastorella is an excellent example of the correct behavior of a virtuous maiden who trusts her lover, as Serena has earlier been an example of failure both in common sense and in trust.

The chief value of this episode is to synthesize in terms of necessary thought and action all that Calidore has
learned, and to combine this devotion to his love, Pastorella, with the ethical idea of his quest. The contrast between the lawless, disorderly, greedy, murdering "brigants" and the virtuous self-contained Calidore is summarized in two figures of speech near the end of Canto xi. The brigants are likened to flies, the lowest of insects, and Calidore to a lion, the king of the beasts.

In the final canto, Pastorella learns of her noble ancestry, is united with her parents, and can presumably look forward to a full and happy life as Calidore's lady. The chief purpose of this final canto is not narrative, however, but summary and conclusion. Spenser in the first stanza likens Book VI to a ship which has pursued a circuitous route but

...ne hath her compasses lost:  
Right so it fare with me in this long way,  
Whose course is often stayd,yet never is astray.  
(FQ VI, xii, 1.)

Spenser immediately applies the statement to the legend of Calidore:

For all that hetherto hath long delayd  
This gentle knight, from seeing his first quest,  
Though out of course, yet hath not bene mis-sayd,  
To shew the courtesie by him profest,  
Even unto the lowest and the least.  
(FQ VI, xii, 2.)

Calidore's delay has given the Blatant Beast time to damage all the "estates" of society and to come finally to the
church, where he has been able to "confound" and to produce disorder. The thousand tongues of the Blatant Beast include the tongues of several of the animals already encountered in earlier episodes (tigers and bears as well as cats and dogs), but the chief source of destructive power is the

...tongues of mortall men,
Which spake reprochfully, not caring where nor when.  
\[\textit{[Fg VI, xii, 27.]}\]

Calidore cannot, of course, kill this Beast: he can only bind it, muzzle it, and lead it about to the wonderment of those who see it thus tamed. Spenser ends the canto and Book VI by recording that the Blatant Beast ultimately "broke his yron chaine" and that no other champion has as yet been found to muzzle him again. The Beast consequently spreads confusion by speaking irresponsibly and indiscriminately so as to cause confusion and disorder and to set up strife and misunderstanding. Spenser realizes that his own verse is likely to suffer from the same kind of irresponsible detraction. It is tempting to suppose that he may have had a prophetic vision of some of the scholarly tissus of conjecture concerning the historical "identity" of some of his characters; but it is more likely that Spenser wished to include all of the misuse and perversion, both wilfull and careless, of the God-given faculty of speech since the Tower of Babel.
Spenser gives unity to Book VI by his use of images as well as by illustrative episodes all of which are ultimately shown to be part of the "ring" which goes out from Elizabeth and returns to her. Elizabeth is the "sun" of the world, the synthesis of all the individual "lights" and virtues; and by means of this final symbol he combines the Christian and Platonic elements of his "legend" with the courtly-love and birth-will-tell threads. The Proem at the beginning of the Book and the opening stanzas of Canto xii make Spenser's unity of intention clear.

The legend of courtesy is of particular value in establishing the final framework within which courtesy books and educational tractates were conceived. As Ruth Mohl has shown, Milton's conception was written within this general tradition. This study of Spenser's definitive treatment of the theme in Book VI of the Faerie Queene has examined the several episodes, patterns, figures of speech, and formulae for the purpose of observing some of the attributes of that tradition which found their way into a Protestant epic which Milton admired and drew from.

Both Spenser in Book VI and Milton wherever he discusses the means by which man may learn and whenever he himself as a poet prays for guidance and enlightenment, show an humble awareness of the limitations of man's understanding at any given moment, the necessity for his having faith that even he
who must stand and wait is also serving, and learning, too, if he will but use each occasion properly. There is a keen sense in both poets of emergent understanding, of the necessity for choice and for action in terms of choice, of the relationship between faith and act, and of words and deeds. Both use the analogy of a growing and flowering plant to describe the manner in which man learns, and the idea that as fruit is useful to higher beings for higher purposes, so man's understanding, knowledge, and wisdom, if guided, "light unto light," by divine grace, are useful to higher and higher orders of being in the golden chain that extends to the throne of God. Perhaps most important, both poets emphasize the proper observance of "degree" as the only proper means of gaining increasingly higher insights; and both insist upon going one step at a time, from "center to circumference" rather than in leaping to conclusions or acting upon impulse and partial or incorrect information. Above all, "degree" for both poets is measured not as the world measures, but in terms of Christ's kingdom and by means of ascertaining truth.

