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A STUDY OF
EARLY CAROLINE LYRIC VERSE
WITH SPECIAL ATTENTION TO THAT OF
THOMAS CAREW AND ROBERT HERRICK

A thesis
submitted for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
at the
University of Waikato
by
MARGARET CAMERON McLAREN

University of Waikato

1977

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A B S T R A C T

In this thesis a range of secular lyrics written during the reign of Charles I, and often slighted since, is surveyed. Special attention is directed to the work of Thomas Carew and Robert Herrick.

First the historical background of the period, with its social and political tensions, is examined. The court is seen as a bastion of privilege, a cause for resentment and, at the same time, a nurturing ground for great poetic talent.

In the tradition of earlier monarchs, Charles I was an earnest patron of the arts; and from their country estates, literary aristocrats like Lord Falkland also gave personal and practical encouragement to artists, especially poets.

The poets in their turn, though they did not always admit it, took their work seriously, creating a myriad of lovely lyrics in which classical, medieval and Renaissance themes and conventions are used, challenged and reworked.

The influence of John Donne and Ben Jonson is seen to have been considerable. Donne had provided a model of personal, dramatic and closely-reasoned "strong lines". And Jonson encouraged controlled reliance on classical poets "as Guides, not Commanders", and wrote poetry and criticism in clear idiomatic English, with a respect for the rhythms of both speech and song.

The development of music, in particular the increasing popularity of the declamatory air in which individual words were heard clearly so that each was important, affected early Caroline lyrics, and was affected by them. To a lesser extent, but just as

surely, drama, masque and dance left their mark on the lyric form.

Whether, like Carew, the early Carolines wrote lyrics to be circulated in manuscript, or like Herrick, to be published, the best of them were highly conscious of their craft, and sensitive to the laws of proportion and decorum. They treated their favourite themes, love, philosophy, court and country living, politics and social occasions, the occult, the abnormal and the comic, from many angles, with varying degrees of sensitivity, knowledge and sophistication.

Thomas Carew's polished amatory and occasional poems "netts, of passions finest thred", are shown to investigate human relationships with frankness and scintillating wit.

For all their unpretentious charm and freshness, the lyrics of Robert Herrick, in the context of the whole of *Hesperides*, are seen to have immense range, depth and assurance. With his love of friends and family, his appreciation of living things, his acceptance of the beautiful and the ugly, his delightful sense of fun, his bold comments on the world about him, and his insistence on the worth of human joy, Herrick has earned the immortality he considered his due.

The court poets, and in particular Thomas Carew and Robert Herrick, wrote an abundance of thoughtful finished lyrics, "rare perfections" to use Carew's words, which can both give great pleasure and increase our understanding of the complexities of life.

A C K N O W L E D G E M E N T S

I am grateful to my supervisors. Professor D.I.B. Smith of the University of Auckland has given me stimulating and scholarly guidance, and Mr D.H. Parker has constantly advised and encouraged me.

I would like also to record my thanks to the librarians of the Bodleian Library, Oxford, the British Museum, the Cambridge University Library, the St John's College Library, Cambridge, the University of Leicester Library and, most of all, the University of Waikato library.

Finally I want to thank my husband, Ian, for his unremitting help and forbearance during the long preparation and slow writing of this thesis.

A B B R E V I A T I O N S

<i>B.M.</i>	<i>British Museum</i>
<i>Bod.</i>	<i>Bodleian Library</i>
<i>E.C.</i>	<i>Essays in Criticism</i>
<i>E.L.H.</i>	<i>English Literary History</i>
<i>E.S.</i>	<i>English Studies</i>
<i>J.E.G.P.</i>	<i>Journal of English and Germanic Philology</i>
<i>J.H.I.</i>	<i>Journal of the History of Ideas</i>
<i>H.L.Q.</i>	<i>Huntingdon Library Quarterly</i>
<i>M.L.Q.</i>	<i>Modern Language Quarterly</i>
<i>M.L.R.</i>	<i>Modern Language Review</i>
<i>N.R.</i>	<i>National Review</i>
<i>O.E.D.</i>	<i>Oxford English Dictionary</i>
<i>O.U.P.</i>	<i>Oxford University Press</i>
<i>P.R.M.A.</i>	<i>Proceedings of the Royal Music Academy</i>
<i>R.E.S.</i>	<i>Review of English Studies</i>
<i>S.C.N.</i>	<i>Seventeenth Century News</i>
<i>S.E.L.</i>	<i>Studies in English Literature</i>
<i>S.P.</i>	<i>Studies in Philology</i>
<i>T.L.S.</i>	<i>Times Literary Supplement</i>
<i>U.P.</i>	<i>University Press</i>

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Early Caroline lyrics, high in quality and considerable in number though they are, have been relatively neglected. In this thesis I intend to give serious attention to what seems to me an undervalued body of poetry.

Since 1921, when T.S. Eliot's essays, "The Metaphysical Poets" and "Andrew Marvell" both appeared,¹ immense and deserved heed has been paid to the poetry of John Donne, Andrew Marvell, and the religious poets of the mid-seventeenth century such as George Herbert, Thomas Traherne, Henry Vaughan, and comparatively little to the secular poets who, between the times of Donne and Marvell, wrote so many lyrics of incomparable grace and sweetness. I hope to give some indication of what lay behind the judgment of contemporary readers who could place Randolph above Herrick, or even Cowley above the early Milton.²

The description, "early Caroline", includes poems written during or close to the reign of Charles I, that is, between 1625 and 1649. The beheading of Charles, less than a year after Herrick's poems were published, closed the period sharply.

¹Both essays are in T.S. Eliot's *Selected Essays*, Rev. edn, 1951, Faber and Faber, London.

²Edward Phillips in *Theatrum Poetarum*, 1675, Charles Smith, London, p. 1, writes of "Abraham Cowly, the most applauded Poet of our Nation both of present and past Ages." Phillips, as Milton's nephew, deliberately omitted Milton from his own survey. However "the most applauded" appears to give not only Phillips's own, but a general contemporary opinion.

The term "lyric" defies such easy definition. In this thesis I intend to keep as closely as possible to the understanding Renaissance poets had of lyric, that is, a metrical composition which could and might be set to music as a single song. A high proportion of early seventeenth century lyrics were, in fact, set to music, and in a few cases such as Ben Jonson's "Drink to me only", Robert Herrick's "Fairer Daffodils", and Waller's "Go, lovely Rose", a particularly happy combination of music and verse allowed them to rise above the disregard since accorded to other equally fine contemporary lyrics.

The Renaissance provides no neat definition of the lyric. William Webbe tells us, "The most usuall kindes (of verse) are four, the Heroic, Elegiac, Iambick and Lyric. . . Sometimes the lyric ryseth aloft, sometimes the comickall."¹ Puttenham writes of those "who delighted to write songs or ballads of pleasure. . . melodious Poets (melici) or by a more common name *Lirique* Poets."² Campion calls certain poems "lyricall, because they are apt to be soong to an instrument, if they were adorn'd with convenient notes."³ Sidney sweeps all English poetry of which he approves into the term, "lyricall." "In England. . . other sorts of Poetry almost have we none, but that Lyricall kind of Songs and Sonnets." At the same time he condemned the English lyric of his time for its frigidity or general lack

¹William Webbe, "Of English Poetry", 1586, *Elizabethan Critical Essays*, ed. G. Gregory Smith, 1904, I, 291-292, O.U.P., I, 291-292.

²George Puttenham, *The Art of English Poesie*, 1589, ed. G.D. Willcock and Alice Walker, 1936, I, 26, U.P., Cambridge, p. 25.

³Thomas Campion, *Observations in the Arte of English Poesie*, 1602, ed. G.B. Harrison, 1922, Bodley Head, London, p. 29.

of what he called "forciblenes, or *Energia*,"¹ a kind of censure which became redundant with such poems as Donne's "The Anniversarie" or Carew's "The Rapture".

It is not till twenty-five years after Charles the First's execution that Edward Phillips comes closer to a definition with this pronouncement: "The Lyric consists of Songs or Airs of Love, or other the most soft and delightful subject in verse most apt for Musical Composition."² Phillips, like Puttenham and Sidney before him, recognised that then, as now, lyrics derived from their musical quality a charm and warmth all their own.

Twentieth century scholars attempting to define the lyric come no closer than Phillips did. T.S. Eliot, for instance, calls the very term "unsatisfactory" but favours the idea of the German poet, Gottfried Benn, that the lyric shows "the poet talking to himself...or to nobody....He (the poet) has something germinating in him for which he must find words."³ But many Caroline lyrics were addressed to named individuals, and intended for a particular audience. C. Day Lewis suggests that one possibility would be to exclude poems that argue, poems with mental complications of any kind and poems of more than thirty lines,⁴ which means, for example,

¹Sir Philip Sidney, "A Defence of Poetry", *Miscellaneous Prose of Sir Philip Sidney*, ed. K. Duncan-Jones and J. van Dorsten, 1973, Clarendon Press, Oxford, pp. 116-117.

²*Theatrum Poetarum*, p. 20.

³T.S. Eliot, "The Music of Poetry", *On Poetry and Poets*, 1957, Faber and Faber, London, pp. 96, 97.

⁴See C. Day Lewis, *The Lyric Impulse*, 1965, Chatto and Windus, London, p. 3.

that Suckling's "I prithee send me back my heart", "No, no, fair heretick" and "A Ballad upon a Wedding" would all be excluded. Even what seem most obvious examples of the Caroline lyric such as Carew's "Go, thou gentle whispering wind" have more than thirty lines, and mental complications of every kind surge through language, syntax and imagery of early Caroline poems.

Modern dictionaries, in which clarity and brevity are all important, avoid the contentious suggestions that come through in a work of depth and complexity such as *The Lyric Impulse*. *The Oxford English Dictionary*, for instance, takes the word 'lyric' back to its source: "Of or pertaining to the lyric, meant to be sung...Now used as the name for short poems (whether or not intended to be sung)... directly expressing the poet's own thoughts and sentiments."¹ Other dictionaries give similar definitions except that *The Random House Dictionary* adds that a lyric is "relatively light in volume and modest in range",² a qualification worth keeping in mind.

For this thesis, any sonnets, odes, elegies, epitaphs, epigrams and ballads that seem short and single-purposed enough to be enjoyed when read or heard at a single sitting are considered lyrics, whether they are as obviously light and sweet and lilting as Carew's "Aske me no more", as thought-provoking as his "Elegy upon the Death of Doctor John Donne", or as stylised as "The Spring". Although this

¹*O.E.D.*, Rev. 3rd edn, 1955, Clarendon Press, London.

²*Random House Dictionary of the English Language*, Rev. edn, 1967, New York.

definition excludes a considerable quantity of Caroline verse, notably verse satires, many of which were unpublished and anonymous, and long narrative or didactic poems such as those by Michael Drayton, John Taylor and George Wither, it takes in a range of concentrated, graceful and finished verse, "rare perfections" such as those Carew writes of "In Answer of an Elegiacall Letter from Aurelian Townsend".

I take "lyric" to mean only the words of a song; where it is appropriate to use or refer to musical setting or to discuss the influence of music on lyrics - or lyrics on music - the opinions as well as any information will be secondary because my own knowledge of music is so limited.

Although religious verse is outside the scope of this thesis, it will sometimes be useful to draw on poems by poets whose central purpose is religious. For example a consideration of early Caroline poets' views on their craft requires mention of Herbert's "Jordan I" just as a study of love lyrics is given added depth by the inclusion of King's "The Exequy".

II. Review of Criticism

Although T.S. Eliot did so much to swing poetic favour towards Donne and those poets he calls "metaphysical" he himself did not exclude other poets of the early seventeenth century from the orbit of his approval. In one essay he goes so far as to say "Between Sidney and Campion in the latter part of the sixteenth century, and Jonson writing towards the end of his life,¹ the greatest period of English poetry

¹That is, 1637.

is comprehended."¹ And that eclectic scholar, George Saintsbury, who by his editing of Herrick, by his three volume *Minor Poets of the Caroline Period*, and by his criticism, recognised the value of early Caroline poetry, insists in *A Last Vintage* "In the best period of the seventeenth century you can hardly neglect the smallest poetaster without the danger of missing often detached passages, sometimes whole pieces of absolute and earthborn poetry."²

Other critics who have concentrated on the period are equally enthusiastic. Rufus Blanshard claims that "English lyrics achieved, in the first half of the seventeenth century, a kind of perfection not matched in our history."³ Patrick Cruttwell calls the seventeenth century "the richest and most intimate in our literature."⁴

Herbert Grierson thought otherwise. "It is Blake and the romantics who weighted the lyric with intimate personal feeling and profound mystical thought,"⁵ he wrote, a view which seems to take little cognisance of many early seventeenth century lyrics, as, for instance, Herrick's "Discontents in Devon" or Vaughan's "The Night", to say nothing of sonnets by Shakespeare or Donne. And elsewhere he contends that "the first half of the seventeenth century produced more than one poet of singular interest, but the general level of practical expression

¹T.S. Eliot, "The Age of Dryden", *The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism*, 1934, Faber and Faber, London, p. 53.

²George Saintsbury, *A Last Vintage*, 1950, Methuen, London, p. 84.

³Rufus A. Blanshard, "Thomas Carew and the Cavalier Poets", *Transactions of the Wisconsin Academy of Science, Art and Letters*, 43, 1951, p. 97.

⁴Patrick Cruttwell, *The Shakespearean Moment*, 1954, Chatto and Windus, London, p. 249.

⁵*Cross Currents in English Literature in the Seventeenth Century*, Rev. edn, 1958, Chatto and Windus, London, p. 34.

and verse...is lower than that which had been reached at the close of the sixteenth century."¹ For the "more worldly, not to say dissolute, temper of the Cavaliers" he appears to have little sympathy. I hope, later, to show that his statement: "The courtly poets were light-o' love young gallants, frequently licentious"² is no more fair to Carew and Herrick than it would have been to Donne.

Other critics, acknowledging the sweetness of the lyrics of the time, yet disparage them for being without Arnold's "high seriousness." Pope dismissed the Cavaliers as "that Mob of Gentlemen *who* wrote with Ease."⁴ Leah Jonas writes of Drayton's *Muse's Elizium*, a collection of shorter poems, "They are typically Caroline with their clever handling of rhythm, their grace and melody, their pleasantness and lack of depth."⁵ Yet Caroline verse, though much of it is concerned with the little details of day to day life, Herbert's "dew and rain" or Herrick's "peebly streames and ruffled roses," is not therefore superficial. The subjects these lyricists treat so sensitively, so sweetly, and so variously - love, self-love, moods, attitudes of people to each other in changing situations, conventions and their breaches, times of happiness and misery, daily life in country and city - remain as important today as they were then.

¹*The First Half of the Seventeenth Century*, 1906, Blackwood, Edinburgh, pp. 163-164.

²*Ibid.*, p. 175.

³*Cross Currents*. . . , p. 163.

⁴"Epistle to Augustus", *The Poems of Alexander Pope*, ed. J. Butt, 1963, Methuen, London, p. 639.

⁵Leah Jonas, *The Divine Science, the Aesthetic of Some Representative Seventeenth Century Poets*, Octagon Books, New York, 1973, p. 77.

III. Thomas Carew

Carew and Herrick, the two poets chosen as outstanding writers of Caroline lyrics, are often thought of together, and not infrequently compared, usually though not always, to Herrick's detriment.¹ From their own time onwards both have been chided and praised. Carew's contemporary popularity is attested by the frequency of his poems in manuscript miscellanies of his day, but Suckling, in his search for a Caroline Apollo to preside over his fellow poets, decided against Carew because of his "fault" of meticulous presentation:

His Muse was hard bound, and th'issue of's brain
Was seldom brought forth but with trouble and pain.²

And Davenant feared that Carew³ had brought love into disrepute, making

¹ See, for example, F.R. Leavis, *Revaluations*, 1949, Chatto and Windus, London, p. 29; Geoffrey Walton, "The Cavalier Poets", *From Donne to Marvell*, 1956, ed. Boris Ford, Penguin, London, p. 65; or the splendid and detailed comparison by Floris Delattre in *Robert Herrick: Contribution à l'étude de la poésie lyrique en Angleterre au dix-septième siècle*, 1911, Félix Alcan, Paris, pp. 500-501.

² Sir John Suckling, "The Wits: (A Session of the Poets)", *The Non-Dramatic Works*, 1971, ed. Thomas Clayton, Clarendon Press, Oxford, p. 73.

³ As, for instance, by his flaunting of the Goblin Honour in "The Rapture", *The Poems of Thomas Carew*, ed. Rhodes Dunlap, 1949, Clarendon Press, Oxford, p. 53. Throughout I shall be quoting from this edition. A comparison of it with, say, J.E. Ebsworth's *The Poems and Masque of Thomas Carew*, 1893, Reeves and Turner, London, or Arthur Vincent's *The Poems of Thomas Carew*, 1899, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, shows dramatically how far modern literary scholarship has advanced. Ebsworth alters Carew's text at will, attempting to improve it. He also makes glaring slips, such as the inclusion of Volpone's song to Celia, "Come my Celia, let us prove..." as one of Carew's poems, although according to C.H. Herford and D. and E. Simpson in *Ben Jonson*, 1902-1952, 11 volumes, Clarendon Press, Oxford (referred to from now on as *Works*) Vol. 2, 49, *Volpone* was written in 1606 when Carew must have been ten or eleven. Vincent's edition appears more accurate than Ebsworth's, but offers a smaller canon of verse and an introduction and notes in no way comparable with Rhodes Dunlap's introduction, appendices, commentary and note on the musical settings.

it appear "glad and gaudy":

For ev'ry Lover that can Verses read,
Hath beeneso injur'd by thy Muse and thee,
Ten Thousand, Thousand times, he wish'd thee dead.¹

But Phillips lauds him, a generation later, "Tom Carew...was reckoned among the chiefest of his time for delicacy of wit and poetic fancy." And the highest praise he can find for Waller is to rate him "not inferior to Carew himself."²

In this century F.R. Leavis sees Carew as a direct link in "the line of wit which runs from Ben Jonson and Donne through Carew and Marvell to Pope,"³ and suggests that Carew "has claims to more distinction than he is commonly accorded."⁴ G.A. Parfitt discusses the seriousness, the range of matter and linguistic awareness of Carew,⁵ and Louis L. Martz⁶ and H.V. Richmond⁷ acknowledge Carew's importance among seventeenth century love poets. But only Edward Selig⁸ has

¹Sir William Davenant, "To Tho: Carew", *The Shorter Poems and Songs from the Plays and Masques*, 1972, ed. A.M. Gibbs, Clarendon Press, Oxford, p. 77.

²*Theatrum Poetarum*, II, 14.

³*Revaluation*, p. 29. Other critics have accepted Leavis's idea. Odette de Mourgues, for instance deliberately excludes court lyrics from her study, *Metaphysical, Baroque and Précieux Lyrics*, 1953, O.U.P., London, p. 141, on the grounds that they "remained in the main current of national poetry."

⁴*Revaluation*, p. 15.

⁵"The Poetry of Thomas Carew", *Seventeenth Century English Poetry*, 1971, ed. William R. Keast, O.U.P., London, pp. 279-290.

⁶Louis L. Martz, *The Wit of Love*, 1969, University of Notre Dame Press, Indiana, shows a warm response to Carew's lyrics.

⁷H.M. Richmond, *The School of Love*, 1964, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, pays Carew comparatively scant attention in an otherwise comprehensive survey of the themes of seventeenth century love poems, but does assume his pre-eminence among contemporary lyricists.

⁸Edward I. Selig, *The Flourishing Wreath*, 1958, Yale University Press, New Haven.

devoted to him the close attention his finely-textured poems deserve; and even in his study a considerable part is either paraphrase or description of imagery. For instance, of "To my Mistress sitting at a Riverside" he writes, "We discover. . . . not a great depth of ocean tempest - tossed but a brook whose perfectly clear waters ripple over a bed of silver and gold."¹ Such criticism is of limited help towards appreciation of the poems.

Carew's lyrics are not for every taste. C.V. Wedgwood dismisses them as "mere arabesques of prettiness"² and calls him "that voluptuous courtier."³ Frank J. Warnke talks of "ribald Carew."⁴ Douglas Bush refers to Carew's "courtly, impersonal, fastidious elegance of form and texture" but concludes that his "amatory artifice is most enjoyable in small drafts."⁵ W.J. Courthope is more damning: "An imagination so shallow, so incapable of penetrating to the heart and movement of things...was, of course, unable to rise into the region of the noble and pathetic."⁶ Thomas Carew did not attempt to rise into such a region. What he did attempt he achieved completely, as I hope, later in this thesis, to show.

¹Edward I. Selig, *The Flourishing Wreath*, 1958, Yale University Press, New Haven, p. 82.

²*Seventeenth Century English Literature*, 2nd edn, 1970, O.U.P., London, p. 45.

³"Poets and Politics in Baroque England", 1944, *Penguin New Writing*, 21, 1960, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, London, p. 124.

⁴"Baroque and Metaphysical" in *The Metaphysical Poets*, ed. Frank Kermode, 1969, Fawcett Publications, Connecticut, p. 104.

⁵*English Literature in the Earlier Seventeenth Century*, 1962, Rev. edn, O.U.P., London, pp. 119-120.

⁶*History of English Poetry*, 1895-1910, Macmillan & Co., London, III, 244.

IV. Robert Herrick

Criticism of the lyrics of Robert Herrick¹ reflects an ambivalence similar to that remarked on in the criticism of Carew's poetry, though for different reasons. Bush, for example, though he professes an affection for Herrick's work, calls it "too sensuously and smoothly Elizabethan for an age of strong lines."² C.V. Wedgwood dismisses Herrick as lacking "the quality of mind necessary for more arduous contemplation than that of violets."³ Basil Willey comments disparagingly: "Herrick's favourite themes are love and wine, pagan joy and pagan sadness; he has no complexities and no 'metaphysical' subtleties."⁴ Leavis is still harsher, dismissing Herrick as "still overrated" and "trivially charming,"⁵ phrases which disturb admirers of Herrick such as Roger B. Rollin and Thomas Cain unnecessarily,⁶ since they in part reflect Leavis's estimate of the lyric form, "light in volume and modest in range" as it is.

¹I have used L.C. Martin's edition, *The Poems of Robert Herrick*, 1959 Rev. edn, O.U.P. London, for all quotations. Although the indexing and additional notes in Max Patrick's edition are considerably fuller, and the text appears equally accurate, there is a satisfying clarity and elegance about Martin's edition. Also Malcolm McLeod (*A Concordance to the Poems of Robert Herrick*, 1936, Clarendon Press, Oxford) has followed Martin's pagination (which up to page 419 is the same as in Martin's earlier editions) and it has sometimes been convenient to use text and concordance together.

²Bush, p. 115.

³"Poets and Politics in Baroque England", p. 131.

⁴Basil Willey, "Robert Herrick 1591-1674", *Church Quarterly Review*, 1955, CLVI, p. 253.

⁵F.R. Leavis, "The Line of Wit", *Revaluation*, p. 36.

⁶See, for example, Roger B. Rollin's *Robert Herrick*, 1966, Twayne Publishers, New York, and Thomas Cain's unpublished dissertation, "The Poetry of Robert Herrick", 1973, Oxford University.

Even some of those who praise Herrick most highly, censure him too, usually for what they consider errors in taste. Swinburne, so generous as to claim, "He is and probably always will be the first in rank and station of English song-writers,"¹ wrote elsewhere of his "monotony of matter and of manner," commenting, "It was doubtless to relieve the saccharine and 'mellisonant' monotony that he thought fit to intersperse those interminable droppings of natural or artificial perfume with others of the rankest and most intolerable odour."²

The Reverend A.B. Grosart, though he was responsible for an edition claiming "integrity of text," wanted "all save students of our Literature warned off to Selections..for we would not choose to have our wives and children come on the sorrowful nastinesses of too many of the so-called Epigrams and occasional lines of the other Poems."³

Even Percy Simpson, in his preface to a selected edition of Herrick, says it "gives a welcome opportunity of clearing away those weeds⁴ from the flower garden of the *Hesperides*."⁵ Max Patrick thinks such

¹A.C. Swinburne, "Robert Herrick, *Studies in Prose and Poetry*, 1894, Chatto and Windus, London, pp. 45-46.

²Introduction, *Works of Robert Herrick*, 1891, ed. Alfred Pollard, George Routledge and Sons, London, p. xii.

³Introduction, *The Complete Poems of Robert Herrick*, 1876, ed. A.B. Grosart, Chatto and Windus, London, pp. xiii-xiv.

⁴That is, Herrick's epigrams.

⁵Preface, *The Poetical Works of Robert Herrick*, 1921, ed. F.W. Moorman, O.U.P., London, p. vi.

finickiness is an attitude of the past: "Some readers attracted by charm have been repulsed by his earthiness and those who savoured this quality were repelled by what they considered his constant insipid daintiness. But twentieth century readers are peculiarly fortunate. For the expansion of sensitivity to extremely diverse kinds of poetry in recent years makes possible, perhaps for the first time since Herrick's own period, healthy free appreciation of all aspects of his many-faceted genius."¹ However Frank Kermode could write in his review of L.C. Martin's most recent edition of Herrick, "The student may still, somewhat peevishly, wonder what there is to say about this poet, short-winded and uneven as he is. . . Herrick is still ravishing in his pretty folklorism and his little votive verses; but these leave little room for comment, less even than the technically and morally coarse writing which fills so many pages of his work."² It may be that the student, rather than wondering what there is to say about the poet, may instead wonder whether Kermode has taken into account Herrick's more serious lyrics such as "Corinna's going a Maying", or the more illuminating criticism of them.³ As for the "technically and morally coarse writing" which offends Kermode, that will be considered later in this thesis.

¹J. Max Patrick, Introduction, *The Complete Poetry of Robert Herrick*, 1963, New York University Press, New York, p. x. From now on this edition will be referred to as *Patrick*.

²Frank Kermode, review of L.C. Martin's 1957 edition of *The Poems of Robert Herrick*, in *Review of English Studies, New Series*, IX, 1958, p. 81.

³See for instance, the discussion of "Corinna", by Cleanth Brooks, *The Well-Wrought Urn*, 1947, Harcourt Brace & Co., New York, pp. 68-75.

Of all the work done on Robert Herrick this century, perhaps the most important is Professor S. Musgrove's short but seminal essay.¹ Not only does Musgrove treat Herrick's poetry with the seriousness it deserves; he also disposes of the myth that Herrick is pagan simply because he absorbed classical allusions and beliefs into his lyrics.² And he showed how meaningless any separation of early seventeenth century poetry into schools can become,³ a lesson still not learnt by some current critics.⁴

¹*The Universe of Robert Herrick*, 1950, Auckland University College Bulletin No. 38, English Series No. 4, Auckland.

²Edmund Gosse had written, "As might be expected his religion is as grossly anthropomorphic as it is possible to be," "Robert Herrick", *The Cornhill Magazine*, 1875, Vol. XXXIII, Smith Elder & Co. London, p. 187; and even this century F.W. Moorman in *Robert Herrick: a Biographical and Critical Study*, 1921, O.U.P., London, p. 208, commented: "There was in Herrick a curious strain of paganism, which accords none too well with his duties as a Christian priest." Criticism since Musgrove's publication, such as Thomas R. Whitaker's article "Herrick and the Fruits of the Garden" in *English Literary History*, 1955, XXII, pp. 16-33, takes great pains to show how satisfactorily Herrick resolved any conflict between the Christian and the classical in his poetry.

³*Musgrove*, p. 31.

⁴Earl Miner, for example, thorough and perceptive though his studies are, attempts to discriminate absolutely between two kinds of poetry in his texts *The Metaphysical Mode from Donne to Cowley*, 1969, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, and *The Cavalier Mode from Jonson to Cotton*, 1971, Princeton University Press, and consequently fails to appreciate fully the poetry of Herrick, and still more, of Carew, both of whom are considered only in the latter book, mostly on the rather naive grounds that they name the people they write of and to.

The author of the only recent full length published critical study¹ of Herrick's poetry acknowledges his debt to Musgrove. Where critics take issue with Musgrove, as for example Thomas Cain² who challenges Musgrove's assertion that the mood in "Corinna" is "that of the mind on holiday," they do Herrick no service. Conscious of the proximity of "endlesse night" as Herrick is, he is still eager to enjoy "the harmlesse folly of the time" while he can. Corinna - or Anthea or Bianca for that matter - may be "taking her place in a ritual with great biblical and classical weight behind it"² but she, "sweet slug-a-bed" is invited to do so with the gaiety and lightness Musgrove recognises.

Some non-critical works have been useful in various ways. Because almost all the primary material considered in this thesis is stored in manuscript form in the Bodleian, *The First-Line Index of English Poetry 1500-1800 Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library, Oxford*,³ has been invaluable not only for checking details, but also as a kind of vast concordance of early Caroline lyrics. Difficult as it may be to accept what amounts to a large scale vocabulary count as a serious contribution to literary criticism, it cannot be denied that Josephine Miles's painstaking survey⁴ provides useful reinforcing information for a study of

¹Roger B. Rollin, *Robert Herrick*, which shows the immense richness and variety of Herrick's lyrics.

²Cain, p. 210.

³Ed. M. Crum, 1969, Clarendon Press, Oxford.

⁴*The Primary Language of Poetry in the 1640's*, 1948, University of California Publications in English, XIX, No. 1.

Caroline lyrics, and also helps to counter her compatriot's theory that there is basically no difference between poetic theory and practice in the times of Philip Sidney and Thomas Carew.¹ And K.A. McEuen² has explored the sources of many Caroline lyrics with great thoroughness. It might be argued that a study such as this should confine itself to the poetry of a chosen exponent. But just as, in Donne's words, "No man is an Iland intire of it selfe; every man is a peece of the *Continent*, a part of the maine,"³ so every poem of the time was part of that greater whole covered in Rosemond Tuve's term, "Renaissance poetic." There was still a shared realm of thought and feeling, language and rhythm, imagery and allusion, in verse of very different kinds, from drinking songs to elegies. To use a phrase or an idea from other poetry, classical, European, or English, could add new depths to even the slightest of lyrics. Lovelace's lines,

Tell me not, (Sweet) I am unkinde,
That from the Nunnerie
Of thy chaste breast and quiet minde,
To Warre and Armes I flie⁴,

derive their peculiar power not only from the hypnotic rhythm but also

¹See Rosemond Tuve, *Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery*, 1947, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

²*Classical Influence upon the Tribe of Ben*, 1939, The Torch Press, Iowa. This seems the most detailed of several studies of this kind.

³"Devotions upon Emergent Occasions", *Complete Poetry and Selected Prose*, ed. J. Hayward, 1955, Nonesuch Library, London, p. 538.

⁴"To Lucasta, going to the warres", *The Poems of Richard Lovelace*, 2nd edn, 1930, ed. C.H. Wilkinson, London, p. 18.

from the associations of *nunnery*. In Martin Lluelyn's "Epithalamium"¹ the bride's sheets are called a "nunnery." More remarkably, William Habington wrote, in "To Roses, in the Bosom of Castara",

Yee blushing Virgins happie are
In the chaste Nunn'ry of her breasts.²

And Herrick made the image his own:

Under a Lawne, then skyes more cleare,
Some ruffled Roses nestling were:
And snugging there, they seem'd to lye
As in a flowrie Nunnery.³

Donne's famous compass image in "A Valediction: Forbidding mourning" and Jonson's, in the lines,

And like a Compasse keeping one foot still
Upon your Center, doe your Circle fill
Of generall knowledge;⁴

have behind them an elaborate lore associated with compasses.⁵ And Lord Herbert's poem, "To his Watch, when he could not sleep"⁶ beginning

¹*Rare Poems of the Seventeenth Century*, 1936, ed. L. Birkett Marshall, University Press, Cambridge, p. 156.

²*The Poems of William Habington*, ed. K. Allott, 1948, University Press, Liverpool, p. 12.

³"Upon Roses", *Herrick*, p. 25.

⁴"An Epistle to Master John Selden", *Works*, VIII, 159.

⁵See John Freccero's essay, "Donne's 'Valediction Forbidding Mourning'", *Journal of English Literary History*, XXX (1963), pp. 335-376.

⁶*The Poems, English and Latin, of Lord Herbert of Cherbury*, ed. G.C. Moore Smith, 1923, Clarendon Press, Oxford, p. 1.

"Uncessant minutes" adds, later, to the restlessness of the "uncessant Labours" in Marvell's "The Garden".¹

This sharing of a common reservoir of language and imagery may account partly for some of the confusion over authorship of Caroline lyrics. In the manuscript miscellanies there are many examples of poems being ascribed to two or more authors.² Even in printed texts this was not uncommon,³ and this century, when editing has a rigour unknown previously, articles disputing authorship of poems are not infrequent.⁴

The argument against the choice of a lesser known period of literary achievement, and of two poets known mostly for a minute sample of their work, has been answered before now. Saintsbury stresses that it is important to look widely. "Every fresh example *may* - it may almost be asserted that every fresh example *does* give the

¹*The Poems and Letters of Andrew Marvell*, ed. H.M. Margoliouth, 3rd edn, 1971, Clarendon Press, Oxford, I, 51.

²For instance, "A Health to a Mistris" included by Rhodes Dunlap in his edition of Carew among 'Poems of uncertain authorship', is ascribed in *B.M. Add Ms 15299* to R. Clerke, but in *B.M. Harley 6057* to Th. Cox. "On a Gentlewoman dying in Travell and the childe unborne" is attributed to William Browne in *B.M. Harley 6931*, to Doctor Corbett in *Bod. Rawl. Poet 117* and to William Davenant in *B.M. Egerton 2421*.

³To cite one of many possible examples, "Among the myrtles as I walked" appeared in Carew's 1640 posthumous *Poems*, eight years before it was printed in Herrick's 1648 edition which he edited so carefully himself.

⁴Consider, for example, Malcolm Wilder's "Did Jonson write 'The Expostulation' attributed to Donne?", *Modern Language Review*, Vol. 24, 431-435.

rule with a difference; and by far the larger number of these differences are at least illustrative."¹ Josephine Miles uses her research to support a similar conviction: "We may note the clear fact that innovation in the materials of poetry comes strongly from minor poets."² But the Caroline lyric merits study not simply to discover where innovation may have sprung from; rather for the sheer delight it can give. A variety of themes and conventions were taken up, used and countered, with both the immediacy of speech and the lilt of music.

The lyric, possibly more than any other form of verbal language, derives its appeal from sound, from the appeal to Eliot's "auditory imagination...the feeling for syllable and rhythm, penetrating far below the conscious levels of thought and feeling, impregnating every word."³ In this thesis I shall try to use Caroline lyrics to show their charm and range, from the delicate softness of Jonson:

Have you seene but a bright Lillie grow
Before rude hands have touch'd it,⁴

to the gay cheekiness of Suckling:

Why so pale and wan fond Lover?⁵

¹Introduction, *Minor Poets of the Caroline Period*, 1921, ed. George Saintsbury, Clarendon Press, Oxford, I, iv.

²*Renaissance, Eighteenth Century and Modern Language in English Poetry*, 1960, University of California Publications, Berkeley, p. 50. Detailed evidence is given elsewhere in the same chapter.

³"Matthew Arnold", *The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism*, 1933, Faber & Faber, London, pp. 118-119.

⁴"Her Triumph", *Works*, VIII, 134.

⁵"Song", *Suckling*, p. 64.

to the urgency of Randolph:

Chide the slow Preist, that so goes on,¹

to the controlled sensibility of Carew:

In *Celia's* face a question did arise
Which were more beautifull, her lips or eyes,²

and, finally, to the "lovely concreteness"³ of Herrick:

Gloves, Garters, Stockings, Shooes, and Strings.⁴

¹"An Epithalamium", *The Poems of Thomas Randolph*, 1929, ed. G. Thorn-Drury, Hazlewood Books, London, p. 54.

²"Lips and Eyes", *Carew*, p. 6.

³This phrase is taken from Odette de Mourges, *Metaphysical, Baroque and Précieux Poetry*, p. 176.

⁴"To Phillis to love, and live with him", *Herrick*, p. 193.

CHAPTER TWO
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

I. The Reign of Charles I.

Charles I's reign presents difficulties to the literary historian. Basil Willey writes about the rejection of scholasticism and the growth of rational theology in the opening years of the century, and then moves on to discuss Hobbes and Glanvill,¹ overleaping Caroline attitudes entirely, as though, to him, the court poets did not matter.

C.V. Wedgwood goes to the other extreme, holding the poets at least partly responsible for Charles's arrogant and ostrich-like behaviour.²

Neither ignoring the Caroline poets nor censuring them helps us understand what they were about.

Certainly their age was a troubled one, disturbed philosophically by questions such as Montaigne's "Who am I? What do I know?", theologically by Phillip Stubbes's prediction of the end of the world and by the prevalence of religious persecution,³ economically by the

¹*The Seventeenth Century Background*, 1957, Chatto and Windus, London.

²*Poetry and Politics under the Stuarts*, 1960, University Press, Cambridge, pp. 30-31: "Poetic exercises...undoubtedly had the effect of stimulating a self-congratulatory attitude in the king and some of his closest friends. Trivial in themselves, the compliments of the court poets were not in the end to be trivial in their results: they stimulated, both in those who wrote and in those who received them, an attitude of mind which weakened the judgement and made king and courtiers alike unable to read the harsher signs of the times."

³One way out, of course, was to leave the country, a chance many took and many more contemplated. See below, p. 217.

desperate financial state of the monarchy and the consequent imposition of such levies as ship money, and most of all politically by Charles I's highhanded treatment of his parliament.¹

While England was simmering for revolution the poets, both at court and in the universities, kept writing, assuming and retaining for most of Charles I's reign, a degree of importance, popularity and relative security.

It is a rhyming Age, and Verses swarme
At every stall,²

wrote Ben Jonson, while Michael Drayton gave a comfortable and civilised picture of dedicated poets sharing their work:

My dearely loved friend how oft have we
In winter evenings (meaning to be free,)
To some well chosen place us'd to retire;
And there with moderate meate, and wine, and fire,
Have past the howres contentedly with chat,
Now talk'd of this, and then discours'd of that,
Spoke our owne verses 'twixt our selves, if not
Other mens lines.³

This does not mean that poets continued to sing as blandly as the Elizabethans had done in the socially and politically stabler years

¹See Lawrence Stone, *The Causes of the English Revolution*, 1972, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, p. 128, who quotes Charles in his proclamation of 27 March, 1629, "We shall account it presumption for any to prescribe any time unto us for parliaments."

²"An Elegie", *Works*, VIII, 200.

³"To my Most Dearely-loved Friend, Henery Reynolds Esquire", *Poems of Michael Drayton*, ed. John Buxton, 1953, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, I, 151.

of the late sixteenth century, pleading with a lover, or asking: "Ah sweet Content, where is thy mild abode?"¹ Many of the lyrics of Charles's time had a new edge, a vigour, unknown before. The nascent air of challenge and unrest emerged in the poetry of the time. A tradition of royal patronage in all the arts had been established at the court² and continued to flourish. But the poets were aware that all was not well there,³ and that life outside the confines of the court was not as settled as it had seemed.

Donne had put into verse not only his own restlessness but the whole spirit of uncertainty that caused gentlemen of his day to test unaccepted beliefs:

The new Philosophy calls all in doubt

¹"Sonnet", Barnaby Barnes, *Pathenophil and Parthenophe*, 1593, reprinted in Ault, *Elizabethan Lyrics*, 4th edn, 1966, Longmans Green, London, pp. 167-168.

²When James, from being King of Scotland, went to England as King, various Scottish poets followed him. The right to patronage they - like other court poets - took for granted as theirs, comes out in a poem of Alexander Craig's,

My rusticke Muse when as each one cry'd out,
 Could not be heard from so remote a place...
 Wee come from farthest *Scotish* coastes to thee,
 Some portion of thy royall feast to finde:
 It restes in thee to welcome us therefore,
 And make us rich, that I may beg no more.

"Essayes of a Prentice in the Divine Art of Poesie", *Poetical Works of Alexander Craig*, ed. D. Laing, 1873 printed for the Hurterian Club, Glasgow, p. 8.

³In Satyre III Donne had asked

. . . hast thou seene,
 O Sunne, in all thy journey, Vanitie,
 Such as swells the bladder of our court?

(*The Poems of John Donne*, ed. H.J.C. Grierson, 1912, Clarendon Press, Oxford, pp. 164-165.)

The Element of fire is quite put out:
 The Sun is lost, and th'earth, and no mans wit
 Can well direct him where to looke for it.¹

Randolph refers to the same spirit of intellectual disquiet:

In this unconstant Age when all mens minds
 In various change strive to outvie the winds.²

Carew, in a poem celebrating the culture, the gaiety, the "calme security" of the court, calls the rest of England an "obdurate Land."³

A decade later Lovelace realises the unease has become agitation, ferment:

And now an universall mist
 Of Error is spread or'e each breast,
 With such a fury edg'd, as is
 Not found in th' inwards of th'Abyesse.⁴

When the "Publick Faith," "Parliament" and "Property" all seem in danger only one certainty remains. In Lovelace's words again:

Since then none of these can be
 Fit objects for my Love and me;
 What then remaines, but th' only spring
 Of all our loves and joyes? The KING.⁵

¹"The First Anniversarie", *Donne*, p. 237.

²"To Mr Feltham on his booke of Resolves", *Randolph*, p. 75.

³"In Answer of an Elegiacall Letter upon the death of the King of Sweden", *Carew*, p. 75.

⁴"To Lucasta. From Prison", *Lovelace*, p. 51.

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 50.

Isabel Rivers suggests that when the court poets of Charles's day praised courtly life, their king and those near to him, they did so in full awareness of their weakness, intending to improve them.¹ That such an attitude did exist comes out in a protest of Henry King's:

I would not flatter. May that dyet feed
Deform'd and vicious soules: They onely need
Such physick who grown sick of their decayes
Are onely cur'd with surfets of false praise.²

However, the satisfied, even exuberant tone of poems like Fanshawe's "An Ode, upon occasion of His Majesties Proclamation in the Year 1630", and Carew's "In Answer of an Elegiacall Letter upon the death of the King of Sweden" indicates that such didacticism, if it existed at all, was only one minor element in the lyrics of the Cavaliers. Rather they were making a last-ditch stand for all that seemed to them noble and permanent in life: loyalty, courtesy, sensitivity to beauty and to art.³ Grierson's words could apply to almost any of the Caroline poets, "The metaphysicals were all on the King's side, for they were on the

¹*The Poetry of Conservatism*, 1973, The Rivers Press, Cambridge, pp. 62-63. "The theory of flattery is that it makes the flattered man better." She was discussing in particular Jonson's use of the masque, and, incidentally, the whole moral issue of flattery.

²"To the Queen at Oxford", *The Poems of Bishop Henry King*, ed. M. Crum, 1965, Clarendon Press, Oxford, p. 97.

³P.W. Thomas, *Sir John Birkenhead, 1617-1679*, 1969, Clarendon Press, Oxford, p. 134, saw the publication of the Beaumont and Fletcher folio in 1647 in a similar light. "The folio was not simply a commercial or aesthetic venture: it was also a morale-boosting gesture of defiance, a propagandist reassertion of the Stuart ethic."

side of the humanities."¹

Sir John Suckling, not long before Charles set out expecting to quell the Scottish rebellion, expressed the mood of many courtiers:

May no ill vapour cloud the skie,
Bold storms invade the Soveraigtie,
But gales of joy, so fresh, so high,
That You may think Heav'n sent to try this year
What sayl, or burthen, a Kings mind could bear.²

In spite of the pose of flippancy Suckling usually adopted,³ he is earnest in that poem, drawing on what Davenant called "the whole strength and stock of Poesie"⁴ to convey his loyalty.

It was customary for literary men - or those who had "wholly addicted themselves"⁵ to writing - to see their art not as a time-passing hobby⁶ nor as a psychological outlet⁷ but as a serious occupation. Puttenham had preached: "A Poet is as much to say as a maker.Such as (by way of resemblance and reverently) we may say of God."⁸

¹*Seventeenth Century Poetry*, p. 15.

²"On New-years day 1640. To the King", *Suckling*, p. 85.

³As in "The Wits: A Sessions of the Poets", *Suckling*, pp. 71-76.

⁴"To Endimion Porter", *Davenant*, p. 50.

⁵"Discoveries", *Works* VIII, 583.

⁶As might seem from the Drayton quotation (above, p.22) when taken out of context.

⁷As could equally have seemed from Donne's "Elegie: Death" (*Donne*, p. 284) from his outcry,

Language thou art too narrow, and too weake
To ease us now.

⁸*Puttenham*, p. 3.

"Poesie in all kind of speaking is the chiefe beginner, and maintayner of eloquence," lauded *Campion*.¹ "Poetry," wrote Ben Jonson, "is the most prevailling Eloquence, and of the most exalted Charact."² And Randolph, rating poetry as "inestimable," declared,

There is no wealth to valiant poetry!³

The respect such poets accorded their work carried over into their most profound family moments. Ben Jonson could do his dead child no greater honour than to call him:

BEN IONSON his best piece of *poetrie*.⁴

Nor, since the growth over a hundred and thirty years of printing, of a reading, as well as a listening public, was verse the prerogative only of those who regarded it as their life's work. Any courtier might trust his feelings to the written word, preferably in rhyme⁵ and metre. Castiglione had listed knowledge of poetry among the essential qualities of a gentleman, and repeated a Maister Bernade's advice that a man who wanted to show his love to a woman ought "being at a banquet to dip his finger in wine and write it upon the table."⁶ As John Buxton put

¹*Campion*, p. 3.