These principles are relatively clear in the context of the statements in the texts of both Spenser and Milton. More significant than the precept are the illustrations or examples, the "modus operandi," of learning virtue, or, in Christ's terms, of achieving the kingdom of God. Humble
self-renunciation within Christian humility is the only condition under which fallen man may "regain to know God aright"; and this humility in practice, with its concomitant necessity for sifting evidence as a means of finding truth, appears dramatically static. Satan in Paradise Regained seems from the viewpoint of this world to have a psychological advantage over Christ when he accuses Christ, in effect, of pedantic and picayune rejection of everything. When Milton concentrated his epic Paradise Regained on the sainthood and martyrdom of "one greater man" and his regaining to know God aright," he went back to the well-spring of English humanism, the effort to establish knowledge of language, historical criticism, and textual analysis as Erasmus and his contemporaries, in England particularly, had conceived it. He overcomes the traditional and also the Calvinistic insistence upon the importance of the magistrate (or the individual minister) as a mediator and all-powerful agent through whom God operates; Christ is that agent, and his example is sufficient. This point will be treated in the following chapter. Here the idea is stated to make clear the parallel between the self-renunciation of Calidore in his patient getting at truth as a basis for action, even in the harrowing rescue of his beloved Pastorella, and Christ's careful sifting of truth and establishment of values in his debates with Satan in Paradise Regained. Calidore
renounces both himself and much of the dignity and beauty as well as the glamour and trivia of his high birth in his "learning" of the virtue courtesy and of the way in which it must be practiced to low and high, friend and foe. Christian truth is the only measure of "degree" by which truth may be learned. Christ, the ultimate exemplar, the "greater man," must renounce also some of the tools and ornaments which have enabled a line of dedicated scholars to arrive at an understanding of what the Christian Scriptures actually said: Christ renounces that part of them and that use of them which is not conducive to the achievement of his kingdom. In a debate with Satan it is absolutely necessary that he establish firmly the position on which he argues and the religious and ethical basis for that position. Though such a statement seems self-evident, Spenser's "ensample" in the matter of the human achievement of the virtue courtesy in terms which do not so directly seem to pose a conflict between pagan literature and Christian doctrine will perhaps help to establish the epic and Protestant framework within which Milton wrote and Milton's audience understood. The tentative groping forward, firm in a faith that God will provide those who are the humble and dedicated champions of truth with "light unto light" if they will persist in their quest for truth and salvation, is the "modus operandi" which Spenser in his intricate and perhaps overloaded legends of courtesy illustrates. Christ provides a simpler and more
direct and more universal example of the same epic and religious "learning" in the ultimate sense of "regaining to know God aright." The seeming renunciation of human learning is therefore a rejection of human learning as a sufficient end in itself, just as Calidore's courtesy of manners and speech had to be abandoned in dealing with Briana and Crudor to make way for the higher duty of protecting the wronged and establishing peace and benevolence. The tact and skill and persistence and critical acumen which court training has brought Calidore enable him to rescue Pastorella finally, after many less difficult and less trying rescues in which his heart and soul have been somewhat less involved; and ultimately all his experience and discipline enable him to achieve the full flowering of the "seed" of virtue which God has planted but the cultivation of which, in Milton's terms, God "requires of a strictness." In a similar fashion, the very learning which Satan extolls in specious terms has been a means of Christ's sifting truth; and as a means of sifting truth, for Erasmus and the writers of the Mirror for Magistrates and for Sidney and, as we have just seen, for Spenser, these worldly acquisitions may be turned to good account as soil and working tools are turned to good account in husbandry.

The paradox that victory can come through renunciation is not original with the Elizabethans; the Parmenides presents
Socrates as unwilling to pursue a logical argument the consequences of which he could see were inhuman or unjust even before he spelled them out in words. It is perhaps a paradox in itself that English, the language with the most flexible structure and most varied vocabulary of any which Western cultures have produced, has always mistrusted a truth which could be contained in a word. Truth emerges from example, from a number of examples in juxtaposition, and from "discourse" rather than from a series of Aristotelian, medieval, and (word loathsome to Elizabethan and seventeenth-century humanist alike) "scholastic" propositions which then serve as the basis of a supposedly iron-clad system of syllogisms. The preference for Ramist illustration as a kind of logic has been discussed by several scholars whose evaluations differ somewhat; but the core of the matter was the English insistence upon mistrust of self and of the single insight of any given moment as a sufficient guarantee of ultimate truth or a sufficient means of stating that truth.
SECTION IV
EVALUATION
CHAPTER 10
CONCLUSION

As Spenser said of Sir Calidore's quest for the Blatant Beast, the conclusion of this dissertation must remind the reader that the course of the discussion "is often stayd, yet never is astray." This study of Milton's Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained against the background of the Elizabethan theory of Christian learning has been focused upon a few pertinent texts which are concerned with ideas which Milton propounds in his epic poems. It has therefore been necessary first to review Milton's statement of those ideas, chiefly the ones which have to do with learning, in the first section of the dissertation, and then in the remaining sections to consider earlier treatments of similar ideas and problems.

Analysis of these selected texts indicates that Milton's humanism was indeed a continuation of the Reformation humanism of Ascham, Sidney, and the authors of the Mirror for Magistrates, though Milton often expanded, deepened, clarified, and disciplined the ideas and modes of expression of his precursors. This study also shows that Milton's interpretation of history, for all his superior knowledge and more accurate scholarship, was essentially a continuation of the Elizabethan seeking for moral causes as a means of defining both moral and practical effects. Finally, this dissertation also has made clear that Milton's
epics and his formal theology are rooted in the same soil which produced Spenser's *Faerie Queene*. Each of the chapters has summarized the specific conclusions and listed the qualifications of the general statement of similarity in the traditions, both popular and intellectual, within which the Elizabethan humanists and Milton wrote.

This dissertation consistently recognizes the fact that Milton drew upon an astonishing quantity and variety of learning, that he was perhaps more universal and more erudite than any of the other authors treated. Milton’s erudition was seldom of the documented or pinpointed variety, however, for Milton had so thoroughly absorbed and made his own the many related sources and analogues for every element of his epics that he seems to have used his erudition to clarify the basic message of the epics and to make those messages more widely understandable and more universally convincing by showing how Christian truth contains and makes usable all other learning.