²"Discoveries", *Works*, VIII, 633.

³"On the Inestimable content he injoyes in the Muses, to those of his Friends that dehort him from Poetry", *Randolph*, p. 28.

⁴"On My First Sonne", *Works*, VIII, 41.

⁵Those who had anything to say *against* rhyme, notably *Campion* and *Jonson*, were themselves the most accomplished rhymers.

⁶*Baldassaro Castiglione, The Book of the Courtier*, translated by Sir Thomas Hoby, ed. W.H.D. Rouse, 1928, Dent, London, p. 252.

it: "Any educated man would think it quite natural to try his hand on occasion at a copy of verses....The writing of poetry was part of the social tradition...of the complete gentleman in the seventeenth century."¹ So, too, was the knowledge and appreciation of lyrics written by others within the court's circle, to show favour or accompany a gift. Ben Jonson's "Drinke to me onely",² however much it might owe to Philostratus, however far it might be from any "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings," captured both the mood of the time and the essence of a true love poem, worthy to nestle in a "rosy wreath" such as an admirer might send.³

The printers, in fact, deliberately provided for those who needed verses and could not write themselves. In one of the late sixteenth century miscellanies the prospective buyer had been told,

Here may you have such pretie thinges,
As women much desire:
Here may you have of sundrie sorts
Such songs as you require.⁴

¹Preface, *A Tradition of Poetry*, 1967, Macmillan and Co., London, p. vii.

²"Song: To Celia", *Works*, VIII, 106.

³That some of Jonson's poems were considered of potential practical use is indicated in these quaintly extravagant lines from Richard West's elegy "On Mr Ben Iohnson", (*Works*, XI, 470)

The cringing Mounsieur shall *thy Language* vent
When he would melt his *Wench* with *Complement*
Using *thy phrases*, he may have his wish,
Of a coy *Nun*, without an angry *Pish*.

⁴"The Printer to the Reader", from *The Handefull of pleasant delites*, composed by Clement Robinson and divers others, 1584, Scolar Press Facsimile, 1973, A1^v.

A similar offer was made in later collections such as *Witt's Recreations*, first published in 1640¹, and *Parnassus Biceps*, 1656.

The poems a reader might "require" ranged widely. As Tasso had written: "No forest was ever quite so crowded with a great variety of trees as poetry is with a great variety of subjects. The matter of poetry then appears more varied than that of any other subject, for it includes things high and low, serious and comic, sad and laughable, public and private, the known and the unknown, modern and ancient, native and foreign, sacred and secular, civilized and primitive, human and divine."² A verse collection such as *Witt's Recreations*³ ranged in content from fairy lyrics with the airy delicacy of "King Oberon's Apparell":

A rich Wastecoat they did bring
Made of the trout-flies gilded wing⁴

to crude but lively verses such as those "Upon a Fart Unlucky Let"

¹See, for instance, the prefatory note "To the Candid and Courteous Reader", by H.H. (Henry Herringman, the "Stationer") of *Witt's Recreations*, 1656 or that "To the Ingenuous Reader" by Abraham Wright prefacing *Parnassus Biceps*, ed. G. Thorn-Drury, 1927, Etchells and Macdonald, London.

²Torquato Tasso, *Discourses on the Heroic Poem*, 1594, translated by Allan H. Gilbert in his *Literary Criticism: Plato to Dryden*, 1940, Wayne State University Press, Detroit, pp. 70-71.

³Published, as already mentioned, in 1640 by J. M(ennis) and J. S(mith), London, but in subsequent years augmented and republished under various titles such as *A Recreation for Ingenious Headpeeces* and *Musarum Deliciae*.

⁴*Musarum Deliciae*, 2nd edn, 1656, Henry Herringman, London, p. 32.

and upon "The Lowse's Peregrination". Some poems were intended to "sweeten your severer studies"¹ in a variety of ways; others, recited in public or sent with gifts, including most of the occasional lyrics to be discussed later, had a clear practical purpose. Nor was such poetry reserved for frivolous entertainment. Puttenham's description of poetry as "the common solace of mankind in all his travails and cares of this transitorie life"² was not meant, or taken, lightly. Montrose, like Raleigh, is reputed to have been rhyming in prison the night before his execution.³ Charles I is said to have had Sidney's *Arcadia* ("that monument of dullness," in Eliot's words⁴) by him during his imprisonment.⁵

II. Royal Patronage

Charles's affection for *Arcadia* belonged within a whole tradition of royal patronage and knowledge of poetry. Puttenham, despite his statement that "in any writer untruth and flatterie are counted most great reproches"⁶ notes Elizabeth as a poet "first in degree...whose learned, delicate noble Muse, easily surmounteth all the rest that

¹*Peacham*, p. 82.

²*Puttenham*, p. 24.

³C.V. Wedgwood, *Poets and Politics in Baroque England*, pp. 135-6.

⁴*Selected Essays*, pp. 128-129.

⁵John F. Danby, *Poets on Fortune's Hill*, 1952, Faber and Faber, London, p. 46.

⁶*Puttenham*, p. 27.

have written before her time or since, for sence, sweetnesse and subtilitye."¹ Elizabeth had translated Boethius herself,² and verses in Volume 2 of Percy's *Reliques of Ancient Poetry* are attributed to her. James I may have been called "that loathsome Lackwit"³ by Coleridge but Ben Jonson called him "best of Poets,"⁴ a "King" able to "test" worthily Jonson's own "Muse". At the age of nineteen James had written out his *Ane Schort Treitise conteining some Reulis and Cautelis to be observit and eschewit in Scottis Poesie* and he continued to write verses and tracts intermittently.⁵ Charles I, though less prolific, turned his hand to literature too. Most of the poems attributed to him have been proved to be by others but not "Majesty in Misery",⁶ an earnest but uneven "Imploration to

¹*Idem*, p. 63.

²E.M.W. Tillyard, *The Elizabethan World Picture*, 1943, Chatto & Windus, London, p. 11.

³R.F. Brinkley in *Coleridge on the Seventeenth Century*, 1968, Greenwood Press, New York, p. 8, quotes this from Notebook 30, fol. 19^v, 20^r, *BM Add. Ms 47527*.

⁴"To King James", *Works*, VIII, 28.

⁵See C.J. Sisson, "King James the First of England as Poet and Political Writer", pp. 47-63, *Seventeenth Century Studies*, presented to Sir Herbert Grierson by G. Bullough and others, 1938, Clarendon Press, Oxford.

⁶This poem is given on pp. 195-198 of *Poems of Sir Walter Raleigh, Sir Henry Wotton and Other Courtly Poets*, ed. J. Hannah, 1885, George Bell & Sons, London, taken from Burnet's *Memoirs of the Dukes of Hamilton* 1677, pp. 381-383 where it is printed "as a copy of verses written by his Majesty in his captivity, which a very worthy gentleman, who had the honour of waiting on him then, (i.e. during his captivity at Carisbrook Castle in 1648) and who was much trusted by him, copied out from the original; who avoucheth it to be a true copy." The poem is also attributed to Charles I in Thomas Percy's *Reliques of Ancient Poetry*, 1858, Bickers & Son, London, II, 329-332.

the King of Kings" as the subtitle explains. Though arrogant in tone, this stanza:

With my own power my majesty they wound;
In the king's name the king himself's uncrowned;
So doth the dust destroy the diamond

could grace a better lyric, but most of the poem, however genuine the feeling in it, is marred by such monotony of rhythm and occasional clumsiness of word choice as this:

Augment my patience; nullify my hate;
Preserve my issue, and inspire my mate;
Yet, though we perish, bless this Church and State.

Chappell gives Charles I as the composer of the music to Carew's lyric, "Mark how the bashful morn"¹, but Ian Spink proves the same setting to be indubitably Lanier's, written for Charles but not by him.² However this may be, Charles I maintained at his court a serious literary circle, much concerned with lyrics. John Beaumont recognised his king's patronage in these lines:

Among your serious thoughts with noble care
You cherish poets, knowing that they are
The starres, which light to famous actions
give,
By whom the mem'ries of good princes live.
You are their prince in a peculiar kind,
Because your Father hath their Art refin'd.³

¹W. Chappell, *Popular Music of the Olden Times*, 2 vols, 1855-1859, Chappell and Co., London, I, 414. He gives as his authority *BM Add Ms 22608, fol. 59.*

²See *English Song: Dowland to Purcell*, 1974, Batsford, London, pp. 7-8.

³"To the Most Illustrious Prince Charles, on the Excellent Use of Poems", *The Poems of Sir John Beaumont*, ed. A.B. Grosart, 1869, Fuller Worthies Library, pp. 140-144.

"A Prince without letters is a Pilot without eyes"¹ warned Ben Jonson, chief poet at Charles's court. "He was well pleased and delighted with readinge verses made upon any occayson" reports Clarendon.² Lucy Hutchinson, who had been at court as a young girl but became the devoted wife of a leading Puritan soldier, called Charles "the most obstinate person in self-will that ever was"³ yet admitted, "Men of learning and ingenuity in all arts were in esteem and received encouragement from the king."⁴ Rubens and Van Dyck painted for him. The art treasures of the Duke of Mantua were bought by him for England at his command. Under the architect, Inigo Jones, St Paul's was elaborately restored and a magnificent house at Greenwich was built for his queen.⁵ Elaborate masques were performed at court, the designs by Inigo Jones and the writing by such poets as Jonson, Carew and Milton.⁶

¹"Discoveries", *Works* VIII, 601.

²Edward Hyde, Lord Clarendon, "Lord Falkland", *History of the Rebellion*, reprinted in D. Nichol Smith's *Characters from the Histories and Memoirs of the Seventeenth Century*, 1918, Clarendon Press, Oxford, pp 49-50.

³*Memoirs of the Life of Colonel Hutchinson*, ed. C. H. Firth, 1885, I, 121.

⁴*Ibid.* pp 119-120.

⁵See John Summerson, *Inigo Jones*, 1966, Penguin, London.

⁶See *Rivers*, p.9.

Such lavishness was resented by many Englishmen¹ but most of those at court agreed with Edward Payton that "King Charles in his tender age was the true patterne for all Princes to walke in, and now is the mirror and glasse for all the worldes imitation."²

Almost all the lyricists of the time were Royalist, and many wrote poems about royal events, such as the birth of royal children, for which they received sinecures and favours of various kinds.³ The most sought after of these was that of Poet Laureate. Although the title was not officially conferred until 1670 when Dryden received it by Letters Patent, it was certainly used earlier. The annual pension promised by James "in consideracion of the good and acceptable service done and to be done unto us by our welbeloved Servaunt Benjamyn Iohnson by a patent issued in 1616"⁴ entitled Jonson to be called King's Poet.⁵ Its value, 100 marks (about £67)⁶ a year, was considerable in an age when the stipend for the Master of St John's College, Cambridge, was 12 pounds a year.⁷ However Jonson, a convivial soul, found it

¹J.P. Kenyon, *The Stuarts*, 1958, Batsford Ltd, London, pp. 89-90 tells us that Charles's subjects complained that he was "squandering away millions of pounds upon old rotten pictures and broken-nosed marbles".

²*Of Court and Courtiers*, *BM Ms Harley* 3364, dated 1633, folio 15'.

³To consider only my major examples, Carew's post at court was that of Sewer in Ordinary to the King as well as Gentleman of the Privy Chamber. Herrick's parish was given him in answer to a direct petition to the king, after the murder of Buckingham. Herrick had served Charles's favourite as Chaplain on his disastrous visit to the Isle of Rhé that same year.

⁴Quoted in full, *Works*, I, 231.

⁵Phoebe Sheavyn, *The Literary Profession in the Elizabethan Age*, rev edn, 1967, University Press, Manchester, p. 102.

⁶*Ibid*, 102.

⁷*Ibid*, p. 113.

insufficient and in 1630 wrote "The humble Petition of poore Ben to th'best of Monarchs, Masters, Men, King CHARLES," asking,

Please your Majestie to make

Of your grace, for goodnesse sake,

These your *Fathers Markes*, your *Pounds*.¹

Apparently Charles agreed, for a warrant, signed by the King, is "gratiously pleased to augment and increase the said annuitie or pencon of one hundred marke into an annuitie of one hundred pounce of lawfull money of England for his life" and also "one Tere of Canary Spanish wyne yearly."²

Although neither of the patents nor Jonson's letter uses the term "Poet Laureate", contemporaries did use it of Jonson. For instance William Hodgson's poem, "On the Author", is subtitled "The Poet Laureat, Ben Iohnson".³ And from that time on Jonson has been considered the first Poet Laureate. *O.E.D.*,⁴ for instance, quotes Masson in *Milton*, I, 387, as saying that the year 1633 was "the thirteenth year of the laureateship of Ben Jonson.". Nowhere is there any suggestion that there could have been more than one Poet Laureate at a time, or that the appointment was not for life. But it is intriguing to notice that an untitled poem by Michael Drayton has the

¹*Underwood Works*, VIII, 260.

²Extant in *Ms Bod. Rawl. A 289*, fol. 12, reprinted in *Works I*, 245-247.

³*Works*, XI, 350.

⁴*O.E.D.*, VI, 108.

heading, "These verses weare made by Michaell Drayton Esquier Poett Laureatt the night before hee dyed."¹ That was in 1631, six years before Jonson died.

Aubrey writes of William Davenant that "After the death of Ben Jonson he was made in his place Poet Laureat".² His 1638 royal "graunt of one anuitie or yearlie pencon of one hundred pounce"³, does not use the title, but John Suckling calls Davenant, "Fraught with Laurell home"⁴ and William Habington writes of him as "Encompast with thy Laurell".⁵ His twentieth century editor, A. M. Gibbs, refers to the royal grant of 1638 as "generally assumed to mark the beginning of Davenant's appointment as Poet Laureate".⁶

Besides Jonson and Davenant most of the poets of the day addressed poems to Charles and received at least indirect benefits from him. Even as journalistic a poet as George Wither dedicated his longest poem, *Britain's Remembrancer*, to Charles, while William Drummond of Hawthornden, a Scot with a beautiful house on the banks of the Esk, and in no way dependent on the king's favours, called his 1633 volume of poems *The*

¹*Drayton*, I, 507.

²*Brief Lives*, ed. A. Clark,¹⁸⁹⁸ Clarendon Press, Oxford, I, 205-206.

³Public Records Office Patent Rolls 14 Car. 1, Part 9, Pat. C. 66/2804 reprinted by E. K. Broadus, *The Office of Poet Laureate in England, with some Account of the Poets*, 1921, Clarendon Press, Oxford, p. 228.

⁴"To my Friend Will. Davenant upon his Poem of Madagascar", *Suckling*, 78.

⁵"To my Friend William Davenant", *Habington*, 158.

⁶Biographical Introduction, *Davenant*, p. xxv.

Entertainment of the High and Mighty Monarch Charles. An anonymous poem 'To the King on New-Yeares day, 1638' epitomises the adulation:

...you (my King) have purify'd our flame
 Made wit our virtue which was once our shame;
 For by your own quick fires you made ours last,
 Reform'd our numbers till our songs grew chast.¹

Connected as most early Caroline secular poets were to the court,² their attitude to it was not uncritical. Though the court stood for loyalty, permanence and grace, it also stood for hypocrisy, emptiness and extravagance. Jonson speaks out against the prevalence there of sycophancy and ostentation, sometimes positively as in epigrams such as "On Sir Cod the Perfumed" or "On Court-worme". More often he suggests what the man of integrity should avoid, as for instance in the words of a Satyr describing Nobody, a rustic who has ventured into the city:

He can neither bribe a grace
 Nor encounter my lords face
 With his plyant smile and flatter,
 Though this lately were some matter.³

As Robin Skelton demonstrates with numerous examples, though the educated cultured gentlemen he called Cavaliers sought to entertain,

¹*Choyce Drollery*, p. 48. In his introduction, p. xvii, J.E. Ebsworth attributes this poem possibly to H. King, but it is not included even tentatively by Margaret Crum in her authoritative 1965 edition of *The Poems of Bishop Henry King*.

²See J.W. Saunders's essay "The Social Situation of Seventeenth Century Poetry", *Metaphysical Poetry*, 1970, ed. M. Bradbury and D. Palmer, Stratford-upon-Avon Studies, 197, Edward Arnold, London, pp. 237-259.

³"Entertainment at Althrope", *Works*, VII, 126-127.

they also sought the destruction of cant and sentimentality.¹

Nowhere is this more apparent than in the lyrics of Thomas Carew, but it is also marked in the work of others such as Suckling who, unlike, say, Wither, enjoyed the leisure and culture, the luxury and the opportunities for licentiousness available at the court, at the same time as he mocked and challenged the social behaviour there.

III. Other forms of patronage

Both within and close to the larger court circles of Charles there existed smaller circles of scholars and poets. The camerata which revolved around Nicholas Lanier, Master of the King's Musicke,² and Ben Jonson, Poet Laureate up to his death in 1637, was perhaps the most concerned with writing and enjoying lyrics.³ Another which overlapped with it was that which surrounded John Selden, that "Monarch in Letters"⁴ who S. W. Singer claims "Kept a plentiful table which was never without the society of learned guests".⁵ Other wealthy courtiers, like Endymion Porter and Lady Mary Wroth, encouraged and gave generously to struggling lyricists and in turn had verse addressed to

¹ See *The Cavalier Poets*, 1970, Faber and Faber, London, p. 26-27.

² Lyrics were written specifically to be sung by this group. For instance, Cartwright's poems, "On the Nativity", "On the Circumcision" and "On the Epiphany", *Cartwright*, pp. 258-259, are all subtitled "For the King's Musick".

³ As in "To a Lady that forbidd to love before Company", *Suckling*, p. 43, Ben Jonson's own "tribe" and his influence on them will be considered later in this chapter.

⁴ "An Epistle to Master John Selden", *Works VIII*, pp. 158-161.

⁵ Biographical Preface to *The Table Talk of John Selden*, 1866, ed. S. W. Singer, Routledge & Sons, London, p. 54.

them.¹ Donne had asked:

And they who write to Lords, rewards to get,
Are they not like singers at doores for meat?²

Certainly poems of gratitude varied in quality. The better ones were written without stooping to

servile flatterie (common *Poets* shame).³

But there were always the dangers of sycophancy hinted at in William Habington's lines prefaced to Shirley's *The Grateful Servant*:

My name is free, and my rich clothes commend
No deformd bounty of a looser friend,
Nor am I warme i' the Sunshine of great men
By guilding their darke sinnes, truth guides my pen.⁴

Besides those patrons attached to the court there were others who dispensed sinecures and hospitality from their country houses.

Sir Philip Sidney, poet and critic himself, had entertained freely. His home, Penshurst Place,⁵ was rivalled in culture and hospitality by Wilton House where his sister, Mary, Countess of Pembroke, lived. "In her time", Aubrey reports, "Wilton House was

¹Consider, for example, Herrick's lyric "To the Patron of Poets: M. Endymion Porter", *Herrick*, p. 41 or Ben Jonson's "To Mary Lady Wroth", *Works*, VIII, 66-67.

²"Satyre II", *Donne*, p. 150.

³Ben Jonson, "To Robert Earle of Salisburie", *Works*, VIII, 41.

⁴"To my friend the author", *Habington*, p. 155.

⁵For Ben Jonson's "To Penshurst" one of several contemporary poems which celebrate the welcome given in great country houses, see *Works*, VIII, 93-96. The genre is discussed in G.R. Hibbard's useful essay, "The Country House Poem of the Seventeenth Century", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, XIX, 1956.

like a College, there were so many and ingeniose persons. She was the greatest Patronesse of wit and learning of any Lady in her time."¹ Buxton goes further, "Not only did she invite poets to visit her at Wilton but her household was staffed by them: Samuel Daniel was her son's tutor, Hugh Sanford her husband's secretary, Thomas Howell had long been in his service, Thomas Moffett was the family doctor."² Her oldest son, William, Earl of Pembroke, was patron to William Shakespeare, John Donne, William Browne, George Herbert and Ben Jonson, and the next son, Philip, who succeeded his brother to the title in 1630, to Robert Herrick.³ The Duchess of Richmond had taken William Davenant as a page until she passed him on to the service of Fulke Greville about 1624.

By the time Charles came to the throne, patronage of this kind was less common. It did, however, flourish at Great Tew, the country house of Lucius Cary, Lord Falkland, where Jonson, Carew, Waller, Cowley and Godolphin all visited. Lord Clarendon called Tew "a University bounde in a lesser volume....His house looked like the University itselpe by the company that was alwayes founde there... Many came thither to study in a better ayre, findinge all the books they could desyre in his library and all the persons together whose company they could wish and not finde in any other society...."⁴

¹Aubrey, I, 138.

²John Buxton, *Sir Philip Sidney and the English Renaissance*, 1954, Macmillan & Co., London, p. 6.

³See "To the right honourable, Philip, Earle of Pembroke and Montgomerie", *Herrick*, p. 141.

⁴"Lord Falkland", reprinted *Nichol Smith*, p. 73.

Falkland, himself a minor poet of some ability¹, writes of his "inspired train"² including in it Carew, Digby, Killigrew, Mayne, Godolphin and Waller.

Besides the court at Whitehall and the country houses, the universities provided a setting conducive to the output of lyrical verses. Although in the twenties and thirties the "University wits" like Randolph were quite separate from the poets who frequented Charles's court, they had Royalist sympathies, were visited quite often by the king and some of his retinue, and wrote verses in honour of these occasions and at countless other opportunities.³ It was quite natural that in the 1640's, back from Scotland and ousted from London, the king should set up his court at Oxford.

IV. Inherited Conventions

Favourable as their conditions were for writing lyric verse in Charles I's reign, the poets writing then - as at any time - owed an immeasurable debt to the past.⁴ Medieval lyrics, whether courtly with an idyllic pastoral setting, or popular in bawdy entertaining vernacular, had certain recognizable characteristics. They were

¹See, for example, his elegy "On his Noble Father, Mr Jonson" in *Jonsonus Virbius, Works*, XI, 402-404.

²"Lord Falkland", *Nichol Smith*, pp. 92-93.

³See *They Were Defeated*, 1932, Collins, London. Much of Rose Macaulay's fictional biography of Herrick is set in university colleges where she imagines him escaping for long spells in a poetry writing and reading circle when life at Dean Prior became too depressing. From a scant collection of facts she recreates a picture of life at Cambridge, sometimes amoral, but always stimulating and intense.

⁴See Cleanth Brooks, *The Wellwrought Urn*, 1947, Appendix 1, pp. 215 ff. for a discussion on how the poet inherits his ideas, his literary concepts and forms, his imagery and his language.

suitable for singing, usually secular, short and pithy, and of practical use for quoting in sermons, or reciting or singing on social occasions such as marriages and farewells. Sometimes light matters were treated seriously, religion being used to intensify secular and even comic verse¹ in a way that was to become an integral part, first of Donne's *Songs and Sonnets*² and later of Caroline verses such as "To Lucasta"³ where Lovelace pleads for a "Resurrection" from his mistress, or "Her Muffe"⁴ where his beloved's fingers are referred to as "ten white Nuns."

Again, it was not uncommon in medieval poems for there to be two voices, as in Robert Henryson's "Robene and Makyne"⁵, written about 1460. By the later sixteenth century this device was

¹Consider, for example, "The Compleint of Chaucer to his Empty Purse," from *The Poetical Works of Chaucer*, 1912, ed. W.W. Skeat, p. 126.

Now purs that ben to me my lyves light

And saveour, as doun in this worlde here.

²For instance, in "The Flea", pp. 40-41, the flea is called a "temple", the beloved and the writer are spoken of as being "cloyster'd" and killing the flea is considered sacrilege.

³*Lovelace*, p. 132.

⁴*Idem*, p. 128.

⁵*An Oxford Anthology of English Poetry*, ed. H. F. Lowry and W. Thorp, 1935, pp. 51-52.

thoroughly absorbed into lyric practice,¹ and was to continue as a favourite Caroline convention. It is used in lyrical dialogues such as Randolph's "A Dialogue between a Nymph and a Shepherd", in answer poems such as Suckling's delightfully impertinent,

Out upon it, I have lov'd
Three whole days together²;

and Sir Toby Matthew's sober, tongue-in-cheek, reply,

Say but did you love so long?³

It also appears in companion poems such as Habington's "To Castara Inquiring why I loved her" and Randolph's equally platonic "Upon Love fondly refus'd for Conscience Sake".

Such conventions are all part of what L. F. Mott calls "the system of courtly love."⁴ This system, perhaps inspired by Ovid's

¹There is, for instance, an anonymous lyric:

Who made thee, Hob, forsake the plough
And fall in Love?

Sweet beauty which hath power to bow
The gods above

What dost thou serve? a shepherdess;
One such as hath no peer, I guess.

Lyrics from the Song Books of the Elizabethan Age, 1897, ed. A.H. Bullen, p. 166. Acknowledgement is there made to William Byrd's *Songs of Sundry Natures*, 1589.

²"The Constant Lover", *Suckling*, p. 55.

³"The Answer", *Idem*, p. 56.

⁴*The System of Courtly Love*, 1965, Haskell House, New York.

Ars Amatoria, is explained step by step in Andréas Chapelain's *De Arte Honesti Amandi*. The typical legend involves a young man who wanders into an enclosed garden¹, is hurt in his attempt to pick the rose which represents his love, and runs away, bitterly complaining.² Adaptions of this theme in *aubade*, or *chanson de dance*, and later in Caroline lyrics, frequently have a spring landscape and a lady with an assumed but pastoral name such as Corinna (which seventeenth century gentlemen would recognise as the name of Ovid's mistress in *Amores*), who has hurt the singer by repulsing him.³

A lyric might be in the form of a dream, a lament, a rapture, an attempt at seduction, an address to either win over or scorn a haughty lady, or a blazon itemising a lady's beauty, all familiar forms among Caroline lyrics.⁴ This planned type of setting, artificial as it may seem today, accorded easily with the gracious formality of courtly life.⁵ The public ceremonies at which lyrics might be

¹See C. S. Lewis, *The Allegory of Love: A Study in Medieval Tradition*, Rev. edn 1951, O.U.P. London, for a survey of the love allegory from the *Roman de la Rose* to Spenser. Stanley Stewart's *The Enclosed Garden*, 1966, University of Wisconsin Press, Milwaukee, examines, not always convincingly, time and the garden in Renaissance imagery.

²Guillaume de Lorris's *Roman de la Rose* could be considered a prototype of poetry based on such conventions.

³See Rosemund Tuve, *Seasons and Months, Studies in a Tradition of Middle English Poetry*, 1933; reprinted 1969, Folcroft Press, P.A. p. 97.

⁴As for example, Suckling's "His Dream", Herrick's "The Vine", and Carew's "The Rapture", "To my Mistris Sitting by a Rivers side", "To my inconstant Mistriss" and "The Complement".

⁵As Harry Levin points out in his article "Notes on Convention", *Perspectives of Criticism*, Harvard Studies in Comparative Literature, 1950, Cambridge, Mass., 20, p. 66, "Conventions are less evident in literature as long as they are working."

recited or sung, in T. S. Eliot's words "gave poetry a framework which made possible the attainment of perfection in particular kinds."¹

An integral part of the stylised pastoral or garden setting was the conventional imagery English courtiers learnt either from their French or Italian counterparts² or from the Greek or Roman elegiac poets. Herrick in his "Upon the death of his Sparrow. An Elegie." makes mention of Catullus's Lesbia and is also directly within the whole anacreontic tradition of poets mourning the death of small creatures. Similarly concepts of eyes like stars and hair like golden wire have origins that go back to Horace.⁴ This does not make them any less natural or fresh when they appear in a stanza such as this:

She thinking not be be espied
Had layd from her her countrey tire;
The tresses of her hair untide
Hung glist'ning like the golden wier.⁵

The lyricists of the miscellanies of the late sixteenth century toyed prettily and frequently with such images, and poets were still

¹"The Social Function of Poetry", *On Poetry and Poets*, p. 16.

²It was not uncommon for courtiers to be able to speak and read French and Italian well. Edward Herbert, for instance, in his *Autobiography* (ed. S.L. Lee, 1886, J. C. Nimmo, London, pp. 150,152,241) reports scraps of conversations he had in those languages.

³*Herrick*, pp. 103-104.

⁴See K. K. Ruthven, *The Conceit*, 1969, Methuen & Co., London, pp. 22-23.

⁵Anon, "The Lamentable Song of the Lord Wigmore", in *The Crowne-Garland of Goulden Roses*, ed. R. Johnson, for J. Wright, London, 1631, pp. 14-17.

doing so in the opening years of the seventeenth century, as is shown by Campion's lovely lyric:

There is a garden in her face
 Where roses and white lillies grow
 . . .
 There cherries grow which none may buy
 Till "cherry-ripe" themselves do cry.¹

In the song books it was not uncommon to find fanciful variations of this kind:

As Flora and I lay waking
 I smiled to see a bird's mistaking
 For from a bough it down did skip
 And for a cherry pecked her lip.²

This is a variant of the "art deceives life" theme of the Greek painter Zeuxis, whose grapes were painted so perfectly that the birds came down to peck them. It recurs in a number of other Caroline poems. For instance in "To Splendor, A Morning Salutation", perhaps by William Cartwright, one stanza runs:

¹"Cherry-ripe" from Thomas Campion's *Fourth Book of Airs*, circa 1617, found in *Lyrics from the Elizabethan Song Books*, p. 80.

²Anon, from John Hilton's *Ayres*, 1624, quoted in *English Madrigal Verse*, 1967, ed. E. G. Fellowes, 3rd edn, Clarendon Press Oxford, p. 116.

Pearch here then silver Dove, and doe not flye mee,
 if thou misdoubtst my love, sitt downand trye mee,
 my soule is ravishd with thy sight

 Ide sippe
 Nepenthe from the lippe.¹

Yet even as poets like Campion and Cartwright were writing, other poets and critics were challenging the use of conventional images. "If I should undertake to wryte in prayse of a gentlewoman, I would neither praise hir christal eye, nor hir cherrie lippe, etc. For these things are *trita et obvia*"² wrote Gascoigne. Randolph puts it this way:

I will not say her haire(s) are finest wires
 of gold or silver, (drosse the world admires).³

Shakespeare had already said, for all time, the same thing, in Sonnet 130:

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;
 Coral is far more red than her lips red.⁴

¹Listed among "Doubtful Poems", *The Poems and Plays of William Cartwright*, ed. G. Blakemore Evans, 1951, University of Wisconsin, Madison, p. 567.

²"Certayne Notes of Instruction", *Elizabethan Critical Essays*, 1904, ed. G. Gregory Smith, 1, 48.

³"The Character of a perfect Woman", *Randolph*, p. 165.

⁴*The Sonnets*, 1966, ed. J. Dover Wilson, University Press, Cambridge, p. 67.

But even negating known conventions was itself part of a tradition well established by Berni and Tasso.¹

Rather than disdaining conventions so brilliantly, other poets took them and used them in new ways. As Donne reworked conventions in poems like "A Jet Ring Sent" and "A Dissolution", so did Carew in poems like "Lips and Eyes" and "In Her Fair Cheeks" and Herrick too, even in his introductory poem, "The Argument of his Book". Ault gives a quaint anonymous poem, "On his Mistris":

I'll tell you how the rose at first grew red
And when the lily whiteness borrowed
You blushed, and straight the rose with red was dight;
The lily kissed your hand, and so was white.²

This recalls Herrick's lines:

and I write

How *Roses* first came *Red*, and *Lillies White*³.

Another anonymous poem from the same manuscript but not included by

¹See *Richmond*, p. 62.

²*Bod. Ms Don c.57*. Reprinted in *A Treasury of Unfamiliar Lyrics*, 1938, ed. Norman Ault, Victor-Gollanz Ltd, London, p. 182.

³"The Argument of his Book", *Herrick*, p. 5.

Ault has similar imagery transmuted into this stanza:

I see a palenes in his brow
 (and) his cheekes are drownd in snow
 Whither are those roses fled?¹

There is, of course, something false about taking the images of roses and lilies - or anything else - out of context and considering them in relation to each other instead of within the poem where each belongs. As Rosemond Tuve points out, "Again and again we see that the nature of the imagery and the intention of the poem are indissolubly connected."²

Equally it is important for us to remember that however we might isolate and comment on language and imagery that seem artificial because they belong within an established convention, the Renaissance poet saw artificial and natural concepts as complementary rather than mutually exclusive.³

¹"Amarillis teare thy haire", *Bod Ms Don c. 57*, fol. 59^r. Surely Keats had both the imagery and the hypnotic rhythm of these lines in mind as he wrote "La Belle Dame sans Merci"?

²*Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery*, p. 18.

³Nature, after all, is the art of God, who is the divine "Maker" - to use the same "high and incomparable title... wee Englishmen have mette with the Greekes in calling him (the poet)" (*Sidney*, p. 77). In Traherne's words:

Long time before
 I in my mother's womb was born
 A God preparing did this glorious store,
 The world for me adorn.

("The Salutation", *The Poetical Works of Thomas Traherne*, ed. and pub. D. Dobell, 2nd edn 1906, London, p.3.)

When King wrote,

Dry those faire, those Christall Eyes,¹

he was deliberately and earnestly using an artificial image familiar to his readers, just as Suckling was when, with half-teasing, care-free cynicism, he comments,

Of thee (kind boy) I ask no red and white
to make up my delight².

To enjoy early Caroline lyrics as they were meant to be enjoyed it is necessary to accept such artificial imagery, to remember, as seventeenth century readers would have remembered, Sidney's famous words: "Nature never set forth the earth in so rich tapestry as divers poets have done, neither with so pleasant rivers, fruitful trees, sweet-smelling flowers, nor whatsoever else may make the too much loved earth more lovely. Her world is brazen, the poets only deliver a golden."³

V. John Donne

Although many of the conventions used by Caroline lyricists were firmly rooted in earlier traditions, certain fresh characteristics can be traced to poetry closer to their time. By the seventeenth century the right of the individual to hold and express his own opinion was recognised more than it had been before. However complex the reasons,

¹"Sonnet", *King*, p. 147.

²*Suckling*, p. 48.

³*Sidney*, p. 78.

England had broken free of the authority of the Pope, and was increasingly restive under kings who, no more than their predecessors, assumed the right to absolute power. And as in politics, so in poetry, intense personal feeling was making itself heard.

Perhaps the most self-centred and individual¹ of the Jacobean poets was John Donne.

Most poetry, and especially most lyrical poetry, is an expression of personal feeling, but in Donne's lyrics, secular and divine, the insistence on self is especially bold:

I have done one braver thing
Then all the *Worthies* did,²

he wrote, and,

I wonder, by my troth, what thou, and I
Did, till we lov'd,³

and

I am a little world made cunningly.⁴

Not only does the "I" come in the opening lines of poem after poem to an extent remarkable even for love poetry; it continues throughout

¹See especially R. Ellrodt, *Les Poètes Metaphisiques Anglais*, 1960, Librairie José Corti, Paris, Tome 1, Ch. IV, "Conscience de soi", pp. 117-135, for the importance of Donne's personality in his poetry.

²"The Undertaking", *Donne*, p. 10.

³"The good-morrow", *idem*, p. 7.

⁴Holy Sonnet V, *idem*, p. 324.

each poem, either stressed metrically or as a rhyming word:

Take mee to you, imprison mee, for I
 Except you' enthral mee, never shall be free,
 Nor ever chaste, except you ravish mee.¹

Other pronouns which include or relate to the first person, thou, thee, you, she, her, we and us similarly recur in key positions, right against the grain of Latin practice.

Nor does the obsession, as it almost is, with self², confine itself to the use of personal pronouns. The very realism of Donne's "masculine expression" directs the reader straight to the writer or to his experiences, sometimes in self-pity, sometimes through frank detail, more often through unambiguous insinuation, as in these instances:

To (poore) me is allow'd
 No ease³.
 Licence my roaving hands,⁴

he writes,

Practise may make her know some other part,
 But, take my word, shee doth not know a Heart⁵

¹Holy Sonnet XIV, *idem*, p. 328.

²Donne was well aware of his egocentricity, claiming openly

"I will vent that humour then
 In mine owne selfe love",

"Selfe Love", *Donne*, p. 74.

³Divine Poem III, *idem*, p. 323.

⁴Elegie XIX, "Going to Bed", *idem*, p. 120.

⁵"The Blossome", *idem*, p. 60.

and

Oh winter dayes bring much delight,

Not for themselves, but for they soon bring night,¹

Is it surprising that Suckling's "A Candle" and "The Miracle", Carew's much finer "A Rapture" and Cartwright's enchanting but chauvinistic "Song of Dalliance" were written in the ensuing decades?

Even in poems with snatches as realistic as in "The Dreame", Donne's framework is always logical, which sets him apart from Elizabethan lyricists such as Thomas Ford or Francis Davison. Rosemund Tuve traces Donne's habit of ratiocination directly to Ramus.²

¹"Epithalamion made at Lincolnes Inne", *idem*, p. 142.

²Peter Ramus in his "Second Book of Dialectick", *The Logicke of the Moste excellent Philosopher, P. Ramus Martyr*, 1574, reproduced in 1966 by the Scolar Press, Leeds, p. 71, claims he "teachethe to dispose and place orderly the argumentes invented, to the ende that we may judge well and rightly." It can therefore seem reasonable that critics from Rosemund Tuve in *Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery*, 1947, to Joan Bennett in *Five Metaphysical Poets*, should have attributed the development of poems with a logical base to the influence of Ramus. But more recently other critics such as Joseph A. Mazzeo in "Modern Theories of Metaphysical Poetry" and S.L. Bethell in "The Nature of Metaphysical Wit", essays from *Discussions of John Donne*, ed. F. Kermode, 1962, question whether the logic, or planned development, within a poem has anything in common with the kind of syllogistic logic Ramus explained.

↗ Whether the first impetus for making a poem turn logically upon an idea comes from Ramus originally or not, the practice is to be found in poems which predate Donne's *Songs and Sonnets*. For instance Sir Philip Sidney's "My true love hath my heart and I have his" is surely closely reasoned and could well have provided a pattern for a later poem such as Carew's "Lips and Eyes".

The Ramists - and Caroline poets would have come across many of them during their time at Oxford and Cambridge - were impelled to "seek and declare reasons and causes"¹ and also to "recognise the capacity of specials to state generals."² The *because* of Donne's stanza,

Dull sublunary lovers love
(Whose soule is sense) cannot admit
Absence, because it doth remove
Those things which elemented it³

is indispensable to the argument.

In later years Dryden was to scorn in Donne this essentially logical basis even to love poetry⁴ but Donne's nearer contemporaries admired it in him:

Thou shalt yield no precedence, but of time,
And the blinde fate of language, whose tun'd chime
More charmes the outward sense.⁵

¹Tuve, *Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery*, p. 342.

²*Ibid.*, p. 347.

³"A Valediction: forbidding mourning", *Donne*, p. 50.

⁴John Dryden, "Discourse on Satire", *The Works of John Dryden*, ed. A. B. Chambers, W. Frost, V. A. Dearing, 1974, Univ. of California Press, Berkeley, IV, 7, writes that Donne "perplexes the minds of the fair sex with nice speculations of philosophy when he should engage their hearts."

⁵"An Elegie upon the death of the Deane of Pauls, Dr Iohn Donne", *Carew*, pp. 72-73.

Randolph announces explicitly,

Reason within me shall sole ruler be
And every sense shall weare her livery,¹

and one short typical poem contains the words *if*, *why*, *therefore*, *yet* and *since*, all within its twenty-six lines.² Carew, in a poem of fourteen lines,³ uses *if* four times without the slightest strain. Edward Herbert begins the three stanzas of "To the C. of D." with the words "Since", "Therefore" and "Thus".⁴

The close logical structure leading to an incontrovertible conclusion is one aspect of what contemporaries meant by their phrase 'strong lines'. Another was the sheer energy characterised by Donne's opening,

For Godsake hold your tongue, and let me love,⁵

¹"On the Inestimable Content he Injoys in the Muses", *Randolph*, p.2.

²"On the Losse of his Finger", *idem*, pp. 135-136.

³"Persuasions to enjoy", *Carew*, p. 16. Randolph, in his Precept 37, (p. 65) "If e're I take a wife", does the same thing four times ~~een~~ within fifteen lines.

⁴*Edward Herbert*, p. 55. Though this is the only poem by Edward Herbert in which every stanza has a logical structure, in many of his other poems such as "The Idea", "Platonic Love" and "To his Mistresse for her True Picture" the reasoning throughout follows a careful sequence. Sidney Lee in his introduction to Edward Herbert's *Autobiography* (p. lvii) writes "Herbert proves himself the ablest of all the disciples of Donne... Like his master, he revels in subtleties of thought and diction."

⁵"The Canonization", *Donne*, p. 14.

more impetuous than a poet as controlled as, say, Carew, would have written but with a similar vigour to that with which Randolph opens his plea to Ben Jonson:

Ben doe not leave the stage,¹

or Davenant begins an elegy:

Ho! Pilot! change your Course!²

Strong as such lines may be in the modern sense of the word, they are also strong in the contemporary sense which involved deliberate elaboration. Donne who could address even a "poore flower" as

. . . thou which lov'st to bee

Subtile to plague thy selfe³

had to use involutions of imagery, language and syntax to express his own complex thoughts. He could see no other way of reaching new areas of experience. To him,

On a huge hill,

Cragged, and steep, Truth stands, and hee that will

Reach her, about must, and about must goe;

And what the hills suddennes resists, winne so.⁴

¹"An answer to Mr Ben Johnson's Ode to perswade him not to leave the stage", *Randolph*, p. 82.

²"Written, when Collonell Goring was beleev'd to be slaine" *Davenant*, p. 69. These bold openings may owe something also to the increasing habit of reading poems aloud at private and public gatherings where it could be necessary to capture attention with the first line.

³"The Blossome", *Donne*, p. 60.

⁴"Satyre III", *idem*, 157.

Contemporaries did not always approve. Jonson is reported as having told Drummond, "Donne himself for not being understood would perish" and more generally he deprecates farfetched imagery and over-compression.¹ Half a century later Thomas Hobbes wrote condemningly:

(Such is) the ambitious obscurity of expressing more than is perfectly conceived, or perfect conception in fewer words than it requires. Which expressions, though they have the honor to be called strong lines, are indeed no better than Riddles, and not onely to the Reader but also often a little to the Writer himself; dark and troublesome.²

Whatever Jonson and Hobbes might say, poets who followed Donne used his daring compressions and elaborations to excellent effect. The concentration and intricacy of reasoning characteristic of Donne continues in lines like these, in which Herbert, pleading with his own rebellious heart, struggles to resist religion:

. . . Forsake thy cage,
Thy rope of sands,
Which pettie thoughts have made.³

¹"Conversations with Drummond", *Works*, 1, 138. See also "Discoveries", *Works*, VIII, 624, "We should. . . speake what wee can, the nearest way, so as wee keepe our gate, not leape; for too short may as well be not let into the memory. . . the obscurity is mark'd but not the valem. . ."

²"Answer to Davenant", *Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century*, ed. Spingarn, II, 63.

³"The Collar", *Herbert*, 153.

Today, under the influence of T. S. Eliot's views on the metaphysical poets and Rosemund Tuve's answering insistence that the most farfetched conceits need not offend the Renaissance principle of decorum,¹ we tend to accept Donne's influence on the technique of the early Carolines easily. But in the early years of this century Barrett Wendell wrote disparagingly about the knotty structure² used by Donne, and C. H. Hartmann, though he gave great praise to some of Lovelace's lyrics, deplored his tendency to "confuse the sense by his disregard for the natural order of words", and "most shamelessly violate the simplest rules of grammar and syntax"³.

Whatever the assurance and skill with which Donne was prepared to dislocate established verbal patterns, his lyrics still have the freedom and ease of the spoken word. His whole life - his early legal training at the Inns of Court, his frequent attendance at plays, his eventual ordination as an Anglican priest and therefore preacher,

¹*Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery*, pp. 18-26. She instances King's poem "On Lady Riche: to Death" in which he writes in genuine earnestness:

The whole world is thy factory, and wee
Like traffick driven and retail'd by thee.

The principle of decorum will be considered more fully below.

²See Barrett Wendell, *The Temper of the Seventeenth Century in English Literature*, 1904, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, p. 122, "Donne... seems to disdain the oddities into which (his) lines distort themselves."

³*The Cavalier Spirit*, 1925, G. Routledge, London, p. 118.

his presence at court before he married and after his wife's death¹
 - could all have contributed to this mastery.

Busie old Foole,²

says he to the sun who dared to interrupt lovemaking.

Goe, and catche a falling starre,³

he suggests to a companion quite nonchalantly, as though such a
 task might be undertaken any day.