In *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*, Milton has repeated in epic form the Christian paradox, "He who would save his life must lose it." The Elizabethan tradition of learning, an outgrowth of the Christian humanism of Erasmus and More and an heir of the Italian Renaissance, included as a means of realizing its Reformation mission the concentration upon the texts of the ancient writers, even the Puritan insistence upon confining one's efforts to a strict if thorough examination
of the text of the Scriptures; and the emphasis throughout the century upon learning as a means of interpreting Scripture led in many instances, as earlier chapters have shown, to a rejection of all writing and all learning which was not specifically contained in Scripture. Though even the most popular and most sensational of Foxe's accounts of the deaths of martyrs included the theme of the renunciation of this world, and though Sidney himself, the "president" of Christian learning, in his writing and in the example of his life illustrated this Christian rejection of the world, nevertheless the claims of the world on the one hand and of Christian piety on the other came into sharp and many-sided conflict. One of the most crucial and most often recurring of these battles was fought over the question of learning—over the two related questions, "What should a Christian know?" and "How should he, as a fallen man, go about learning it?" Milton's answer, that man must learn by an orderly "conning over" of the visible and inferior "creatures" which may be known to fallen man through the five senses, and that he must know whatever will enable him to "regain to know God aright" by imitating the Divine excellence to the top of his comprehension, is a summary of the Elizabethan tradition of the "reforming times" which he hoped to revive and continue. These related answers are the categorical "precepts" by which Milton answered these questions. The two late epics are the "examples," or the orderly conning over of the
pertinent material, rendered "simple and sensuous" by the art of poetry. These "examples" contain not the Scriptures alone, nor the limiting dogma of any one sect, but rather the "pattern of the Christian hero" against the background of the fall of man and God's plan for his ultimate redemption. So considered, the two late epics become not mere redactions of formal theology nor even primarily statements of the author's prescriptive opinions, any more than the School of Athens in the "Stanze" by Raphael is a formal essay on Pico's moral and ethical philosophy, but rather a work of art in which the harmony and balance of a conception of man and of his place in God's universe and his way of coming into his own inheritance as a child of God are presented as testimonial case "histories" of the working of the Divine Spirit of Truth universally and individually through the moral order which operates in the minds and hearts of all who will but understand.

And the chief lesson which this "pattern" of "visible conning over" presents is the paradox that fallen man must, like the Christian exemplar Christ, renounce the Devil and all his works not by affirmation only but by an apprehension of essential truth. Only when fallen man subordinates all his faculties and all human effort to the ultimate Christian mystery of giving up his life in order to save it can he make use of the "good" which is so inextricably tangled with the
prideful "bad" in all that is of this earth. The two epics make clear, again by example in myth and by example in the very form and manner of the texts of the epics which convey the myth, the necessity of subordinating all knowledge, all understanding, and all effort to the spirit of truth which Christ's example teaches. In the very act of subordinating all pagan learning to Christian truth, Milton achieves the inclusion-within-function, or proper use, of all that is good in all human achievement. In this way the "ring" pattern comes full for each individual soul, and all that is not "depraved" may return to God its author.

More important than any detailed summary of one or another facet of the sixteenth-century background within which Milton wrote is the general clarity which a review of the Elizabethan tradition brings to the reading of Milton. Scholars have for some time, as the Appendix shows, emphasized Milton's reliance upon general traditions popularly understood rather than upon esoteric and controversial matters which can be pinpointed to one or another specific source or to a particular theological argument which may or may not have engaged his attention. This dissertation has tried to indicate the ethical framework within which Milton thought and wrote, a framework which is at once traditional and which, paradoxically, makes for the kind of originality which Newton claimed for Milton. The Elizabethan tradition of learning
within which Milton wrote was Protestant, Reformational, humanist, and individual. Milton, therefore, above all else measured all things by the "use" which they had in terms of Christian truth, the "degree" and the direction. He therefore sought truth in the primitive Church, in those ancients who had been closest to excellence, and in the exercise of right reason, all, of course, reconciled with a humane interpretation of Scriptures. So had the Elizabethan and Reformation humanists before Milton, as Sidney, Fulke Greville, and Spenser testify, and as Mirror for Magistrates and Acts and Monuments illustrate at a very much less literary and more popular level. It is little wonder, therefore, that a writer who was convinced as a matter of religious certainty of this way of judging truth and making choices should have changed his specific opinions on such matters as monarchy and Presbyterian polity as often as conditions and a re-examination of himself and the evidence might indicate. The effect of Milton's Reformation humanism was therefore not narrowing and belittling, as C. S. Lewis seems to think usual with humanists, but on the contrary contributed to Milton's independence of mind, his integrity of thought and action, the accuracy of his scholarship, and the power of his poetry. The effect of this blend of attitudes which seems so unlikely to most twentieth-century critics has been confusing. For example, T. S. Eliot
in objecting to Milton's lack of traditional sanctions for his opinions betrays the fact that Mr. Eliot fails to understand the tradition which Milton and most other Englishmen of his day accepted as a token of England's God-given role as the chosen vessel of Reformation. The "tradition" as Milton understood it demanded the sifting of the evidence and the judging of the entire matrix of a situation in terms of the spirit of Christian truth as well as the letter of the Scriptures. As this dissertation has shown, Spenser and Sidney both illustrated this application of the idea of "degree" as a part of God's order. Only by judging in terms of God's order could man hope to arrive at an understanding of truth.

This habit of mind which Milton shared with his Elizabethan forbears also makes clear certain passages in *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*. For example, Satan's speeches in *Paradise Regained* fall into the pattern of excellent things which are nevertheless evil because they do not proceed from God but rather reflect only the opinions of men and are therefore corrupt. Christ's rejection of learning discussed in Chapter 2 is a rejection not of learning but of the improper use of it—upon any use which is not centered in God or which seeks only its own ends or worldly glory. It even becomes clear that Milton presents a drama of contrast in which Satan by every means short of repentance attempts to learn what for him and the world is a "truth"—Christ's
identity and his own fate. Christ is also seeking a "truth"—
the means by which he is to realize his kingdom. Christ
"regains the blissful seat" by climbing up step by step in
patience and self-negation and Christian humility as he
"learns" by sifting Satan's arguments. The essential theme
of Paradise Regained is therefore the means of attaining
salvation by imitating Christlike humility and by judging
"truth" in terms of the "degree" of its emanation from God.

Conversely, for Milton as for Fulke Greville, Sidney,
Spenser, and Foxe, the test of truth is the correctness of
insight into moral causation. Christ's condemnation of
the kingdoms of this earth and of the slaves who are slaves
within and who cannot, therefore, be made free is one example;
the insistence that Vortigern's sloth and the wishful think-
ing of his subjects combined to make them slaves first of
their own passions, and finally of an invader, is another.
Another is Fulke Greville's review of Sidney's political
insights, in which Sidney based his argument upon recent
history (Mary's marriage to Philip) as a repetition of the
moral pattern of Solomon's marriages to pagan women, and both
as a warning to Elizabeth not to marry a Catholic.