Shall I wasting in Dispaire

Dye because a woman's faire,⁴

shrugs Wither with a similar air of negligence. Even the most
 mystical of poems opens with the line,

I saw eternity the other night,⁵

in which both the rhythm and the idiom catch the familiarity of
 daily speech.

My lines and life are free; free as the rode,⁶

¹See Izaak Walton, *Lives of John Donne and George Herbert*, 1909, Harvard Classics Vol. 15, P.P. Collier & Son, New York, p. 343. He reports that James "put a value upon his company being much pleased when Mr Donne attended him".

²"The Sunne Rising", *Donne*, p. 11.

³"Song", *idem*, p. 8.

⁴George Wither, "Shall I Wasting in Dispaire", *Juvenilia*, 1626 and 1633, ed. H.J.C. Grierson and G. Bullough, Clarendon Press, Oxford, p. 284, reprinted 1970, Burt Franklin, New York, Part III, p. 845.

⁵"The Night", *The Poems of Henry Vaughan*, ed. L. C. Martin, 1963, rev. edn. O.U.P., London, p. 229.

⁶"The Collar", *Herbert*, p. 153.

a young poet tells us as he struggles against accepting the confines of priesthood. Previously,

Sure there was wine,¹

he had reminded himself as well as those overhearing him, disconcertingly.

These natural speech rhythms can perhaps be traced through Donne to the great age of drama in which he lived. While the lyrics of an Elizabethan miscellany so often deal with an abstract or a hypothetical situation:

A shepherd in a shade his plaining made
Of love and lover's wrong,²

Donne is right there in an actual place, close to the windows, curtains, walls and bed,³ or whatever the physical setting of a particular poem may be. In one poem he is reproaching his lover who does not realize the enormity of her triple murder :

Cruel and sodaine, hast thou since
Purpled thy naile, in blood of innocence?⁴

In another poem he urges impatiently,

Since thou thoughtst it best
Not to dreame all my dreame, let's act the rest,⁵

¹*Idem.*

²Anon. "Song", c. 1600, from *Lyrics from Elizabethan Song Books*, p. 44.

³As in "The Sunne Rising", *Donne*, p. 11. See Patrick Cruttwell, *The Shakespearean Moment*, 1954, Chatto and Windus, London, for a study in depth of this idea.

⁴"The Flea", *Donne*, p. 40.

⁵"The Dreame", *idem*, p. 37.

And later poets use the same approach, focussing on a specific time and incident. Herbert writes:

As I one ev'ning sat before my cell,
 Me thoughts a starre did shoot into my lap.
 I rose, and shook my clothes, as knowing well,
 That from small fires comes oft no small mishap.¹

Lovelace pleads:

Tell me not (Sweet) I am unkinde.²

Randolph remembers,

As once in blacke I disrespected walkt,
 Where glittering courtiers in their Tissues stalkt.³

Waller orders,

Go, lovely Rose!⁴

and use the example of your life and death to convey my message.

Like the personal approach, the logical framework, what Tillyard calls "the domestication of the fluctuating rhythms of speech",⁵ the intricacy and the dislocation of established patterns, this focussing on to a single situation, as though a lyric were in a play, came to Caroline lyricists at least partly through the influence of John Donne.

¹"Artillerie", *Herbert*, p. 139.

²"To Lucasta, Going to the Warres", *Lovelace*, p. 18.

³"On a maide of honour seen by a scholler in Sommerset garden", *Randolph*, p. 169.

⁴"Go lovely rose", *The Poems of Edmund Waller*, ed. G. Thorn Drury, 1893, Charles Scribner's Sons, reprinted 1963, Greenwood Press, New York, p. 128.

⁵*The Metaphysicals and Milton*, Chatto and Windus, London, 1956, p. 60.

VI Ben Jonson

If the poets of Charles's reign owed much to a predecessor, so also did they owe - and acknowledge - an immense debt to a closer contemporary, Ben Jonson, who wrote many of his lyrics after Charles had succeeded to the throne, and did not die till 1637.

There is a tendency for critics interested in the influence of Jonson and Donne on seventeenth century verse to consider them almost as a team. "Both in different terms challenged the supreme poet of the previous generation, Spenser. Both stood for a masculine spirit in poetry, weighty, pregnant, concentrated, against poetry of facile method and melting phrase",¹ C. H. Herford and P. and E. Simpson inform us. J. B. Leishman reminds readers that though Jonson and Donne "are commonly regarded as the founders of two different schools ... (they have) many important characteristics in common".²

Sydney Musgrove, without committing himself to any denigration of earlier lyrics, similarly points out that the influence of Donne and Jonson is not easily separable.³ Josephine Miles calls Jonson "a radical poet allied with Donne against a large field."⁴ Certainly there are poems whose authorship Donne's and Jonson's editors have been unsure about for over three hundred years.⁵ But Jonson would

¹*Works II*, 448.

²*The Monarch of Wit*, 6th edn, 1962, Hutchinson, London, p. 12.

³*Musgrove*, p. 28.

⁴*The Language of Poetry of the 1640's*, p. 66.

⁵Esther Dunn in *The Art of Ben Jonson*, p. 151, reports that Donne's Elegie XVI was reprinted in the 1641 edition of *Underwoods*. Herford and Simpson include among the poems ascribed to Jonson, "An Epigram on Richard Burbage, *Works VIII*, 439, which Grierson gives in his edition, *Donne*, Appendix C, p. 413, among the poems attributed to Donne in 1755.

not have been happy to be either confused or coupled with Donne. Although he allowed "John Done the first poet in the World in some things"¹ he condemned his roughness and obscurity² and by precept and example guided the early Carolines away from them. Donne would confidently let difficult syntax and speech rhythms contend with the rhyme and underlying iambic beat, shrugging,

I sing not, Siren like, to tempt; for I
Am harsh.³

But Jonson made his disapproval of such an attitude clear, grumbling to his friend Drummond, "Done for not keeping of accent deserved hanging".⁴

Jonson's contemporaries showed no inclination to link him with

¹"Conversations with Drummond", *Works*, 1, 135.

²Others approved Donne's ruthless handling.

Thy imperious wit
Our stubborne language bends ,
praised Carew (p. 73) and Isaac Walton was to use "The Baite" to insist that Donne "could make soft and smooth verses, when he thought smoothness worth his labor". (*The Compleat Angler*, 1676, reprinted 1953 privately for the Navarre Society, London, p. 217).

³"To Mr S. B.", *Donne*, p. 211.

⁴"Conversations with Drummond", *Works*, 1, 135.

Donne. Though his play, *The New Inn*, was derided in performance, and his consequent outburst, "Come, leave the lothed stage" drew censure of varying degrees¹, Jonson was enormously respected in his own day. Drayton (who omits Donne's name altogether), surveying the literary figures of his time, rates "learn'd Johnson" as "the most curious maker of them all."²

Edward, Lord Herbert of Cherbury, in a poem commending Jonson's translation of Horace begins,

Twas not enough, *Ben: Ionson* to be thought
Of English Poets best.³

Lucius Cary, Lord Falkland, signed himself both in a letter to Jonson and in a poem "Your Sonne, and Servant"⁴. Ralph Brideoake calls him

¹There were harsh reactions such as Owen Felltham's insulting "Come, leave this saucy way" and R. Goodwin's "Vindiciae Jonsonianae", *Works XI*, 44, which in spite of its title calls Jonson's Ode "blockish": but poets of the calibre of Carew made their rebukes more moderate, showing awareness of Jonson's literary stature in lines like these:

The wiser world doth Greater thee confesse
Then all men else, then thy selfe onely lesse.
(*Carew*, p. 65.)

²"To my Most Dearely-loved Friend Henery Reynolds Esquire: Of Poets and Poesie", *Drayton*, I, 154.

³"Upon his Friend Mr *Ben: Ionson* and his *Translation*", *Works*, XI, 352.

⁴"Epistle, on Sr H.M." an "Epistle to his noble ffather, Mr Jonson", *ibid.*, 400, 404.

"the English Lyre",¹ Richard West prophesies:

*Thou shalt be read as Classick Authors; and
As Greeke and Latine, taught in every Land.*²

Carew refers to "great *Johnsons* verse"³. Even Milton, so sparing with contemporary references in his poetry, invites those who would be merry,

to the well-trod stage anon
If *Jonsons* learned Sock be on.⁴

In fact C. H. Herford and P. and E. Simpson print two hundred and sixty-five pages of prose and verse comments on Jonson, of which a large proportion are contemporary. Most sound high praise. Those Jonson would have liked draw attention to his own attitude to poetry as honest moral comment, clearly and simply expressed. Margaret, Marchioness of Newcastle, writes,

As for Ben Johnsons brain, it was so strong,
He could conceive, or judge what's right, what's wrong:
His Language, plain, significant and free.⁵

John Beaumont the younger claimed that Jonson,

made our Language pure and good,
To teach us speake, but what we understood⁶,

¹"Upon the Death of Mr Ben Iohnson", *ibid.*, 467.

²"On Mr Ben Iohnson", *ibid.*, 470.

³"To my worthy Friend, M. D'Avenant", *Carew*, p. 96.

⁴"L'Allegro", *The Poems of John Milton*, 1955, ed. H. Darbishire, Clarendon Press, Oxford, I, 141.

⁵"A General Prologue to all my Playes", *Works*, XI, 511.

⁶"To the Memory of him who can never be forgotten, Master Beniamen Johnson", *Ibid.*, 438.

To him how daily *flockt*, what *reverence* gave
 All that had wit, or would be thought to have.¹

wrote Lucius Carey. James Howell informs Sir Thomas Hawk, Knight, in a letter, "I was invited yesternight to a solemne supper by B. I. Wher you were deeply remembred, ther was good company, excellent chear, choice wines and joviall welcom."²

That such a setting fostered the poetic talent of the time is abundantly clear from the appreciative snatches of contemporary verse. Robert Herrick's nostalgic lines,

Ah *Ben!*
 Say how, or when
 Shall we thy guests
 Meet at those *Lyrick* Feasts,
 Made at the *Sun*,
 The *Dog*, the triple *Tunne?*
 Where we such clusters had,
 As made us nobly wild, not mad;
 And yet each Verse of thine
 Out-did the meate, out-did the frolick wine,³

¹"An Eglogue on the Death of Ben Johnson", *Works*, XI, 43.

²Quoted in *Nichol Smith*, p. 43.

³*Herrick*, p. 289.

show delightfully how the 'tribe of Ben' felt towards him. Even if a jealous rival could call him, "the best of Poette but the worst of men",¹ innumerable allusions to his presiding in the Apollo room at the Old Devil tavern, or visiting friends like William Drummond in Scotland or Richard Corbett at Oxford, show how social Jonson was. Almost all his poetry is too. In one epigram he is "Inviting a Friend to Supper;" in many epigrams, epistles and odes he is praising or censuring a named person for his or her behaviour, as in his graceful thanks 'To Lucy, Countess of Bedford' for her unexpected gift, or his cruel jibe "On Don Surly" who misunderstands how a great man should live. In one lyric he is making a frank but cheerful appeal to the royal household for the annual terse of canary wine that the king had granted him.² In another he is requesting his bookseller to observe buyers' reactions to his books:

Bee thou my Bookes intelligencer, note
 What each man sayes of it, and of what coat
 His judgement is.³

Neither Jonson nor the reader is involved in the way poet and reader are caught up in the dramatic intensity of Donne:

For Godsake hold your tongue, and let me love.⁴

¹Inigo Jones concluded his poem "To his false friend Mr Ben Johnson", with that line, *Works*, XI, 386.

²"An Epigram, To the House-hold." "The Under-wood", *Works*, VIII, 241.

³"Epigram LVIII, to my Book-seller", *ibid.*, p. 232.

⁴"The Canonization," *Donne*, p. 14.

What he achieves is akin to that elusive quality Eliot called the "continual extinction of personality, a process of depersonalization."¹ Two poems Jonson wrote about the reaction of others to his work serve to illustrate this. The one is "Come leave the loathed stage", Jonson's savage lash at his critics after his play, *The New Inn*, had been derided. The other is "To my Lady Covell", a self-portrait in which he chuckles at his own physical ungainliness. In each case he detaches himself from the derision, like a doctor giving a bad prognosis of a condition, others' or his own. All the same, the emotion is there, different, distilled, but no less recognisable. K. A. McEuen's statement that the terms of address "Dear", "My dearest love", "My Lov'd Friend" "lack intimacy"² may apply to some degree to the particular elegies she cites as examples, but a strong, even intimate sense of Jonson's immense, rugged personality emerges in some of his poems such as the group called "A Celebration of Charis in Ten Lyrick Peeeces", especially in lines like those which open the first poem:

¹"Tradition and the Individual Talent", *Selected Essays*, p. 17. On p. 21 of the same essay Eliot continues, "Poetry is not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotion; it is not the expression of personality but an escape from personality. But of course, only those who have personality and emotions know what it means to want to escape from these things." It is almost as though he had Jonson in mind.

²McEuen, p. 121.

Let it not your wonder move,
 Lesse your laughter; that I love.
 Though I now write fiftie yeares,
 I have had, and have my Peeres;
 Poets, though divine, are men.¹

It is not intimacy the poem lacks, but self-indulgence.

Jonson's technical control allows him to treat a wide variety of topics with consummate skill. He can be rough and merciless as in "On Mill my Ladies Woman", or light and tender as in the lines,

Doe but marke, her forehead's smoother
 Then words that sooth her!²

In one of his few religious poems, "A Hymne to God the Father",³ he shows utter honesty and humility:

Heare mee, O God!
 A broken heart,
 Is my best part.

Three poems could hardly be more different in subject matter, but technically they have similarities. In each there is a high proportion of monosyllables and run-on lines, exact conformity of rhyme, metre, and stanzaic form, and the lines are even in length, short in "A Hymne to God the Father", long in "On Mill my Ladies

¹"His Excuse for Loving", *Works*, VIII, 131.

²"Her Triumph", *ibid.*, 134.

³*Ibid.*, 129-130.

Woman", and crisp and unbroken (except deliberately in the last line of each stanza) in "Her Triumph".

A quite different kind of poem, "A Fit of Rime against Rime" shows technical virtuosity¹ of a more playful kind as Jonson scoops up the whole Campion-Daniel debate on rhyme into sixty short lines. Rhyme itself is utterly controlled, the *wits* and *fits* or *banish'd* and *vanish'd* being subtly interspersed with near rhymes, such as *together* and *wither*, or *tongues* and *wrongs*. Rime, the speaker, puns and generalises with gay abandon but keeps strictly to a regular metrical and stanzaic pattern. Like "A Triumph" and "Hymne to God the Father", "A Fit of Rime against Rime"² shows Jonson's stress on integrity, his abhorrence of affectation, "false weight" in matter or manner. "*Spenser*, in affecting the Ancients, writ no language; Yet I would have him read for his matter,"³ he had said. In his battle with his co-producer of masques, shown in the lyric, "An Exposition with Inigo Jones", it is hypocrisy he objects to. And in the first of his "Lyrick Peeeces" for Charis he insists,

And it is not alwayes face,
Clothes, or Fortune gives the grace;
Or the feature, or the youth:
But the Language, and the Truth

¹For a full appreciation of Ben Jonson's brilliant technical control, see Wesley Trimpi's *Ben Jonson's Poems, a Study of the Plain Style*, 1962, Stanford University Press, California.

²*Works*, VIII, 183.

³"Discoveries", *ibid.*, 618.

With the Ardor, and the Passion,
Gives the Lover weight, and fashion.¹

The cruel epigram, "On Some-thing that walkes Some-where",² shows his impatience with the sham and foppery which must often have been met at court.

The same preference for what is straightforward and honest characterises Jonson's attitude towards the language of verse. Just as he would not suffer fools gladly (as Epigram XII "On Lieutenant Shift"³ viciously illustrates) neither would he suffer tortuous or pretentious language. It disturbed him that his kind of poetry seemed not to be valued at its true worth while inferior rhymes, such as he scorns in his play, *The Poetaster*, were popular.

Discoveries reverberates with his censure:

Nothing is fashionable, till it bee deform'd; and that is to write like a *Gentleman*. All must bee as affected, and preposterous as our Gallants cloathes.... *Nothing* in our Age, I have observ'd, is more preposterous then the *running Judgements* upon *Poetry*, and *Poets*; when wee shall heare those things commended, and dry'd up for the best writings, which a man would scarce vouchsafe, to wrap any wholsome drug in; hee would never light his *Tobacco* with them."⁴

¹"His Excuse for Loving", *ibid.*, 131.

²*Ibid.*, p. 30.

³*Ibid.*

⁴"Discoveries", *ibid.*, 581-582.

And again,

Many writers perplex their Readers and Hearers with mere *Non-sense*. Their writings need sunshine. Pure and neat Language I love, yet plaine and customary.¹

When Jonson recalls the "blushing apricot and woolly peach"² he is surely being as plain and customary as could be. He approves of language which is "plaine, and pleasing: even without stopping, round without swelling; all well-torn'd, compos'd, elegant, and accurate."³ His aim is to "redeeme Arts from their rough, and braky seates, where they lay hid, and overgrowne with thornes, to a pure, open, and flowry light."⁴ "The chief vertue of a style is perspicuitie, and nothing so vitious in it, as to need an Interpreter,"⁵ he wrote, and certainly he himself is always lucid and idiomatic. When Trimpi talks of Jonson's "passionate plainness"⁶ he touches the very essence of his poetry.

Jonson's insistence on clarity is almost equalled by his insistence on care. "Diligence is a great ayde", he wrote, "even to

¹*Ibid.*, 620.

²"To Penshurst", *ibid.*, 94.

³"Discoveries", *ibid.*, 625.

⁴*Ibid.*, 567.

⁵*Ibid.*, 622

⁶A phrase Trimpi uses throughout his book.

an indifferent wit."¹ Planning and revision he recognises as essential. "For a man to write well... Hee must first thinke, and excogitate his matter; then choose his words and examine the weight of either. Then take care in placing, and ranking both matter and words, that the composition be comely; and to doe this with diligence, and often."² Even the coarsest of Jonson's poems, such as the epigram, "On Lieutenant Shift", are shapely and controlled, each one fitting his own description of a poem:

so loftie form, so streight
So polisht, perfect, round and even
As it slid moulded off from heaven,³

a description that accords well with many of the "rare perfections" written by the early Carolines. In "Discoveries" he notes:

I remember the Players have often mentioned it as an honour to *Shakespeare*, that in his writing... hee never blotted a line. My answer hath beene, Would he had blotted a thousand... I had not told posterity this, but for their ignorance... (for I lov'd the man, and doe honour his memory (on this side Idolatry) as much as any).⁴

¹"Discoveries", *Works*, VIII, 590.

²*Ibid.*, 615.

³"Eupheme", *ibid*, 280.

⁴"Discoveries", *ibid.*, 583-584.

Of his own lyric control he was quite confident:

I'm sure my language to her, was as sweet,
 And every close did meet
 In sentence, of as subtile feet,
 As hath the youngest Hee
 That sits in shadow of *Apollo's* tree.¹

Such an opinion would have appeared to Jonson honest, but not smug. For he was willing to learn, promulgated the theories of others,² and borrowed freely in criticism and poetry alike. Critics from his own time onwards have commented on Jonson's heavy use of the classics, in attitude, in translation - not always acknowledged - and, less importantly, in references and allusions.³

¹"My Picture left in Scotland", *ibid.*, 149.

²As Louise B. Osborn pointed out in the *Times' Literary Supplement*, May 1, 1930, p. 370, Jonson has lifted great chunks of John Hoskin's prefatory letter to *Directions for Speech and Style* and the whole section on letter writing for *Timber, or Discoveries made upon Men and Matter*. The wording on his title page (facsimile, *Works*, VIII, 85) "Discoveries Made upon Men and Matter as they have flow'd out of his daily Readings" is all the acknowledgement he makes.

³Jonson does allude incidentally to classical writers and deities. In "Inviting a Friend for Supper" (*Works*, VIII, 64-65), for instance, he mentions Virgil, Tacitus, Livy, Horace, and Anacreon, and in "An Execration upon Vulcan", *ibid.*, Vulcan, Mars, Jupiter, Jove and Minerva. But in his briefer lyrics his classical allusions are sparser and less crucial than in many poems by other Carolines, such as Carew.

William Cartwright was one of the first to point out how much Jonson used the classics. In his elegy, "On the memory of the most Worth Beniamin Johnson",¹ he excuses the "Father of Poets":

What though thy culling Muse did rob the store
Of Greeke and Latin gardens to bring ore
Plants to *thy* native soyle?
.
.
.
.
.
.
.
Thefts thus become just *works*: thy and their *grace*
Are wholly thine.

Dryden picked up the same theme, having Neander say of Jonson, "He was deeply conversant in the Ancients, both Greek and Latin, and he borrowed boldly from them... But he has done his robberies so openly, that one sees he fears not to be forced by any law. He invades authors like a monarch; and what would be theft in other poets is only victory in him."² Edmund Gosse, torn between admiration and shock, blames Martial for Jonson's "obscene and unsavoury jests".³ Jonson's editors, C. H. Herford and P. and E. Simpson, declare Jonson had classical authority for all the innovations he seriously claimed.⁴ And other twentieth century

¹*Cartwright*, pp. 514-515.

²"An Essay of Dramatic Poesy", *Essays of John Dryden*, ed. W.P. Ker, 1961, Russell and Russell, New York, p. 82. Crites's famous speech comes on pp. 42-43 of the same essay. "The greatest man of the last age (Ben Johnson) was willing to give place to them (the Ancients) in all things: he was not only a professed imitator of Horace, but a learned plagiarist of all the others; you track him everywhere in their snow."

³*The English Poets*, 1905, ed. T. H. Ward, Macmillan and Co., London, II, 125.

⁴*Works II*, 342.

critics have diligently connected poem after poem of Jonson's with classical verse.¹

Jonson himself wrote "Words borrow'd of Antiquity do lend a kind of Majesty to style", and, more significantly,

I know Nothing can conduce more to letters
 then to examine the writings of the *Ancients*,
 and not to rest in their sole Authority, or
 take all upon trust from them.... For to all
 the observations of the *Ancients*, wee have our owne
 experience: which, if wee will use, and apply,
 wee have better meanes to pronounce. It is true
 they open'd the gates, and made the way, that
 went before us; but as Guides, not Commanders.²

Such a passage leads into a truer appreciation of the way Jonson helped bring classical forms, mythology and imagery into the

¹"The most thorough study in this area still seems to be K. A. McEuen's *Classical Influence upon the Tribe of Ben*. Another is J. G. Nichol's *The Poetry of Ben Jonson*, 1969, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London and another, J. R. Hibbard's essay, "The Country House Poem of the Seventeenth Century". For instance, Jonson's epigram XCV, "To Sir Henrie Savile" is shown to be based almost word for word on a passage from Cicero's *De Oratore* II, lines 62-63, "Drink to me only" on four epistles by Philostratus, "Inviting a Friend to Supper" on the fifth epistle of Horace's first book and also on three poems by Martial, even to details of the food eaten.