The Elizabethan tradition of Christian learning, whether
it pleases the twentieth-century scholars and critics or not,
makes clear the principles which Milton took for granted
and the attitudes which were, in his thinking, an outgrowth
of those principles. The *Areopagitica*, judged within the traditional theory of learning outlined in this dissertation, is therefore neither a plea for absolute tolerance nor a hypocritical partisan document, as different scholars have accused it of being, but rather a statement of the method by which man may judge properly the manner in which any kind of evidence is to be placed within its proper "degree" subordinate to Christian truth.

Because Milton and the Elizabethans before him habitually expressed these ideas in examples which are often parables, it is almost impossible to define the tradition without using examples in which to state the definition. To conclude with one figure of speech which is also an example, this dissertation has followed the "ring" in that it has gone back from Milton's statement to analogous statements in the "reforming times" and now returns again to Milton with an accretion of enlightenment. The habit of mind everywhere exemplified in the champions of the Elizabethan tradition will perhaps serve as substitutes for the drops from the well of life, even as those which Michael gave Adam. Even the return to a past unspoiled by erroneous accretions of human traditions is a repetition of the manner of seeking new light which the English humanists of Elizabeth's time and Milton's followed.
APPENDIX

SCHOLARLY COMMENT ON MILTON'S THEORY OF LEARNING

It is difficult in surveying scholarship on any given problem to arrive at a satisfactory criterion for including some books and articles and excluding others. Often those scholarly comments which have been most provocative have little to do with the specific topic to which a completed study is limited, yet those very tangential works are sometimes responsible for the germ of the idea upon which scholarly hypotheses are built.

This dissertation, both in spirit and in topic, is, of course, deeply indebted to the scholarly work of Professor George W. Whiting. If one of his writings must be singled out for specific mention, his book Milton's Literary Milieu furnished the idea and precedent for a study which examines one part of the tradition within which Milton wrote; but his guidance both in class and out of it have been so much a part of this dissertation as to make adequate acknowledgement of indebtedness impossible.

Among those books and articles not devoted specifically to Milton's theory of learning, there are a number of general scholarly works which establish a framework within which it is possible to proceed to such a study as this dissertation has attempted--such works as Henry Osborn Taylor's
The Classical Heritage of the Middle Ages, Erwin Panofsky's Meaning in the Visual Arts, Alfred North Whitehead's Adventures of Ideas, all of which deal with the intellectual history which must be taken almost for granted as background for any study of Milton.

There are also, happily, surveys of the opinions of the scholars and critics who have commented upon Milton's ideas, notably the survey in Douglas Bush's Paradise Lost in Our Time and a more general account of intellectual histories in The Renaissance and English Humanism. Ruth Mohl has surveyed some of the most recent theories of Milton's central meaning in her essays on Spenser and Milton, and her summary has in turn been reviewed by Ernest Sirluck.

This chapter will rely heavily and gratefully upon these surveys, and will concentrate upon a few of the scholarly articles which are directly pertinent to the theory of Christian learning which Milton shared with the "reforming times" of the sixteenth century. Even within this limit, the articles discussed must be only a partial list of those which are pertinent.

The most recent general study which is directly pertinent within the criteria outlined above is Howard Schultz's book, Milton and Forbidden Knowledge. Mr. Schultz organizes his survey around several intellectual problems which bear directly or indirectly on the use of knowledge as Milton's age and
Milton himself looked upon those problems. He seems sometimes to attribute more meaning by attraction to contemporaneous ideas than Milton's text will bear. For example, in a compendious survey of the prevailing attitudes toward pagan learning, Schultz cites a welter of opinions from various preachers and sectaries, and finally concludes that Milton's out-and-out condemnation of pagan learning in *Paradise Regained* is to be understood only in terms of attitudes which prevailed among preachers in Milton's time:

We cannot explain the bitterness of the lines against learning in *Paradise Regained* by the commonplaces vitalized differently in *Paradise Lost* or by others, as I shall try to confirm while rounding out this account with some of the truisms played upon in the brief epic. Nothing would better correct the reading of *Paradise Regained* IV, 285-364 as pious convention than to study—and study in their original settings—the unimpassioned platitudes to be isolated next, for these are the true commonplaces. Yet upon this base of received doctrine Milton reared his lethal argument against out-of-place Hellenism. The argument therefore seemed plausible and "epic," and hence artistically fit, because by bits and in contexts alien to Milton's it had become public property. 10

As this dissertation has tried to show, the habit of testing all truth in terms of Christian criteria was public property long before the preachers of the mid-seventeenth century voiced it. The Church Fathers, as Professor Schultz among others has noted, were common sources for the idea; and Milton's exemplars in historical writing, as Professor Whiting has shown, particularly his English predecessors such as Raleigh, followed an
old and well established pattern of providential interpretation. Professor Schultz's survey of the intellectual trends of the day as they worked into the preliminary skirmishes of the Battle of the Books later in the century is compendious and valuable, but his comment on Milton's rejection of pagan learning is perhaps not unquestionably to be explained as a reflection of contemporaneous opinion.

Professor Schultz also argues later in his book that the bitterness of the rejection stems from a contemporaneous controversy over the necessity for learning for ministers, and that Milton's Christ actually represents not mankind but the spokesman and exemplar for the ministry. According to this argument, Milton's bitterness stems from his having taken up a cudgel to defend the Puritan point of view and to discredit the "professional" clergy who claimed privilege because of superior learning. The material which Professor Schultz adduces in the course of this argument is again very valuable, indeed, but his evidence does not seem to substantiate his argument that Christ is intended not as an example for laymen but only for clergymen. Despite his learning, Mr. Schultz seems in this argument to have overstepped Christian theology and to have made Milton so much a controversialist even in the closing years of his life as to have made him blind to the very principle upon which he insisted, as this dissertation has shown, the testing of all truth, even Scriptural statements, by the spirit of Christian truth. Even
granting Mr. Schultz's hypothesis that Milton does intend
Christ as the spokesman and exemplar of the church rather
than for every individual soul, it seems unlikely that the
author of Lycidas would have considered learning of any kind
bad in itself as a qualification for clergymen. Milton does
not, in any event, reject learning: rather, as this disserta-
tion has attempted to show, he subordinates all secular learn-
ing to Christian truth. In this subordination he follows the
usual practise of the English humanists of the "reforming
times" of the sixteenth century.