²"Discoveries", *Works*, VIII, 567. This passage also raises the question of the Renaissance idea of imitation which will be considered later.

service of Caroline poets, most of whom had attended Oxford or Cambridge and been trained to some degree in Latin and Greek.¹ The Greek *elegos* was to become a prototype not only for memorial poems but for love songs too.² Classical epigrams and paradoxes, especially those of Martial, provided Jonson and other later poets like Herrick, with a host of examples.³ And within lyric form, classical characteristics such as controlled balance and antithesis⁴ - so marked in a poem like "To Sir Robert Wroth" - and self-characterisation⁵ reappeared, perhaps never more perfectly than in "A Celebration of Charis in Ten Lyrick Peeces", honest, strong, yet restrained as he mentions his "fiftie yeares", providing a natural model for certain of Herrick's lyrics such as "To a Gentlewoman, objecting to him his gray haire."

Believing that classical writers had "open'd the gates and made the way... as Guides, not Commanders", Jonson could use classical forms, ideas, and references, but choose his native idiom⁶

¹ See Bald, *Seventeenth Century English Poetry*, 1959, Harper and Brothers, New York, p. 7.

² See McEuen, pp. 121-122.

³ *Idem*, pp. 14-27.

⁴ See *Ellrodt*, II, 315-329.

⁵ Learned from Catullus, Horace, Ovid and Propertius. See *Richmond*, p. 292.

⁶ For example, in "The Humble Petition of poore Ben to th'Best of Monarchs, Masters, Men, King CHARLES", *Works VIII*, 259, he talks of "the ratling pit-pat-noyse".

and syntax.¹ The opening lines of "Inviting a Friend to Supper",

To night, grave sir, both my poore house, and I

Doe equally desire your companie:

Not that we thinke us worthy such a ghest,

But that your worth will dignifie our feast,

With those that come,²

show his way of keeping word order close to that of normal speech, the lines run on, the caesuras corresponding to natural pauses, sometimes cutting across the underlying metrical pattern. In "A Song of the Moon", Jonson is relaxed and colloquial:

I had somewhat else to say

But have lost it by the way.³

Unlike Donne, Jonson does not demand instant attention: instead he moves into a conversation quietly, as the poets of Charles I's day were to do so often. Herbert follows the same approach in poem after poem:

Lord, I confesse my sinne is great⁴

and,

I have consider'd it, and finde

There is no dealing with thy mighty passion⁵

¹His only mannerism appears to be a fondness for inversion, though only of the kind that cannot obscure the sense, as in "For his Mind I do not care", "A Celebration for Charis", *ibid.*, 142.

²*Ibid.*, 64,

³*Ibid.*, 417.

⁴"The Repentance", *Herbert*, p. 48.

⁵"The Reprisall", *idem*, p. 36.

and,

To write a verse or two is all the praise,
That I can raise.¹

Herrick with openings like "Welcome Maids of Honour"² and "Deare Perenna, prethee come",³ similarly adopts an attitude of gentle intimacy. So, in various ways, do later Carolines. Even the persuasive assurance of Marvell's address "To his Coy Mistress" bears an affinity to Jonson's direct conversational approach and may, partly, derive from it.

In a lyric like "Kisse me, sweet: the warie lover" Jonson indicates his intention of writing musically. For Donne's

I sing not, Siren like, to tempt; for I
Am harsh,⁴

he substitutes,

Now my thought takes wing,
And now an *Epode* to deepe eares I sing⁵.

W. M. Evans considers "Drinke to me onely" deliberately written for a tune already in existence, attributed to a Colonel Mellish, and, further, that a number of Jonson's other lyrics can also, with slight variations be sung to the same tune.⁶ Certainly such poems

¹"Praise (1)", *idem*, p. 61.

²"To Violets", *Herrick*, p. 83.

³"To Perenna", *idem*, p. 89.

⁴"To Mr S. B.", *Donne*, p. 211.

⁵"The Forest", X, *Works*, VIII, 108.

⁶*Ben Jonson and Elizabethan Music*, 1929, Lancaster Press, Penn, pp. 34-35.

as "O doe not wanton with those eyes" with stanzas identical in shape and metre, and a high proportion of liquid consonants and long vowels, were followed by a great flow of lyrics similarly apt for musical settings, some of the sweetest by Thomas Carew and Robert Herrick but one or more from almost every other early Caroline poet. Just as Jonson set an example to his tribe in using classical writings to advantage, so also he showed them how he could control his native tongue, honestly, plainly, carefully, yet with consummate sensitivity towards the rhythms of both speech and song.

VII. The Influence of Music

Originally, as the name shows, the lyric was intended for musical accompaniment. Although by the late Renaissance a lyric was already recognised as the words of a poem, Caroline lyricists were always conscious that their verses might be set to music. Donne's lines,

Some man, his art and voice to show,
Doth Set and sing my paine,¹

are constantly used to indicate his awareness that any lyric was likely to be taken as the basis for a song.²

Every gentleman in Stuart times was expected to be able to

¹"The triple Foole", *Donne*, p. 16.

²Poems of Donne's were set to music. *B.M. Ms Egerton 2013* has settings for both "Goe and Catch a Falling Starre" and "Hymne to God the Father". *Ing*, p. 8, informs readers that "The Expiration" was set by Alfonso Ferrabosco in his *Ayres* (1609); and when Donne wrote "The Baite" he must have been well aware of the musical setting to Marlowe's "Come live with me" and expected that it would be sometimes used for his own words.

"sing his part sure, and at first sight withall."¹ For, to quote John Fletcher's Ancient who has just invited his Duke to "Come, list to my ditty",

'Tis a singing Age, Sir,²

and music provided "the fountanes of our lives good and happinesse".³

In medieval music, before time signatures were given to music, music always followed the words.⁴ When a lyric was set to music the ideal was that,

music and sweet poesie agree

As they must needs, the sister and the brother.⁵

Campion, poet-composer as he was, once explained, "In these English Ayres I have chiefly aymed to couple my Words and Notes lovingly together"⁶ and Milton writes of those "sphere-born harmonious sisters,

¹ *Peacham*, p. 100. Similarly *Castiglione* (page 77) stated "Musicke is not only an ornament, but also necessary for a courtier."

² *The Loyal Subject, Beaumont and Fletcher*, ed. A. R. Waller, 1906, University Press, Cambridge, III, 104.

³ *Peacham*, 104.

⁴ See S. Baring Gould, *An Historical Sketch of English National Song*, 1895, reprinted Nelson and Sons, n.d, p. 13. "In medieval music there was no time, every note was lengthened or shortened according to the syllables to which it was attached. Song was the musical rendering of words."

⁵ Richard Barnfeld, "To his friend, Master R. L. in Praise of Music and Poetry", *Poems from Divers Humours*, 1598, *Elizabethan Lyrics*, pp. 249-250.

⁶ "To the Reader", *The Book of Ayres, Campion's Works*, ed. P. Vivian, 1909, Clarendon Press, Oxford, p. 115.

Voice and Verse".¹

This seventeenth century habit of linking music and verse may account for Bruce Pattison's judgement that the madrigal, to take the most common combination of music and verse in the early years of the century, was a very satisfactory compromise between the claims of music and poetry. But he goes on to say, "Music respected the shape of the poetry, setting the verse line by line and reflecting the emotional significance *where possible*... But for most ordinary madrigals music came to be much more important."² That many volumes of madrigals were described on the title page as "apt for voices or viols" he takes, reasonably enough, as indicative that the voice could be dispensed with. But he makes no mention of the fact that sometimes, as in the case of *A Poeticall Rhapsody* and *England's Helicon*, madrigals were published apart from their music. Nor does he seem to me able to justify his more general opinion that "In the sixteenth and seventeenth century lyrics... the whole conception and technique were controlled by the requirements of music and by the idioms of the chief vocal forms of the period, the madrigal and the air."³

Contemporary musicology appears to refute Pattison's pronouncement. Thomas Morley, before the end of the sixteenth century had

¹"At a Solemn Musick", *Milton*, II, 15.

²*Music and Poetry of the English Renaissance*, 1948, Methuen, London, p. 98. The italicising is mine.

³*Idem.*, p. 141.

advised musicians to translate meaning and mood as exactly as possible into their compositions: "You must in your music be wavering like the wind, sometimes wanton, sometimes drooping, sometimes grave and staid, otherwise effeminate."¹ John Buxton cites a passage he found in the Queen's College manuscript of the *Arcadia* and missing from other copies, in which Sidney concluded, "Musicke is a servant of poetrye, for by thone [the one] the eare onelye, by thother the mynde is pleased."²

It is likely that both Sidney and Morley would have been aware of the conclusions of the Camerata, the group of poets, musicians and scholars in Florence who, under the leadership of Count Bardi, set out to find what music really was, and in the course of their investigations decided that for sung music the words must come first:

In composing... you will make it your chief aim to arrange the verse well, and to declaim the words as intelligibly as you can... just as the soul is nobler than the body, so the words are nobler than the counterpoint.³

As a musician from the same group put it: "In both madrigals and airs I have always sought to imitate the ideas behind the words."⁴

¹A *Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, 1597, ed. R. A. Harmon, J. M. Dent & Sons, 1952, London, p. 294. Morley had brought out the first publication in English bearing the word madrigal on its title page, *Madrigalls to Foure Voyces*, in 1594.

²*Sir Philip Sidney and the English Renaissance*, p. 115.

³Giovanni Bardi, "Discourses on Ancient Music", c. 1580, *Source Readings in Music History*, 1952, ed. and trans. by O. Strunk, Faber & Faber, London, 1. 292.

⁴G. Caccini, *Le Nuove Musiche*, 1602, ed. H. Wiley Hitchcock, 1970, Wisconsin, pp. 44-47.

Charles Butler, whose *Principles of Musick in Singing and Setting* shows Morley's advice to be still appropriate in the 1630's, recommends that composers observe the length of syllables when they set words to music, and follow the punctuation of the words in their arranging of rests in the music.

As the ditty is distinguished with Points (Period, Colon, Semi-colon and Comma); so is the Harmony answering unto it, with Pauses and Cadences. Semi-brief rests one or more answer to a Period, or to a Colon: which also is of Perfect sense: Minim and Crotchet rests to semi-colons, commas, Breathings and Sighs. So likewise Primary Cadences Perfect, which close the Harmony, answer fitly to Periods ending the Ditty; or some principal part of it: and Secondary, to Colons or Interrogations. But Improper, and Imperfect cadences answer to Points of Imperfect sense, (Commas and Semi-colons). The Directions being observed (with discretion) in the Harmony, help not a little to the manifesting and understanding of the Ditty.¹

The only approximately² contemporary evidence in favour of

¹*Principles of Musik in Singing and Setting*, 1636. Reprinted 1970 as No. 284 of the series, *The English Experience*, Da Capo Press, Amsterdam, pp. 96-97.

²There is little really contemporary evidence because there are no extant printed song books from Charles I's reign. C.D. Day and E.B. Murrie, *English Song Books 1651-1702*, 1940, The Bibliographical Society, London, state that very few song books were published in the fourth and fifth decades of the seventeenth century, and, in fact, list none. Ian Spink, "English Cavalier Songs 1620-1660", 1960, P.R.M.A. LXXXVI, p. 68, goes further, claiming that between Attey's *Ayres*, 1622, and Playford's *Select Musically Ayres and Dialogues*, 1652, no book of solo songs was printed in England.

Pattison's idea that music controlled rather than reflected the words of the lyric, is that in books of seventeenth century songs, intended as they were to be books of music rather than poetry, the composer is almost always given, the singer quite often and the writer only rarely.¹

The early seventeenth century lyric does not at all support another contention of Pattison's, that "verse for music should keep to broad and simple emotions... Subtlety or verbal ingenuity will almost certainly be lost on the listener."² On the contrary, however applicable Pattison's theory may be to most lyrics, in the later Renaissance it was commonly believed that the poet could write as he pleased - and certainly subtlety and verbal ingenuity constantly characterise the work of, say, Thomas Carew - and that the musician should recognise as "the most important and principled part of music, the imitation of the conceptions that are to be

¹For instance in *Wit and Mirth: or Pills to Purge Melancholy*, 1698-1706, Folklore Library Facsimile, New York, 1959, a collection of songs from Elizabethan times to well on in the seventeenth century, the kind of information frequently offered is "A song sung by Mrs Cross. Set by Mr Jeremiah Clarke." Occasionally there are entries such as this, "A New Song the words by Mr J.C. Set to Musik by Dr Prattle."

²*Pattison*, p. 142.

derived from words."¹

In her unpublished thesis, "A Study of Henry Lawes's Settings of Thomas Carew's Poetry", Anne Pomeroy shows in close detail how Henry Lawes set thirty-eight of Thomas Carew's witty courtly lyrics, remaining constantly sensitive to their meaning.² Lawes's very appointment to his post in the Chapel Royal, like Lanier's to his in the King's Musicke, had been earned by setting to music lyrics by the Earl of Pembroke,³ Sir Philip Sidney's nephew, a task that must have exacted great respect for the words.

¹Vincenzo Galilei, "Dialogo della musica antica e della moderna," 1958, *Strunk*, p. 315.

²"A Study of Henry Lawes's Settings of Thomas Carew's Poetry" 1974, University of Waikato. For instance, to cite just one of her abundant and convincing examples of the way in which Henry Lawes's music responds to the implications of Carew's poetry, the descending notes in lines 7 and 8 of "Lips and Eyes"



indicate the tear falling from Celia's eyes. Anne Pomeroy also shows how, when Carew's poems end with a witty epigrammatic statement, Lawes responds by setting them to a triple rhythm, or to another device known as hemiola which involves a shift from 3/4 to 3/2 or 6/4 metre which can speed up or slow down the line. Lawes is shown to use this device on several occasions as he came to the penultimate line of a Carew lyric. The abstract summarises her conclusions strongly: "It was the faithful portrayal of the poem's meaning that was Lawes's chief concern; and it was this concern which dominated his approach to the music. The musical structure is shaped by the poetic argument - the music existing almost solely to serve the needs of the poetry", p. III. This opinion perhaps underplays the music too far. Lawes surely meant to bring out all he could from the words, using the music to show them at their best.

³W. M. Evans, *Henry Lawes: Musician and Friend of Poets*, 1941, M.L.A., New York, pp. 37-38. In her words, "To change a syllable, to fail to express the sense and spirit which the author had intended, might offend the author and thereby alienate the favour of the Lord High Chamberlain."

Henry Lawes himself wrote, in his address "To all Understanders of Lovers of Musicke", in his *Second Book of Ayres*,

The way of composition I chiefly profess (which is to shape *Notes* to the *Words* and *Sense*) is not hit by too many: and I have often been sad to observe some (otherwise able) Musicians guilty of such lapses and mistakes in this way. . . . If *English* words which are fitted for *Song* do not run smooth enough; 'tis the fault either of the *Composer* or *Singer*.¹

Whatever other "(otherwise able) Musicians" may have done, it was Lawes who could claim he "had the honour to set the Verses of the most and chiefest Poets of our Times".² And the "chiefest Poets" responded with their appreciation. Milton, who, Ian Spink suggests, seems to have written his masque, *Comus*, rather as Lawes's protégé,³ praised him highly:

¹Quoted in full by W. M. Evans in *Henry Lawes*, p. 204.

²*Ibid.*, p. 198.

³*English Song: Dowland to Purcell*, 1974, Batsford. J. B. Leishman, in *Milton's Minor Poems*, Hutchinson, London, p. 194, puts forward the same idea, pp. 160-161.

Harry whose tunefull and well measur'd Song
 First taught our English Musick how to span
 Words with just note and accent, not to scan
 With *Midas* Ears, committing short and long.¹

Herrick addressed one poem, "To M, Henry Lawes, the excellent Composer of his Lyricks" and wrote another on the death of Henry's brother, "Upon M. William Lawes, the rare Musitian".

Henry Lawes, to an even greater extent than his brother William and other composers of the time, would have accepted John Dryden's assertion, made later in the century, "It is my part to invent, and the musician's to honour that invention."²

Although the evidence for the most part seems to refute Pattison's idea that in the early seventeenth century lyrics "the whole conception and technique were controlled by the requirements of music",³ there were ways in which contemporary music influenced the development of the lyric.

Madrigals were normally of a single structure, one stanza long, and when sung often had refrains and words or phrases repeated. There was a tendency for every line to end on a weak syllable.

¹"To Mr H. Lawes, on his Aires", *Milton*, II, 152.

²Preface to *Albion and Albanus*, *Essays of John Dryden*, I, 278.

³*Pattison*, p. 141.

Herrick's deceptively simple "The Argument of his Book", though not a madrigal, follows this pattern, as do many of Herrick's other poems as well as many of those by other early Carolines. Airs usually had several stanzas but all were sung to the same tune, so that regularity of stanza form was important. Herbert's "Life" and "Love" observe this need, as do innumerable other lyrics of the time. Although the madrigal was commonly arranged for group singing, to give pleasure to the performers in private gatherings, rather than for public entertainment, the air was a solo song, usually with a lute accompaniment in the background, sung for others at court or within the context of a masque or a play. As with a ballad or folk-song, it was expected that the words would be clearly heard.

Pattison suggests that the more varied metrical and stanzaic patterns which occur during the seventeenth century can be traced through to the influence of French, Spanish and Italian music.¹ Certainly the declamatory air, aiming to capture the rise and fall of the speaking voice as it did, was the natural development of the new *stile recitativo* that had originated with Bardi's circle of amateur poets and musicians. Even Donne's rhythmical freedom and experimentation were part of a movement sweeping Renaissance literature not only in England. The Italian musician and musicologist, Caccini, talks of "sprezzatura" or "that noble manner of singing" in which the strict tempo of monody was abandoned in favour of a much more spirited and

¹ *Idem*, pp. 179-180.

flexible rhythm.¹ Variation of voice was made possible in dialogues, and answer and companion pieces, all favoured by Caroline lyricists. Enjambement, marked in the work of every poet in the period except Waller,² helped the flow of the song.

VIII. The Effect of Drama, Masque, and Dance

In the early seventeenth century, less conspicuously than music but just as surely, drama, masque and dance influenced the development of the lyric.

Within plays lyrics were used frequently. Sometimes a song such as Jonson's

Come, my Celia, let us prove
While we may the fruits of love³

belongs naturally in its context, advancing the action. At the same time it is capable of standing on its own, when lifted out of the play.

¹Foreword, *Le Nuove Musiche*, Caccini, p.56.

²His craftsmanship, achieving utter smoothness without any concessions to poetic licence, will be considered later in this thesis.

³*Volpone*, *Works*, V, 82. Jonas A. Barish in "Jonson and the Loathed Stage" from *A Celebration of Ben Jonson*, 1973, Blissett, Van Fossen and others, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, pp. 27-53, shows just how rich and compressed this lyric is. Within eighteen lines Celia is offered not only sumptuous jewels and food but also the promise of endless variety in love, and an endless charade in which the lovers will act characters from history and literature.

More often a lyric was simply meant to centre attention on a character, like

Still to be neat, still to be dressed,

the only song in *Epicoene*, in which Clerimont shows his scorn of the Lady Haughty, or,

Queen and huntress, chaste and fair,

from *Bartholomew Fayre*. Even the stanza beginning,

Have you seene but a bright Lillie grow,

part of "Her Triumph", first appeared as a set piece in *The Devil is an Ass*.

William R. Bowden takes great pains to show that lyrics were rarely extraneous entertainment when they appeared in plays.¹ A lyric could serve as a serenade, a complaint of love, an inducement to either love or lust, as an expression of wantonness, to aid characterisation, or to prolong or intensify a crisis. Each lyric supplied a key moment for a play, a moment to be savoured and remembered.

It may be that lyrics on stage fanned the growing mood of suspicion and hostility to the theatre. William Prynne spoke strongly against them:

There is nothing more frequent, in all our Stage-plays...
then amorous Pastorals, or obscene lascivious Love-songs, most
melodiously chanted out upon the Stage between each several

¹See *The English Dramatic Lyric, 1603-1642*, 1951, Yale University Press, New Haven, where this is discussed and illustrated in detail.

Action; both to supply that Chasme or vacant Interim which the Tyring-house takes up, in changing the Actors robes.. as likewise to please the itching eares, if not to inflame the outrageous lusts of lewde Spectators, who are oft-times ravished with these ribaldrous pleasing Ditties."¹

Within the court circle, by the time Charles I was on the throne, masques had taken over much of the popularity of the stage. Jonson wrote thirty-five of them. Carew and Milton both tried their hand. A lyric might be sung at the beginning of a masque to set the mood, at the end to complete the pageant or at certain points during the performance to explain what was happening, to awaken sleepers, or to emphasise good or evil in the characters.²

Ian Spink considers lyrics within masques had a lasting influence: "It was the special requirements of the masque-song that brought about the origin of the English declamatory style. Dramatic performance demanded a loud clear heroic musical declaration over simple harmonies."³ Certainly masques kept musicians and poets working together. It was through *Comus* that Milton met Henry Lawes, through *Coelum Britannicum* that Carew worked with him. And the formality of the masque may have carried over to some extent

¹*Histrion-Matrix*, 1633, quoted in Mary Chan's unpublished article, "Edward Lowe's manuscript, British Museum Additional 29396, and mid-seventeenth century dramatic music," p. 18.

²See Evans, *Ben Jonson & Elizabethan Music*, pp. 100-107.

³"English Cavalier Songs, 1620-1660", p. 64.

into some lyrics of the time not written for masques. There is, for instance, a stylised objectivity which prevents a reader from becoming emotionally involved in a poem like Carew's "The Spring", compressed and intense as it is.

It is similarly possible that the ritual dances of the court may have, at least indirectly through song, had their effect on Caroline lyrics. The kind of simple repeating rhythm, starting each part with a common movement such as a bow and then continuing into different actions, has its counterpart in a lyric like Sir Francis Kynaston's "To Cynthia. On Concealment of her Beauty"¹ which begins with the words "Do not conceale those radiant eyes" and then picks up the words, "Do not conceale" with a different part of the body in each of the six more stanzas.² And the 6/8 time signature, common in dance, fits easily with such a poem.³

In much the same way, Pattison⁴ suggests that the growth of triple rhythms (such as 3/2 or 3/4) in seventeenth century lyrics owes something to the livelier style of dancing and to the increase in definitely triple rhythms in dances such as the volta, the coranto and the saraband, in great vogue at Charles I's court.

¹*Minor Poets of the Caroline Period*, II, 159-160.