This explanation which Professor Schultz propounds seems
to be an attempt to answer questions concerning Milton's tone
of anger in Christ's speeches in Paradise Regained. Professor
E. M. W. Tillyard in his book Milton (1930) suggests that Mil-
ton turned to personal religious comforts in his old age and
blindness, and that he was forced to admit the fallacy of his
earlier efforts to influence men's actions.

For the second time in his life (the first had been
in his earliest divorce tract) he admits himself to have
been in the wrong. In spite of his growing distaste for
dogma it was in the Bible, especially in the Psalms, that
he found expressed what for him was of all things most
important, the communion of the isolated human being with
God. Hence and not from mere Stoic passivity was derived
the 'paradise within' which alone made life worth while.
In the anguish of admitting himself to be wrong he turns
against his old supports, as it they had been responsible
for his error of judgment. His very affection for them,
their power over him, makes him the fiercer.†
Professor Tillyard concludes that "Milton has not cast out the love of knowledge and the humanities: only he cannot allow them to usurp a place to which they are not entitled." The assumption that Milton's attitude in Paradise Regained is an about-face of his earlier opinions is, as this dissertation has tried to show, unfounded. Milton's definition of the purpose of education in the letter to Hartlib and his other writing throughout his life continued the established Reformation conviction that all knowledge, like all virtue, must be measured in "degree" by Christian truth. Though Milton certainly grew and expanded his ideas, as Miss Irene Samuel has shown, he did not reverse his earlier convictions in so fundamental a matter as the superiority of Christian truth and the necessary subordination of all other kinds of truth to Christian truth.

Some ten years after the statement in his book on Milton, Professor Tillyard restates some of the same questions which he had earlier raised, but admits Merritt Y. Hughes's argument that "Milton's Christ stands out as a great traditional hero," particularly in terms of the renunciation of glory, and that Paradise Regained has "for its substance things that were quite public to the intellectual audience of its day." Hughes's article has been of value in this dissertation in that it has demonstrated Milton's use of themes and points of view which were traditional even when Milton varied that tradition to strengthen a particular point.
One entire area of scholarship which bears upon the supposed rejection of learning in *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* is that which has to do with the temptation theme in *Paradise Lost*, *Paradise Regained*, and *Samson Agonistes*. Elizabeth Marie Pope in her book, *Paradise Regained, the Tradition and the Poem*, has reviewed this scholarship and has treated definitively the entire medieval and Renaissance tradition of the temptations as they relate to Satan's temptations of Christ in *Paradise Regained*. She is like Tillyard in her attempt to reconstruct Milton's thinking and order of composition from his psychology at the moment of writing rather than in terms of his text and the general tradition within which he wrote. She recognizes the difficulty of her method:

On the other hand, it is possible (though less probable) that Milton never thought of the pinnacle scene in connection with the temptation by violence, but added the latter merely to build up the dramatic ending still further or to fill in every form of attack Satan made on the Lord.

That is the trouble with constructions of this sort: we know that considerations are likely to occur to a man with Milton's problem and his knowledge of theology, but not in what sequence they entered his mind or what relation they had to one another. All we can do is arrange the various integers in what seems their logical order of occurrence or importance, and hope for the best.

In at least one particular, Miss Pope's hope seems forlorn in the light of this dissertation: it seems very unlikely that Milton intended the final scene on the pinnacle as one in which Christ transcends his human and assumes his divine
nature, and that the Biblical statement "Tempt not the Lord thy God, he said, and stood" really meant, as Miss Pope has phrased it, "Make not trial of me, the Lord your God." If Milton did so intend the final temptation, then arguments other than the arrangement of his probable psychological frame of mind would probably have to be adduced; and it is difficult to bring to bear any pertinent evidence which Miss Pope has not treated definitively elsewhere in her book.

Miss Pope under the topic "triple equation" treats exhaustively the medieval and Renaissance habit of equating the temptations of Adam and Eve with the temptations of Christ, and both of these Biblical temptations with the temptations of mankind in all ages. This habit of drawing parallels from similarity of moral causation has been discussed in Section III of this dissertation. On this same general topic of the theme of temptation in Paradise Regained, Professor Arnold Stein in an article entitled "The Kingdoms of the World: Paradise Regained," interprets Paradise Regained in terms of another kind of parallelism of temptations—a parallelism in which Satan once more deceives himself, or traps himself, by the very stratagems which he uses to trap Christ. Satan, according to Professor Stein's analysis, proves himself ironically incapable of waiting patiently for his destruction whereas Christ is capable in himself of "Suffering, abstaining, quietly expecting/ Without distrust or doubt." In the course of this argument, Professor Stein also argues that in
his carefully balanced replies to Satan, Christ does not renounce "action in the world, the heroism of peace or war," but only insists that all virtue be judged according to its direction and purpose. If a thought, word, or action flourishes freely from the God-given goodness of the heart, then it is virtuous:

I seek not mine, but his
Who sent me, and thereby witness whence I am.
(P.R., III, 106-107)

Mr. Stein's method is primarily though not entirely that of the "new critics" in its reliance upon "language," "rhythm," "imaginative identification," "high dramatic tension," "extreme pressure on the audience," and the like. His reading of Paradise Regained does serve to correct some of the more elaborate theories and assumptions which seem to have little to do with Milton's text.