²See *Baring Gould*, p. 13. "The dance taught the musician what otherwise he might never have learned - the use of Time."

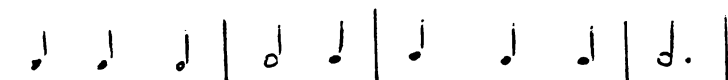
³Wilfred Mellers, too, in *Harmonious Meeting: A Study of the Relationship between English Music, Poetry and Theatre, c1600-1900*, 1965, Dennis Dobson, London, p. 109, also suggests that, but does not illustrate how, in Caroline lyrics the song lilt is directly related to the social rhythm of the dance.

⁴*Pattison*, 189-190.

Waller's vivacious poem serves to illustrate his point:



 Hy - las, oh Hy - las! why sit we mute



 Now that each bird sa - lu - teth the spring



 Wind up the slack - n'd strings of thy lute



 Ne - ver canst thou want mat - ter to sing;



 For love thy breast doth fill with such a fire



 That what - so - e'er is fair moves thy de - sire.¹

In the words of Cartwright:

Then our Musick is in prime

When our teeth keep triple time.²

The short syllables neatly convey the bright skip of a fast dance. The tension between the way the stanza would be spoken (with *mute*, for instance, an unstressed, quiet word) and the way the dance would speed on, provides the sparkle to the poem.

¹Waller, p. 114. I am indebted to Ms Dawn Patchett for help in setting this and Reynold's poem to a time signature.

²"Song" from *The Ordinary*, Act III, sc. v, Cartwright, p. 320.

Henry Reynolds provides an example that is just as sprightly:

$\frac{3}{4}$  |
 Was it a form, a gait, a grace,

 |
 Was it their sweet - ness mere - ly?

 |
 Was it the hea - ven of a bright face,

 |
 That made me love so dear - ly?

 |
 Was it a skin of silk and snow,

 |
 That soul and sen - ses wound - ed?

 |
 Was't any of these, or all of these,

 |
 Where - on my faith was found - ed?¹

¹"Song" c. 1640 (B.M. Add Ms. 25707) from *Seventeenth Century Lyrics*, ed. N. Ault, 1928, Longmans Green, London, pp. 143-144.

Certainly these lyrics and others as slight as William Strode's "On a Gentlewoman walking in the Snowe" and as involved and jovial as Suckling's "Ballad upon a Wedding" were likely to be recited or sung at the court of Charles I, where play, masque, song and dance all shared in favour. The shapeliness and polish of each art form was surely bound to influence, to some extent, the lyric, and in turn be influenced by it.

CHAPTER THREE

ATTITUDES TO CRAFTSMANSHIP

I. Delight and Instruction

Caroline poets were highly conscious of their craft. The court, we know, encouraged deliberate attention to art in every form. And those uncourtly courtiers, John Donne and Ben Jonson, did too. The one with the example of the "new apostasie"¹ of his technique, the other with his critical opinions, written and spoken, and his own polished poetry, nurtured the interest in literary and musical theory which had grown in strength in the reign of Elizabeth.

Some of the energy of the Caroline lyricists was still being directed into defences and apologies for poetry.² Some was spent answering the ideas of late Elizabethans such as Sidney, Campion and Daniel on such matters as the essential purpose of poetry, the relative importance of content and style, reliance on classical examples, use of English rather than Latin or Greek as the medium of verse, and technicalities such as rhyme and prosody.³

¹"An Elegie upon the Death of the Deane of Pauls, Dr John Donne", *Carew*, p. 73.

²Such as Henry Reynolds's *Mythomystes*, or Jonson's Preface to *The Alchemist* or his Dedicatory Epistle to *Volpone*.

³Much of Jonson's "Discoveries", fits into this category; so does Davenant's Preface to *Gondibert*.

Some poets liked to put into verse their assessment of forebears and fellow poets, so providing a useful indication of contemporary taste, such as exists in Michael Drayton's "To My Most Dearely-loved Friend Henery Reynolds Esquire: Of Poets and Poesie",¹ or John Beaumont's address "To his Late Majesty, concerning the true form of English Poetry." But the liveliest and most revealing example is probably Sir John Suckling's 1637 "A Sessions of the Poets" which seems to have been occasioned by the vacancy in the poet laureateship caused by the death of Ben Jonson,² even though Jonson is included among the poets assessed. "The Great Assises holden in Parnassus", 1645, usually attributed to George Wither, and Samuel Sheppard's "The Socratick Session" of 1651 similarly attempt to evaluate earlier and contemporary poets in verse. J. E. Spingarn suggests that Suckling, Wither and Sheppard were followers of Trajano Boccalini's *Ragguagli di Parnaso* of 1612,

¹John Buxton in his preface to his Muses' Library edition of *Poems of Michael Drayton*, 1953, Kegan Paul, London, I, XXV, calls Drayton's undated poem "To Henery Reynolds Esquire: Of Poets and Poesie", 151-156, "some of the most penetrating criticism of the poetry of the time that has ever been written", though Drayton has high praise for his "deare Drummond" and "the two Beaumonts and my Browne",

My deare companions whom I freely chose
My bosome friends; and in their severall wayes
Rightly borne poets,

yet makes no direct reference to Donne, Randolph or Carew.

²See J.W.H. Atkins, *English Literary Criticism in the Renaissance*, 1947, Methuen, London, p. 302.

first translated into English as *Advertisements from Parnassus* in 1657 but probably well known in England before then.¹ In it Apollo, attended by the muses, presides over a court to judge political and literary affairs. Even Wither, elsewhere so set on righting the wrongs of England, confined attention in "The Great Assises" to literature.

The fashion for such poems is one indication of how seriously most poets took their role. Spenser, in the preceding century, had had Cuddie say,

O, what an honor is it, to restraine

The lust of lawlesse youth with good advice.²

Campion at the turn of the century had claimed that poetry is "raysing the minde to a more high and lofty conceite."³

To some poets and critics like Jonson, this process of 'raysing the minde' of first importance in itself, needed, incidentally, meticulous craftsmanship. Horace had taught

¹*Spingarn I*, xxiv-xxv.

²"The Shepheardes Calender", *Spenser's Minor Poems*, ed. E. de Selincourt, 1910, Clarendon Press, Oxford, p. 97.

³*Observations in the Art of English Poesie*, p.3.

A wise and honest man will cry out shame

On artlesse verse.¹

In his own words "A man should... so apparell faire, and good matter, that the studious of elegancy be not defrauded; redeeme Arts from their rough and braky seates, where they lay hid, and overgrowne with thornes, to a pure, open and flowry light: where they may take the eye, and be taken by the hand."² And again "To Nature, Exercise, Imitation and Studie, *Art* must *bee* added, to make all these perfect."³

Others feared that content might suffer if attention were paid to technique. These are the words of the early seventeenth century Dutch poet and critic, Joost van den Vondel:

One must not distort the language for the rhyme and the metre.

The rhyming word must not seem to occur for the sake of the rhyme, but must occur as if it made no rhyme. Epithets must not be aimless, nor serve as stopgaps, but ought to emulate the statues that support a beam or an arch and, while performing this function, help to decorate a building.⁴

¹Jonson's own translation of Horace's line
Vir bonus et prudens, versus reprehendit inerteis
from *De Arte Poetica*, *Works*, VIII, 334-335.

²"Discoveries", *ibid.*, 566-567.

³*Ibid.*, 639.

⁴Quoted by A. J. Barnouv in an article, "Den Vondel and his 1647 *Art of Poetry*", in *Seventeenth Century Studies*, ed. J. Dover Wilson, 1938, O.U.P., London, p. 109.

John Donne sometimes took up his role as a seer with a great sense of responsibility,

I am

The Trumpet, at whose voyce the people came¹
but for him it is the message the trumpet is to convey that matters,
and not the art of the trumpeter. As he writes elsewhere,

Now if this song be too harsh for rime, yet, as
The Painters bad god made a good devill,
'Twill be good prose, although the verse be evill,
If thou forget the rime as thou dost passe.²

Ralph Knevet in "Infirmitye",³ a poem probably of the thirties, takes up a stance that could be copied from Donne's as he suggests that technical finesse is esteemed by the loose and deceitful.

I want a volubility of tongue
To trafficke for applause,
Although I know the lawes
And rights of rhetoricke. I am not strung
For soul and music shrill
.
.
.
.
.
I covet not a tongue
To tune a wanton song,
A tongue tipp'd with deceite or guile
A tongue to rayle or to revile.³

¹"The Second Anniversarie", *Donne*, p. 266.

²"To Mr T.W.", *ibid.*, p. 204-205.

³"Infirmitye", *Add Ms B.M. 27447*, reprinted in *Rare Poems of the Seventeenth Century*, pp. 134-135.

Milton's whole dedication of his life to the preparation and writing of verse that is serious in content and controlled in form shows a similar determination not to become "some vulgar Amorist"¹ or one of those "libidinous and ignorant Poetasters".²

Even in the 1620's there had been those concerned not with producing "rare perfections" but with writing didactic verse. George Wither, by Caroline times already a verse journalist rather than a lyricist, and already once imprisoned for *Abuses Stript and Whipt* on the orders of a king, doggedly addressed *Britain's Remembrancer*³ to "the King's Most Excellent Maiestie" and insisted that he was writing,

That you may know how sicke your Kingdome lies.⁴

Form did not worry him: "I had rather twenty nice *Criticks* should censure mee for a word here or there superfluous, then that one of those other should want that which might explaine my meaning to their capacities."⁵

¹"The Reasons of Church Government", 1641, *Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, 1953, Yale University Press, New Haven, I, 820.

²*Ibid.*, 818.

³"That long jeremied on the plague", *Bush* calls it, p. 82.

⁴"To the King", *Britain's Remembrancer*, 1628, reprinted 1962, Burt, Franklin, New York, I, 22.

⁵"A Premonition", *Britain's Remembrancer*, I, 29.

In earlier days, when he was writing such charming snatches as "Shall I wasting in dispaire" he had still claimed, "I was loath to make a businesse of a recreation."² By 1628 he is more dogmatic:

We love not in affected pathes to goe
For to be understood is language used,²

and

It is the useful matter of my Rimes
Shall make them live.³

He utterly scorns certain court poets,

Who have the way of making pretty Rimes
To fit the apprehension of the times,⁴

and the same scorn shows through in references such as this:

Behold, a frothy Masque, an idle Song,
The witless jesting of a scurrilous tongue,
The capring dancer.⁵

¹"To any body" prefaced to *Wither's Motto, Juvenilia*, III, 625.

²*Britain's Remembrancer*, II, 85.

³*Ibid.*

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 86.

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 412.

Even his *Collection of Emblems* is in pedestrian, purposely moralistic, verse.

It is the scope of my Intention, rather
From such perplext *Inventions* (which have nought
Of Ancient Hieroglyphick) *sense* to gather,
Whereby, some usefull Morall may be taught.¹

After such sermonising it is a relief to turn instead to those poets like Davenant for instance, who could call himself a "Priest"² and yet in other poems lightheartedly refer to himself and other secular lyricists as "silly Priests",³ or Cowley, who could introduce his own poems with such a comment as, "For a man to write well, it is necessary to be in good humor."⁴ Not that those who hoped to create "rare perfections", took themselves, their rivals, or their work any less seriously than Wither did. William Drummond warned: "Some men have of late endeavoured to abstract her (that is, poetry) to Metaphysical Ideas and Scholastic Quiddities, denuding her of her own Habits and those ornaments with which she hath amused

¹"To the Reader", *A Collection of Emblemes, Ancient and Modern*, 1635, 1968, Scolar Press facsimile, Menston, p. 67.

²"To Endimion Porter", *Davenant*, p. 27, cf. *Puttenham*, pp. 7, 9. "Poets were the first Priests and the ministers of the holy misteries... and the first Philosophers Ethick... of the world."

³"To I. W. Upon the Death of his Mistris", *Davenant*, p. 48.

⁴"Preface to Poems, 1656", *Abraham Cowley Poetry and Prose*, ed. L.C. Martin, 1949, Clarendon Press, Oxford, p. 64.

The World some Thousand Years."¹ And Francis Quarles declared "I have not affected to set thy understanding on the Rack, by the tyranny of *strong lines* which... are the meere itch of wit."²

Sir Dudley North had taken the same attitude earlier in an essay of about 1612:

My will... cannot approve the ridling humour lately affected by many, who thinke nothing good that is easie, nor any thing becoming passion that is not exprest with an hyperbole above reason. These tormenters of their owne and their Readers braines I leave to bee admired in their high obscure flight, (while my selfe will bee happy, if I can procure but a familiar delight to a superficial reading).... Poetry is in truth a kind of Musicke.... A Poet should raise light from smoak, not blow that which is light with him to carry but smoak to another... I may be crabbed and rugged, but will never affect to bee so, especially in verses, whose true nature and use is to worke a kind of Charme upon the mind, even with slightnesse of matter, by the well wrought and exquisite harmony of their Cadence and sound... Sophistry and figures may appeare fine and witty but prevaile little upon the best judgements.³

¹William Drummond of Hawthorden, in a letter to Dr Arthur Johnston, cited by George Williamson, *A Reader's Guide to the Metaphysical Poets*, 1968, Thames and Hudson, London, p. 44.

²Francis Quarles, Preface to *Argulus and Parthenia*, 1629. *Works of Quarles*, ed. A. B. Grosart, 1967. A.M.S. Press, New York, III, 240.

³L.A. Beurline rescued this previously ignored essay and reproduced it with a critical comment, "Dudley North's Criticism of Metaphysical Poetry", *Huntingdon Library Quarterly* XV, 1962, pp. 299-313. He considers it an influential essay, and shows that as late as 1638 Dudley North sent a copy of it to John Suckling in answer to a particular request. The above quotation is made up of snatches distributed throughout the whole essay which is a sharp attack on the "strange and uneasy habit" of writing strong lines.

North is protesting both against the ingenious but protracted allegories of late sixteenth century poetry epitomised by Spenser's *Faerie Queene* and also against the delight poets like Donne seemed to take in being difficult, "subtile to tease thyselfe."¹

Two decades later George Herbert, attacking elaboration in any poetry, in his lovely lyric "Jordan I", makes a protest which could have been aimed at some of his contemporaries:

Who sayes that fictions onely and false hair
 Become a verse? Is there in truth no beautie?
 Is all good structure in a winding stair?
 May no lines passe, except they do their dutie
 Not to a true, but painted chair?

Is it no verse, except enchanted groves
 And sudden arbours shadow course-spunne lines?
 Must purling streams refresh a lovers loves?
 Must all be vail'd, while he that reades, divines,
 Catching the sense at two removes?²

Such lines recall Jonson's more explicit references to Spenser and Donne. Herbert also takes up Jonson's plea for honesty and integrity:

Yet slight not these few words:
 If truly said, they may take part

¹"The Blossome", *Donne*, p. 60.

²*Herbert*, p. 56.

Amongst the best in art.
 The fineness which a hymne or psalme affords,
 Is, when the soule unto the lines accords.¹

Perhaps because, unlike Jonson, Herbert was not himself concerned in writing love lyrics, he does not expect the same standards of integrity from the love poet. Instead,

The wanton lover in a curious strain
 Can praise his fairest fair;
 And with quaint metaphors her curled hair
 Curl o're again.

.

Lovers are still pretending, and ev'n wrongs
 Sharpen their Muse.²

Such licence belongs rather to late Elizabethans³ than to Caroline writers of love lyrics, such as Carew with his close-textured arguments or Herrick with his meticulously-shaped intimacies.

Herbert intended his poems as a "blessed SACRIFICE"⁴ to his God, even if he questioned their worthiness. Most Renaissance poets had something of this approach in the back of their minds but saw

¹"A True Hymne", *Idem*, p. 168.

²"Dulnesse", *Idem*, pp. 115-116.

³Such as Rogers in "On the death of a virtuous lady", *Celestial Elegies*, 1598, reprinted in Ault's selection, *Elizabethan Lyrics*, p. 253.

⁴"The Altar", *Herbert*, p. 26.

the more immediate end of their verses "to teach and delight"¹ as Sidney put it, secular poets tending to emphasise the "delight". Giles Fletcher early in the century had written of his wish to "tune sweet ditties"² or "frame sweet ditties."³ Some saw at least some of their work as a pleasurable pastime. Michael Drayton wrote of his shorter poems:

New they are, and the worke of playing Houres.³

William Browne admitted once,

What now I sing is but to pass away
A tedious houre, as some musicians play,⁵

and a few lines later hummed:

I like the pleasing cadence of a line.⁶

Waller asked for sweet sound only:

Soft words, with nothing in them, make a song.⁷

¹*Sidney*, p. 80.

²*Poeticall Works*, II, 240.

³*Ibid.*, p. 234.

⁴"Poly Olbion", *Works* IV, p. 315.

⁵"Song IV", Book II, *Britannia's Pastorals*, 1628, ed. H. Thompson, n.d., W. Tweedie and Son, London, p. 270.

⁶*Ibid.*

⁷"To Mr Creech", *Waller*, 218.

Others support the principle of delight in their critical theory.

Spingarn quotes Ogier in 1628: "Poetry, and particularly that which is composed for the theatre, is intended only for pleasure and diversion."¹ And Cowley, at mid century, has the same conviction, "To communicate delight to others is the main end of Poesie."²

The kind of pleasure Ogier and Cowley are referring to depends considerably on two related qualities, symmetry and decorum.

Symmetry is a matter of shape, or proportion. In Puttenham's *The Arte of English Poesie* the whole of the second book is "Of Proportion".
Campion's attack on rhyme was that he feared its "fitnessse" could disturb proportion, or cover up its lack.³ "The eare is a rational sense, and a chiefe judge of proportion, but in our kind of riming what proportion is there kept, where there remaines such a confused inequalitie of sillables?"³

Burton gives as a possible description of beauty: "The perfection of the whole composition, caused out of the congruous symmetry, measure, order and manner of parts; and that comeliness which proceeds from this beauty is called grace and from thence all things are gracious."⁴

To the Greeks symmetry, in art, as in the human body, was the

¹Spingarn I, lxxiv, from *Ancien Théâtre Français*, 1856, VIII, 13.

²Cowley, p. 64.

³*Observations in the Art of English Poesie*, pp. 4-5. Campion, of course, did use "the childish titilation of rhyme" he so despised, with consummate skill.

⁴Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, 1621, ed. Holbrook Jackson, 1932, Dent, London, III, 12.

essence of beauty. As could be expected therefore, Jonson touched repeatedly on its importance:

In small proportions we just beautie see
And in short measures, life may perfect bee.¹

Edward Herbert is reaching towards a similar conception of beauty dependent on shape and proportion.

Nor is that symmetry of parts and form divine,
Made of one vulgar line,
Or such as any know how to define,
But of proportions new, so well exprest,
That the perfections in each part confest,
Are beauties to themselves, and to the rest.²

Decorum, or seemliness, was considered equally important. When Rosemond Tuve, so steeped in Renaissance theory and practice, wrote, "As the law of decorum ... (ruled out) beautiful non-sense, so it was equally stern in ruling out non-beautiful sense"³, she was giving a seventeenth century objection to unadorned didacticism, not suggesting that early seventeenth century poets and critics, like late nineteenth century editors, would have excluded a considerable number of Jonson's and Herrick's poems from their canons. Any subject,

¹"To the immortal memorie, and friendship of that noble paire, Sir Lucius Cary and Sir H. Morison", *Works*, VIII, 245.

²"To Mrs Diana Cecyll", *Edward Herbert*, p. 35.

³*Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery*, p. 48,

any language, any image, is acceptable in its proper place. By "non-beautiful" she means offending, not taste or modesty, but decorum, intended shape and purpose, appropriateness to the whole.

Each subject should retain
The place allotted it, with decent thewes.
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.
Sad language fits sad looks; stuff'd menacings,
The angry brow; the sportive, wanton things;
And the severe, speech ever serious.¹

Proportion and decorum affected not only choice of subject and form, but imagery too. Rosemand Tuve is helpful again. "The principle of decorum is the most important regulatory principle determining the nature of images.... No part of a poet's task demands more exquisite fineness of sensibility or more penetrating acuteness of judgement."²

Puttenham says the same thing, using the terms *decorum*, *lovely conformitie* and "our owne Saxon English term... *seemelynesse* in his section on imagery to suit the "course and purpose the poet hath in hand."³

¹Jonson's translation of *De Arte Poetica*, Works VIII, 311.

²*Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery*, p 230.

³Puttenham, p. 262.

The images chosen need not in themselves be beautiful; they can be radical or deflatory, to use terms Rosemond Tuve favours, or act as "the Disabler" in Puttenham's words, but they must extend or enhance the sense of the poetry. S. L. Bethell, in his comparison of early and late seventeenth century imagery puts it this way: "The search is for the words necessary to express the full meaning, whereas for the Augustan poet it is for the most elegantly appropriate verbal decorations."¹

Hoskins has given as his requirement for metaphors that they "be not too bold nor too far-fetched" and that they "not be too base... unless your purpose is to disgrace."² Jonson echoes him, warning that far-fetched metaphors, like overcompression, can make a style obscure.³ But as Ellrodt reminds us, we must not be too ready to decide that any image is either strained or base. Any scientific and scholastic comparisons in Renaissance verse might have disconcerted contemporaries far less than us.⁴

What is important is that images be an organic part of the whole, "grow to our style",⁵ as Jonson puts it. Imagery more extreme than that in Carew's "Aske me no more" or Suckling's "Love s

¹*The Cultural Revolution of the Seventeenth Century*, 1951, Dennis Dobson Ltd, London, p. 109.

²*Directions for Speech and Style*, c. 1599, ed. H. H. Hudson, 1935, Princeton, pp. 8-9.

³"Discoveries", *Works* VIII, 624.

⁴*Les Poètes Metaphysiques Anglais*, II, 145-146, "L'obscurité n'est pas dans l'intention..."

⁵"Discoveries", *Works* VIII, 622- 623.

Clock" could hardly exist, and yet in each case it is perfectly integrated into the poem.

So long as decorum was observed the poet could add to nature. "The poet... lifted up with the vigour of his own invention, doth grow in effect another nature, in making things either better than nature bringing forth, or, quite anew... so as he goeth hand in hand with nature, not enclosed within the narrow warrant of her gifts, but freely ranging only within the zodiac of his own wit",¹ Sidney had written in a famous passage.

II. Imitation

It was not only nature poets took leave to use and improve upon. Imitation was seen as an essential part of the process² of writing poetry. Nature provided most of the material but in certain kinds of poetry "the best authors"³ could and should also be used; accordingly Renaissance verse abounds with borrowings from the language of earlier and of contemporary poets. The poet's task was to transmute all he knew into something of his own, and different, just as the sheep eats grass but grows wool.