The area of scholarship which is most generally concerned with Milton's relationship to the Elizabethans, though it is seldom approached from that point of view, is the matter of Ramist influence on Milton and on Sidney and Spenser, among others. Scholarship, particularly recent scholarship, tends to support the hypothesis treated in this dissertation. P. Albert Duhamel in an article, "Milton's Alleged Ramism" has surveyed the evidence and arguments and has concluded that Milton's "adherence to Ramism" has been overstressed and that he evolved his own system of logic and "wrote in the traditional
patterns of humanistic expression."\textsuperscript{24} Leon Howard comes to much the same conclusion in his study of Milton's idea of logic as an "art which is a sort of habit of mind," an attempt to analyze Milton's \textit{Artis logicae}. Mr. Howard concludes,

The Ramean conception of logic as "the art of disputing well" makes a re-discovery of the path, in any particular case, uncertain; and Milton's logic often differs with that of other Ramists, and in its complexities and second thoughts it is not always thoroughly consistent with itself. Such uncertainty and inconsistency—in the present state of our knowledge—make an entirely satisfactory survey of the logical invention in \textit{Paradise Lost} impossible. But a preliminary essay in that direction should suggest that the poem is more rationally coherent than certain modern trends in critical scholarship would have us believe. It was not Milton but his later critics who made illogical the ways of God to men.\textsuperscript{25}

A.J. Smith in a recent article (October, 1956) surveys the general influence of Ramism during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.\textsuperscript{26} He, too, concludes that the influence of Ramism in England has been over emphasized, and that traditions of teaching in the schools which Spenser, Sidney, and Milton attended explain a great deal of the habits of mind which have been mistakenly labelled "Ramist." Professor Smith makes one point which is directly related to this dissertation. He notes that Ascham in the \textit{Scholemaster} "curtly dismissed Ramus and his henchman Talaeus." Since Ascham's theory of imitation is, as Chapter 8 has shown, closely related to the conduct-book tradition and to the Reformation and English humanist theories of example, the
explanation of certain rhetorical devices which are sometimes labelled "Ramistic" need not be traced to the influence of Ramus but, as Smith suggests, to the educational habits which prevailed in England.

Though Professor Smith, Professor Duhamel, and Professor Howard are no doubt correct in their insistence upon the importance of the general tradition of imitation which prevailed in English schools as opposed to the specific single influence of Ramistic rhetoric, Professor Rosemond Tuve has surveyed the several devices which, by any name, formed the background for Elizabethan and seventeenth-century imagery and habits of mind. Her discussion is centered upon the manifestations of these rhetorical devices in metaphysical poetry of the seventeenth century but is still very useful as background for Milton.

The general tradition of teaching and learning which prevailed in the English schools during the Elizabethan period has been exhaustively treated in T. W. Baldwin's William Shakspere's Small Latine & Lesse Greeke. Donald Leman Clark's study, John Milton at St. Paul's School and his article, "Milton's Schoolmasters: Alexander Gil and his Son Alexander," consider in detail Milton's textbooks and schoolmasters, the kind of critical apparatus
and the methods of learning. Professor Baldwin and Professor Clark make it abundantly clear that the drill on language and on various kinds of interpretation always concluded with a pointing to the moral "sententia" which the text under scrutiny was supposed to illustrate. The first volume of Harris Francis Fletcher's projected work, *The Intellectual Development of John Milton*, considers, in terms of the several disciplines which Milton studied, the materials and methods which prevailed in the English schools to 1625. 31

It would be impossible in the space of this appendix to do justice to the scholarship and commentary which has been devoted to explaining Milton's statements concerning education. Oliver Morley Ainsworth made the texts of Milton's pertinent writing on this subject available in one volume; 32 and the consensus of the opinions of scholars is, as Section III of this dissertation has shown, that Milton wrote in the tradition of the Christian-humanist conduct books as interpreted by his predecessors in the "reforming times" of the sixteenth century. Specific scholarly points of view, such as those by Mr. Sensabaugh 33 and Miss Irene Samuel, 34 have been noted in the course of the discussion.

Often a detail in scholarly commentary serves as an illustration of the way in which Milton combined materials,
always within the test of Christian truth. It has long
been observed that Milton's definition of education as a
process which enables fallen man "to regain to know God
aright" is a theological definition. Until recently,
even such scholars as Professor Hanford seemed to deplore
this definition as less progressive and less optimistic than
the derived practical definition concerning the ability
of the educated man to perform all the duties of peace and
war. Recently Mr. J. C. Maxwell added as a note to Miss
Samuel's study of Milton and Plato the fact that much of
the phraseology of the theological definition is directly
paralleled in the Theaetetus, 172-177, and that the idea
is a condensation of the passage in Plato. This fact
illustrates a quality of Milton's habit of synthesizing.
As this dissertation has shown, the theological definition
is the necessary framework within which all study must, if
it is profitable and leads to virtue, be pursued. The
fact that Milton combined the words of Plato with Christian
theology in such a way indicates his ability to fuse the
two traditions and to achieve not a narrowing but, as Miss
Samuel has said, an expansion of both within Christian
truth.

R. R. Cawley's study of just such changes "into some-
thing rich and strange," though not directly a part of the
subject of this dissertation, has demonstrated Milton's
accuracy and combining power in the writing of history. Mr. Cawley shows, for example, the manner in which Milton in the *Brief History of Muscovia* combines three longer passages from Hakluyt into a striking brief statement which drives home Milton's point. 38

Special studies in theology, such as Maurice Kelley's *This Great Argument*, which attempts to prove that *Paradise Lost* and *De Doctrina Christiana* are simply different presentations of Milton's theology, are often useful in defining a tradition even though the particular topic of the study is only remotely related to the subject of the dissertation. In this category should also be listed Don H. Wolfe's *Milton in the Puritan Revolution* 40 and William Haller's *Liberty and Reformation in the Puritan Revolution*. 41 Mr. Haller's book and his study of Foxe's influence in the seventeenth century, 42 which has been cited in Chapter 5 of this dissertation, are particularly useful in tracing the continuation with changes in emphasis of Elizabethan and Reformation points of view. Even such studies as that by Kaster Svendsen on Milton's interest in science 43 have been helpful in establishing balance and proportion. Professor Svendsen's statement, "Milton the theocentric humanist was well aware of the limitations of natural knowledge, but he was no less aware of its moral implications than were
compilers like Swan and Primaudaye," helps to reassure one whose subject lies outside Milton's interest in natural science.

As one continues to discuss scholarly work to which he is indebted, the margin fades "forever and forever" as he moves to include wider and wider areas of scholarship. This chapter has tried only to indicate some of the main branches of the investigation of secondary sources, and to acknowledge humbly and gratefully the indebtedness of this dissertation to the work of other scholars.
NOTES TO CHAPTER 1


3 James Holly Hanford, "The Temptation Motive in Milton," SP, XV (1918), 179.

4 Ibid., pp. 258-59.

5 Ibid., p. 259.


7 See the invocations to books I, II, and especially ll. 13-47 of book IV.

8 Vacation Exercise, Elegy VI, Reason of Church Government et al.

9 John S. Smart, The Sonnets of Milton, (Glasgow, 1921), pp. 110-115. In sonnet number 20 (XVII in the Beeching text) written to Edward Lawrence appear these two lines:

   What neat repast shall feast us, light and choice,
   Of Attick tast, with Wine...
   (11. 9-10)

with the following comment on Attick taste: "The feasts of the Athenians were proverbial for their frugality and simple refinement,—light and choice...He [Plato] allows wine in moderation, and cheerful talk. The simplicity is ideal; but evidence also shows that the actual customs of Athens favoured wholesome and plain food, and distrusted innovations that tended to luxury."

10 Commus, ll. 672-714, 760-779.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 2

1 A. W. Verity, edit., *Paradise Lost* (Cambridge, 1929), II, 413.


4 I. Thessalonians, 5:21.


8 *Areopagitica*, *GE*, IV, 311.

9 Matthew, 6:33.

10 Psalms, 118:22.


12 Ibid.

13 John, 14:6.

14 *Areopagitica*, *GE*, IV, 319.

15 John T. Sheppard, *Music at Belmont* (London, 1951), p. 159. Other quotations from Milton's Prolusions are taken from the Columbia Edition. Sir John Sheppard's translation here is cited because of its superior beauty and clarity; unfortunately it is a translation of only part of the Prolusion.

16 *GE*, IV, 277.

17 *GE*, XII, 253-255.


19 Matthew, 4:7.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 3

1. Arsentesitica, CE, IV, 309.
3. Ibid.
5. Ibid., 65.
9. Ibid., 4-5.
11. CE, X, 5.
13. CE, X, 103.
15. Ibid., 113.
16. Ibid., 87.
18. Douglas Bush, The Renaissance and English Humanism (Toronto, 1939), pp. 69-134. See also the Appendix of this dissertation.
NOTES TO CHAPTER 4

1 Christian Doctrine, CE, XIV, 3.
2 CE, IV, 17.
3 Ibid., 7.
4 Ibid.
5 Some of these illustrations from Milton's History of Britain have already been discussed in Chapter 3.
7 Of Reformation, CE, III, I, 5.
9 Of Reformation, CE, III, I, 5.
11 CE, III, I, 238.
13 Ibid., 216.
14 Ibid., 216-217.
15 Ibid., 217.
18 Haller, loc. cit.
19 CE, III, I, 7.
Milton's extremely subtle artistic use of the pattern of seven ages in the angelic revelation of Books XI and XII of Paradise Lost is pointed out in George W. Whiting's chapter on "The Pattern of Time and Eternity" in Milton's Poetry and This Pendant World (Austin, forthcoming).

Arthur T. Barker, Milton and the Puritan Dilemma (Toronto, 1942), pp. 68-69, remarks that before the divorce tracts, Milton had been "at one with the best part of the nation," and provides the evidence.


C. S. Lewis, A Preface to Paradise Lost, pp. 81-91.


Maurice Kelley, This Great Argument (Princeton, 1941).


C. S. Lewis, English Literature in the Sixteenth Century, pp. 24-32.
NOTES TO CHAPTER 5


2. Milton's own statements concerning the "uses" of history have already been discussed in Chapter III. George W. Whiting, Milton's Literary Milieu (Chapel Hill, 1939), especially pp. 63-93, has established beyond all doubt Milton's "use" of such histories as Raleigh, Pliny, and Diodorus.


6. Ibid., 73.

7. Ibid., 48-58.


9. Ibid.

10. CE, XVI, 279-281.


13. Campbell, op. cit., 3-60.


17. Ibid., 8-10. See also Rollins and Baker, op. cit., p. 269.


20. Ibid., 8-9. See also Wayland's title pages, reproduced pp. 6-8.
21 Ibid., 65-66.
22 Ibid., 15-20.
23 Ibid.
24 Ibid., 3-60. Campbell outlines as completely as possible the complex and difficult bibliographical history in her introduction.
25 Ibid., 48-58.
26 Ibid., 8-9.
27 Ibid., 62.
28 Ibid., 6-8.
29 The Poems of Sir John Davies, edit. Clare Howard (New York, 1941), pp. 113-114.
30 Ibid., 119.
31 Campbell, op. cit., 345, lines 775-777.
32 Ibid., 318, lines 1-16.
33 Ibid., 268.
34 Ibid., 283-288, lines 385-520.
36 Ibid., 271, lines 71-72.
37 Ibid., 288, lines 519-520.
38 Ibid., 52-55.
41 Campbell, op. cit., 171, lines 8-14.
42 Ibid., 177, lines 162-163.
NOTES TO CHAPTER 6


22 Hyder Rollins and Herschel Baker, edit., The Renaissance in England (Boston, 1954), p. 251. The title of one of the ballads is as follows:

A LETTER TO ROME, TO DECLARE TO THE POPE
JOHN FELTON, HIS FRIEND, IS HANG'D IN A ROPE,
AND FARTHER, ARIGHT HIS GRACE TO ENGORM,
HE DIED A PAPIST AND SEEM'D NOT TO TURN.

This predominantly mediaeval "use" of public punishment of criminals and heretics which continued into the Renaissance is discussed in detail by J. Huizinga, The Waning of the Middle Ages (Garden City, 1954), pp. 9-31.

3 Christian Doctrine, CE, XVI, 5.

4 "More than two-fifths of the books printed in England from 1480 to 1640 were religious, and for the years 1600-40 the percentage is still higher." Douglas Bush, English Literature in the Earlier Seventeenth Century (Oxford, 1945), p. 294.


6 Milton cites some of these opinions in Areopagitica (CE, IV, 299) and his Commonplace Book (CE, XVIII, 207).


9 Ringler, op. cit., 53-68, traces the history of these early attacks.

10 Northbrooke, op. cit., 179-180.

11 Ibid., 93.

12 On the authority of Spenser's letter to Harvey, "New books I hear of none, but only of one that, writing a certain book called The School of Abuse and dedicating it to Maister Sidney, was for his labor scorned, if at least it be in the goodness of that nature to scorn." Cited by Rollins and

13 From the title page of the 1579 edition reprinted by the Shakespeare Society.

14 George L. Kittredge, Introduction to A. J. Cook, edit., *Sidney's Defense of Poetry* (Boston, 1890), discusses the properties of Euphuistic style in relation to Gosson and Sidney.


16 Ibid., 48.

17 Ibid., 30.

18 Ibid., 68.

19 Quoted and discussed by Ringler, *Stephen Gosson*, 73-76.


24 Excerpts are included in an appendix to Part I of the reprint of *The Anatomy of Abuses*, especially pp.83-84.


29 *Commonplace Book*, CE, XVIII, 207.


31 Ibid., 309.

32 Ibid.


35 Ibid., 608.

36 Ibid., 609.

37 Ibid.

38 Ibid., 610.
NOTES TO CHAPTER 7

2 Ibid., 611.
4 Matthew, 12:35.
5 *Christian Doctrine*, CE, XVI, 133.
6 CE, XVI, 279.
7 See Chapter 3 of this dissertation.
8 Of Education, CE, IV, 261, 284.
11 Ibid., 8.
12 Ibid., 9.
13 Ibid., 10.
14 Ibid., 14.
15 Ibid., 21-22.
16 Ibid., 38.
17 Ibid., 13.
18 Ibid., 23.
19 Ibid., 41.
20 Ibid., 45.
21 Ibid., 57-58.
22 Ibid., 63.
23 Ibid., I, 15, 23, 29.
24 Ibid., IV, 327-8.
Even a cursory reading of the few documents reprinted in Edward P. Cheney, edit., Readings in English History (Boston, 1922), pp. 426-436, shows the prevalence of these arguments in Court and Parliament.

Greville, Works, IV, 69.

Ibid., 70.

Ibid., 78.

Ibid., 228-9.

Ibid., 128.

Ibid., I, xxxix.

Areopagitica, CE, IV, 346.
NOTES TO CHAPTER 8

1 Fulke Greville, Works, edit. Alexander Grosart (Blackburn, Lancashire, 1870), IV, 7.

2 Ibid., 38.

3 Ibid., 128.

4 Christian Doctrine, CE, XVII, 5.

5 Ibid., 9.

6 Of Education, CE, IV, 277.

7 Ibid., 275.

8 Ibid., 280.

9 Ibid.

10 Matthew 6:33.

11 The phrase is from the passage in The Reason of Church Government (CE, III, I, 237) in which Milton states his plan for an epic or dramatic poem.

12 CE, III, I, 239.

13 Ibid., 237.


17 Ibid., 232.

18 Ibid., 210.

19 Ibid., 215.


22 Christian Doctrine, CE, XIV, 41.

23 Ibid., 31.


25 CE, III, I, 473. Milton includes temperance as one of the "special virtues connected with the duty of man towards himself." *Christian Doctrine*, CT, XVII, 213. Temperance as understood here is considerably narrower than the Platonic (or for that matter, Spenserian) treatment of temperance.

26 Variorum, VI, 185.


28 Ibid., 60-95.

29 Ibid., 1-50.

30 Ibid., 205.

31 Ibid.

32 Arsopagitica, CE, IV, 344.

33 Wilson, *op. cit.*, 394-401.

34 Ibid.
NOTES TO CHAPTER 9

1 Upton's opinions (cited from Edmund Spenser, Works: Variorum Edition, Baltimore, 1935, VI, 187) have been the basis for most of the scholarly argument concerning the identity of Calidore. Essex and Sidney seem to be the chief contenders for the honor of this identification.


3 Summarized in Variorum, VI, 349-364. Heffner's remarks are on p. 364. Considering the number of pamphlet wars, particularly those which concerned religious matters, during the last fifteen years of Elizabeth's reign, Spenser may well have had the general idea of confused and prideful polemics rather than any specific group.

4 Variorum, VI, 187.


6 Cf.

Dert undertaketh to revive
Our Brut, and sings his first arrive.
—Argument, Polyolbion.


7 Variorum, VI, 198-201.


NOTES TO APPENDIX

10. Ibid., 89.
12. Professor Schultz's illustrations supplement and in general confirm R. F. Jones's conclusions in Ancients and Moderns (St. Louis, 1936), especially the chapter entitled "The Advancement of Learning and Piety," pp. 91-123.
19. Ibid., 99.
Pope, _op. cit._, 103.

Ibid., Chapter V, especially p. 53.


Ibid., 172-173.


Rosemond Tuve, _Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery_ (Chicago, 1947).

T.W. Baldwin, _William Shakespeare's Small Latin & Greek_. (Urbana, 1944).


Harris F. Fletcher, _The Intellectual Development of John Milton_ (Urbana, 1957).

Oliver M. Ainsworth, _Milton on Education_ (New Haven, 1928).


Maurice Kelley, _This Great Argument_ (Princeton, 1941), makes almost sensational claims, but (as Howard has noted) many of these supposed heterodoxies have been exaggerated.


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