Jonson put it this way. "Our poet or *Maker*... (should) be able to convert the substance, or Riches of an other *Poet* to his

¹"A Defence of Poetry", *Sidney*, p. 78.

²*Ibid.*, pp. 79, 78. "Poetry is an arte of imitation.... There is no Arte delivered to mankind that hath not the workes of Nature for his principall object."

³See Roger Ascham, "Of Imitation", (1570) *Elizabethan Critical Essays*, I, 7-8.

owne use.... Not as a Creature, that swallowes, what it takes in, crude, raw, or indigested; but that feedes with an Appetite, and hath a Stomacke to concoct, divide, and turne all into nourishment."¹

More succinctly, a poet need feel no shame if he

bring the bootie home;

Nor thinke it theft if the rich spoils so torne

From conquered authors be as trophies worn.²

It is not surprising that in such a climate of thought, lyrics like Marlowe's late sixteenth century poem, "Come live with me and be my love", or Carew's poem of the sixteen thirties, "Aske me no more", should have been followed by a host of imitations. And just as the imitations which began with the same words as their models sometimes equalled the original poems, so imitations which took only the idea or the rhythm of a poem sometimes equalled or surpassed the originals. Examples crowd for attention. Suckling's exquisitely

¹"Discoveries", *Works*, VIII, 638. Jonson, father to his literary tribe, expected to be imitated, or used wisely, but was sharp towards plagiarism of his own work. See Epigram C, "On Playwright", *ibid.*, 64:

Playwright, by chance, hearing some toyes I'had writ
Cry'd to my face, they were th'elixir of wit.
And I must now beleieve him: for, to-day,
Five of my jests, then stolne, past him a play.

²"To Ben Iohnson. Upon occasion of his Ode of defiance annext to his Play of the new Inne", *Carew*, p. 65.

light lyric, "Hast thou seen the Doun ith'air."¹ was surely written with Jonson's "Have you seene but a bright Lillie grow"² in mind, just as Herrick's "Delight in Disorder" was surely prompted by Jonson's "Still to be neat".³ Robert Baron echoes Jonson's song to Celia "Drinke to me onelye" when he says of the rose that had been "nested in Eliza's breast".

It gathered all its sweetnesse there
And smells, not of itselife, but Her.⁴

Patrick Carey's "Nulla Fides" beginning "For God's sake mark that fly"⁵ echoes the opening line of Donne's "The Canonization":⁶

"For Godsake hold your tongue, and let me love."

William Browne, describing winter, uses such lines as these:

And icicles hung dangling on the rocks,⁷

¹"A Song to a Lute", *Suckling*, p. 29.

²"Her Triumph", *Works*, VIII, 134.

³Martin (Commentary, *Herrick*, p. 502) points out that Jonson's poem itself was based on a poem of unknown authorship, and has classical antecedents such as Ovid's "neglecta decens" from *Am*, 1.14.21.

⁴"The Rose", *Rare Poems of the Seventeenth Century*, p. 7.

⁵*Minor Poets of the Caroline Period*, II, 477.

⁶*Donne*, p. 14.

⁷"Song IV", Book I, *Britannia's Pastorals*, p. 119.

and,

And shepherds' boys for cold 'gan blow their nails¹
with no acknowledgement to Shakespeare. Milton's "Il Penseroso"
was surely inspired by John Fletcher's "Sweetest Melancholy" which
begins,

Hence, all you vain delights
As short as are the nights
Wherein you spend your folly²

and goes on in the second stanza, to

Welcome, folded arms, and fixed eyes.³

Carew's very phrase "rare perfections" was used before him by Lord
Herbert in his lyric, "To a Lady who did sing excellently",⁴ just as
Marvell's "vegetable love" revived the "self-renewing vegetable
bliss"⁵ of another poem by Edward Herbert. Even Wither, with his
predilection for opening paragraphs in *Britain's Remembrancer* with
the phrase "The pious king" or "A pious king" after describing some

¹*Ibid.*

²*The Nice Valour, The Works of Beaumont and Fletcher*, ed. G. Darley, 1866, Routledge, London, I, 463. J. B. Leishman in *Milton's Minor Poems*, pp. 123-135 tracing the sources of "L'Allegro", discusses not only Fletcher's poem but also a reply "Against Melancholy" attributed to William Strode, and considers also Thomas Warton's suggestion (*Poems upon Several Occasions by John Milton*, p. 93) that a poem by Burton prefixed to the first edition of *The Anatomy of Melancholy* may also have influenced Milton.

³*Ibid.*, I, 463.

⁴*Edward Herbert*, p. 45.

⁵"Sonnet", *Edward Herbert*, p. 54.

evil English practice recalls Virgil's way of using the words, "At pius Aeneas" immediately after his hero has acted callously, as when he sailed off leaving Dido still building the ceremonial pyre for their wedding sacrifice.

It is possible that a poet like Wither, who scorned those who

. . . write by Imitation

Whose quaint Inventions must be trimd and trickd,
With curious dressings, from old Authors pickt,
And whose main workes, are little else, but either
Old scattered Peeces, finely glew'd together,¹

did not consider that in some of his poems, his early lyrics especially, he could appear to be borrowing. But for the most part poets were well aware what they were doing. Jonson acknowledged that Virgil's poetry is "distill'd through all the needful^{uses} of our lives."² The calculated impact of the opening lines of many Caroline poems,³ which H. M. Richmond⁴ traces to the influence of Rufinus,

¹*Britain's Remembrancer* I, 275.

²*The Poetaster*, Works IV, 293.

³Consider Herbert's

I struck the board and cry'd
No more,

Suckling's

Out upon it,

or Randolph's

Come spurre away.

⁴*The School of Love*, pp. 100-102.

Ovid, Horace and Catullus, was not achieved by accident but by assiduous reading.¹ However Daniel may have decided, "Methinkes we should not so soone yeeld our consents captive to the authoritie of Antiquitie. All our understandings are not to be built by the square of *Greece* and *Italie*,"² it remains a fact that all Caroline poets had a classical education,³ that many of them wrote some poems and even plays in Latin and translated others,⁴ that they used classical allusions frequently⁵, and, most significantly, that their poetry is constantly cast in a classical mould. Maybe "as Guides, not Commanders"⁶ but certainly considerably, classical writings assisted Caroline lyricists.

So - as might be expected from the proportion of poets who were also priests - did biblical literature significantly influence Caroline lyricists. Not only do Christian habits of prayer and meditation affect the poets in their thinking and habits of introspection;⁷

¹ Compare Milton.. "For this good hap I had from a carefull education to be iniured and seasoned betimes with the best and elegantest authors of the learned tongues", "An Apology for Smectymnius", *Complete Prose Works*, I, 914.

² "An Apologie for Rime", 1603, ed. G. B. Harrison in *Elizabethan and Jacobean Quartos*, 1966, Barnes and Noble, pp. 17-18.

³ See *Bald*, p. 7.

⁴ For instance, Edward Herbert's "Euryale Moerens", and Cowley's *Naufragium Joculare*.

⁵ For instance Sabrina's song in *Comus* has thirteen classical allusions in fourteen lines of verse; *Milton*, II, 199.

⁶ "Discoveries", *Works* VIII, 567.

⁷ See Louis Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation*, 1954, Yale University Press, New Haven.

references to Christian customs, ritual, and to the Old and New Testaments frequently recur in secular verse. And the Hebrew fondness for patterns of repetition and parallelism in sentence structure found its way into English verse, doubtless through the 1611 Revised Version of the Bible,² but also through the widespread impulse to translate and paraphrase the psalms, followed by Bacon, King James, Carew, Denham, Joseph Hall, George Herbert, Henry King and others³; perhaps also through plain song. Wherever its source we find it continually, as in Herbert's hymn:

The heav'ns are not too high,
His praise may thither flie:
The earth is not too low,
His praises there may grow.⁴

It recurs in many other poems. Cartwright's "To Mrs Duppa sent with the Picture of the Bishop of Chichester (her Husband) in a small peece of Glass"⁵ provides a particularly elaborate example with one stanza beginning "I was about to say", the next "I was about to pray"

¹See Louis Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation*.

²C.S. Lewis in *The Literary Impact of the Revised Version*, 1963, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, p. 3, points out, "Where the originals are Hebrew the parallelism of the form is a translatable quality".

³See *Bush*, p. 73.

⁴"Antiphon", *Herbert*, p. 53.

⁵*Cartwright*, p. 506-509.

and the following one, "I was about to Chide".

III. Care

There is a deliberation about Jonson's advice on the use of "the Ancients" which typifies the scrupulous attention to their craft among certain late Renaissance poets and critics. Catherine Ing gives an impressive list of poets who recommend assiduous study and exercise in style.¹ Both Sidney and Jonson use the term "artificer" as one of high compliment.² Much of the theory may derive from Scaliger: "All poetry (should be) characterized by planned unity, variety in expression, forcefulness of language, tempered by grace and a master aim of pleasing persuasion."³ John Beaumont's "sober care" has the same ring in his lines,

Uneven swelling is no way to fame,
But solid joining of the perfect frame:
The relish of the Muse consists in rime.
One verse must meet another like a chime,
pure phrase, fit epithets, and sober care
Of metaphors.⁴

¹*Elizabethan Lyrics*, p. 13. She includes Ascham, Gascoigne, Spenser, Harvey, Stanyhurst, Sidney, James I, Webbe, Fraunce, Puttenham, Harington, Nash, Campion, Daniel and Jonson.

²*Sidney*, p. 79; "Discoveries", *Works* VIII, 587.

³*Select Translations from Scaliger's Poetics*, ed. F. M. Padelford, 1905, Yale University Press, New Haven, pp. 2-3.

⁴*Poems of Sir John Beaumont*, pp. 119-120.

Milton claimed he wrote his early epistles to improve himself in "that cramped mode of speech straitened by fixed feet and syllables."¹ And Aubrey reports that Walter Raleigh, John Donne and Ben Jonson all acknowledged John Hoskins's help in polishing their verses,² and that Waller, after some clumsy gossipy verse had been recited to him "replied sur-le-champ... that the cursed earth naturally produced briars and thornes and weeds, but roses and fine flowers require cultivation."³

Current scholars tend to recognise and value this attention to finished craft. John Buxton, discussing a sonnet of Drayton's, wrote "Twenty-five years of thought and experiment, not some spontaneous overflow of powerful feeling, brought him to this perfection."⁴

Contemporaries were not always so appreciative. Endymion Porter brusquely dismisses the care and erudition in the work of Jonson and Randolph with this stanza:

¹Letter to "Thomas Young, His Teacher", *Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, 1953, Yale University Press, New Haven, I, 311.

²*Aubrey*, p. 170. Hoskins himself, who died in 1630, may have been a poet of stature for Aubrey reports (p. 170) that he "had a bigger book of Poemes, neatly written by one of his Clerkes, bigger than Dr Donnes Poemes which his sonn Benet lent to he knows not who about 1653, and could never heare of it since."

³*Aubrey*, p. 310.

⁴*A Tradition of Poetry*, p. 71.

But after times with full consent
 The truth will all acknowledge -
 Shakespeare and Ford from Heaven were sent
 But Ben and Tom from college.¹

Suckling speaks of "the sweat of learned Johnson's brain" and disposes of Thomas Carew on similar grounds:

His Muse was hard bound, and th' issue of's brain
 Was seldom brought forth but with trouble and pain.²

Any "trouble or pain" was exerted by Carew, as by Jonson, Waller and Herrick, and others who on occasions reached their heights of craftsmanship, in searching out the exact word, image or rhythm, not in restricting themselves to rarefied language. Ben Jonson, in his Prologue to *Every Man in His Humour*, had declared that poetry must speak through "deedes and language such as men doe use."³ Randolph, too, declared:

I speak the language of the people⁴

adding ironically,

*Neque, si quis scribat, uti nos
 Sermoni propria, putes hunc esse poetam.*⁵

¹"Upon Ben Jonson and his Zany, Thomas Randolph", *The Ben Jonson Allusion Book*, ed. J.Q. Adams and J. F. Bradley, 1922, Yale University Press, New Haven, p. 189.

²"The Wits": A Session of the Poets", *Suckling*, p. 73.

³*Works* III, 303.

⁴"To the Courteous Reader", *The Jealous Lovers, Poetical and Dramatical Works of Thomas Randolph*, ed. W. C. Hazlitt, I, 56.

⁵*Ibid.*

Richard Corbett, Bishop of Norwich, writing in a poem as dainty as "The Faeryes Farewell" refers to "foule Slutts in Dairies"¹ and Robert Herrick uses terms like "pissing" and "fart" in his epigrams with simulated abandon.

The move towards writing verse in English rather than in classical tongues predated the Carolines, but throughout the seventeenth century some poets continued to write occasionally in Latin and less often in Greek, and when they used English did so as a deliberate choice.

As Waller put it,

Poets that lasting marble seek,
Must carve in Latin, or in Greek;
We write in sand, our language grows,
And, like the tide, our work o'erflows.²

A lesser poet expressed the same idea in his bright doggerel,

You that in Greek and Latin learned are
And of the ancient Hebrew have a share,
You that most rarely oftentimes have sung
In the French, Spanish or Italian tongue,
Here I in English have employed my pen

¹*The Poems of Richard Corbett*, ed. J.A.W. Bennett and H. R. Trevor-Roper, 1955, Clarendon Press, Oxford, p. 49.

²"Of English Verse", *Waller*, 198.

To be read by the learnedest Englishmen.¹

Dudley North has shown that verse in English had not always been as easy to understand as that of the rather garrulous Water Poet. Donne's printer of 1633, with seeming arrogance, addressed the poems "To the understanders: for this time I must speake only to you: at another, *Readers* may perchance serve my turne."² But most Caroline lyricists, writing in their native tongue, intended and expected all readers to be understanders also of their work.

IV. Manuscript and print

Most Caroline poets wrote for the courtly audience of their patrons and their friends. They expected their poems would be passed around in manuscripts, either in holograph, or in the transcription of a friend. Sometimes the poems were read aloud at private gatherings.³ Sometimes courtiers would copy favoured verses into their own commonplace books, varying the wording by accident or intention; sometimes they composed answer or companion poems. Always, to use the words of John Buxton:

The courtier must... do whatever he did with a grace; it was a "sauce to everything, without the which all his other properties and good conditions were little worth"⁴. This is the

¹John Taylor, *Sir Gregory Nonsense, his Newes from No Place*, 1700, reprinted 1870, Publications of the Spenser Society, No. 7, Manchester, p. 49.

²Donne, p. 1.

³Suckling's "The Wits", for instance, was first sung to the king when he was in the New Forest in 1637, according to Thomas Clayton's Introduction, *Suckling*, p. xliv.

⁴Buxton is quoting *Castiglione*, trans. Hoby, but gives no other details.

quality of the amateur, of the man who does all he attempts without the appearance of strain or excessive preparation, who realises that however important to himself is the task on which he is engaged, it may not seem so to others. His manner must suggest an elegant disdain, *sprezzatura*, and thereby imply that he will neither overestimate his present performance, nor allow it to appear his principal concern.¹

For such poets print, especially as a means of livelihood, could be anathema. Donne, shortly after the publication of his "Second Anniversarie" had written "Of my Anniversaries the fault that I acknowledge in myself is to have descended to print anything in verse, which, though it have been excused in any times by men who professe and practise much gravitie, yet I confesse I wonder how I declined to it and do not pardon myself."²

This reluctance to print arose partly from the belief that a gentleman should be "daintie of his doing."³ Writing verse was an accomplishment of the courtier, a means of displaying his charm, his virtuosity, his character, and therefore personal and private, rather than public and vendible. Puttenham had told poets that modesty in withholding their works or their names from print was unnecessary:

¹ *Elizabethan Taste*, p. 7.

² A letter of c. 1612 to G.G. (George Garrard), *The Life and Letters of John Donne*, ed. Sir E.W. Gosse, 1899, Heinemann, London, I, 303-304.

³ G. D. Willcocks and Alice Walker in their Introduction to *The Arte of English Poesie*, p. xi, give this as the reason for Puttenham's decision to publish it anonymously.

Since... so many have been studious of Poesie... let none other meaner person despise learning, nor (whether it be in prose or in Poesie if they themselves be able to write, or have written anything well or of rare invention) be any whit squeamish to let it be publisht under their names, for reason serves it, and modestie doth not repugne.¹

Yet he himself withheld his name from his poem, "Partheniades" as well as from *The Arte*. In the latter case, as in many others, the reading public knew very well who the author was. *The Arte* contained several autobiographical clues and references to Puttenham's earlier works. Similarly readers would have known Milton wrote *Comus* when he withheld his name at its publication in 1637,² if only because he had not concealed it at the first performance three years earlier.

When a poet did agree that his poems be printed it was often with a prefatory note by the poet or commendatory poems by his

¹*Ibid.*, pp. 22-23.

²The dedicatory letter by Henry Lawes to Lord Brockley, *Comus and other Poems*, ed. F.T. Prince, 1968, O.U.P., London, p. 35, refers to Milton's reluctance to acknowledge his authorship. Leishman, in *Milton's Minor Poems* (p. 33) shows that Milton had affinities with both the coterie poets and those who intended their work to be published, principally Spenser, Drayton and Jonson.

friends explaining how he had been prevailed upon to agree to publication.¹

In miscellanies published around the turn of the century it was customary for lyrics to be attributed to their writers by initials, and sometimes not even that.² On occasions poems were incorrectly attributed. Nicholas Breton, for instance in his preface to *The Pilgrimage to Paradise, Joyned with the Countesse of Pembrokes Lover* wrote:

Gentlemen, there hath been of late printed in London by one Richarde Joanes, a printer, a book of english verses entituled *Bretons bowre of Delights*: I protest it was done altogether without my consent or knowledge and many things of other mens mingled with few of mine.³

Similarly *The Passionate Pilgrim* (1599) was ascribed to Shakespeare, but only five of the twenty poems in it are by him.⁴

¹See Phoebe Sheavyn, *The Literary Profession in the Elizabethan Age*, 2nd edn. rev. 1967, by J.W. Saunders, University Press, Manchester, p. 142, for detailed examples.

²See for example *The Phoenix Nest* (1593) or *England's Helicon* (1606) both of which seem much more carefully prepared for publication than earlier collections such as *Tottel's Miscellany* yet have many poems without ascriptions and others with initials only.

³Quoted by E. Hyder Rollins in his preface to *Bretons Bowre of Delights*, 1591, facsimile reprint 1933, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., p. xv.

⁴See Elizabeth Pomeroy, *The Elizabethan Miscellanies*, p. 21. She uses William Jaggard, printer of *The Passionate Pilgrim*, as an example of one who indulged in "light-handed editorial methods".

The same thing happened in the manuscript collections¹ and the commonplace books of Charles's day, except that wrong attributions and printing errors were even less likely to be picked up.

After 1602 the flow of printed miscellanies stopped,² but lyrics continued to appear in song books until 1622. From then on no verse miscellanies or song books seem to have been published until the 1650's. In the intervening hiatus, which corresponds closely to the years of Charles's reign, several collections of individual poets' work were published, but of these those by the amateurs, University wits like Randolph, and courtly dilettantes like Carew and Suckling, were published posthumously.

Although by nature lyrics are not inclined to be contentious, there had been many lyrics written for private circulation which writers and publishers alike had cause to be wary of printing. For instance *Bodleian Ms Tanner 465* contains several poems against the Duke of Buckingham, written soon after his murder, and some in his favour. Most are in English although one, called "Lines in Praise and Dispraise of Buckingham", is in Latin.³ Similarly,

¹For instance, Davenant's editor, A.M. Gibbs, in his Notes on the Text and Canon, *Davenant*, lxxxvi, described the poem, "On a Gentlewoman dying in Trauell and the childe unborne", as attributed to William Browne in B.M. *Harleian 6931*, to Doctor Corbett in *Bod. Rawl. Poet.* 117, and to "W. Davenat" in B.M. *Egerton Ms 2421*.

²There had been almost one a year for two decades. See *Elizabeth Pomeroy*, p. 1.

³Jonson himself was actually arrested in 1628 on the charge of having written some approving verses addressed to Felton, Buckingham's assassin, and examined by the Attorney-General, Sir Robert Heath. Although Jonson was exonerated and restored to favour by Charles, he and fellow poets had had a fright. (See *Works*, I, 94, for fuller details).

in the 1640's there were lyrics and ballads such as those written by T. Weaver collected in *Bodleian Rawlinson Poetical 211*. This kind of stanza from a typical high-spirited poem could well have got Mr Weaver into trouble.

Attend yee Brethren every one
 And listen, with a payre
 Of swaggering Eares, [wch] have outgrown
 By many an inch [ye] hayre,
 Of Popish flames I will relate
 To you a dolefull story
 [Wch] turned a zealotts shoppe of late
 Into a Purgatory.¹

So could "A Roundellay" in the same collection, which hints suggestively at the sexual liberties of a 'Papist preist' with a 'sister of Comunion'.

Sometimes a poem circulated anonymously was printed later in a verse collection such as *The Rump*. In the publisher's own words: "We have not subjoynd any Authors Names; heretofore it was unsafe, and now the Gentlemen conceive it not so proper. 'Tis hoped they did his Majesty some Service, 'twas for that end they were scribbled."²

¹"Zeal over-heated, or A relation of a lamentable ffire that happened at Oxford, 3 nights before Christ-tide in a religious Brother's shoppe...", *Bod Rawl. Poet 211, fol. 80^v*.

²*Ibid.*, fol. 78^r.

Publication of names had been regarded as unsafe because of what Phoebe Sheavyn called "the suspicious and censorious attitude of authority towards printed literature."¹ A decree of 1586 had prohibited the printing of any work until it had been licensed by the Archbishop of Canterbury or the Bishop of London, and a new decree of 1637 laid it down that as well as being licensed all books were to be entered into the Register's Book of the Company. Every printer was to enter into a bond of 300 pounds to print only books lawfully approved. Such restrictions were directly aimed at any seditious or schismatic works whether prose or verse. Although it has been estimated that between 1630 and 1640 an official licence was obtained for little more than one third of the books printed,² writers and publishers still felt the necessity for action. Ben Jonson had been arrested with George Chapman and John Marston for publishing *Eastwood Hoe*,³ George Wither for *Abuses Stript and Whipt*⁴; Michael Drayton was reprimanded severely by King James.⁵ All five

¹Sheavyn, 56. See also pp. 39-63 where official attitudes to publication are discussed.

²See Franklin B. Williams's study, "The Laudian Imprimatur", *The Library*, Fifth Series, Vol. XV, 1960, p. 198.

³Sheavyn, 59.

⁴His imprisonment is described in *The Schollers Purgatory*, c.1825, reprinted 1872 in *Miscellaneous Works of George Wither, Part I*, Spencer Society, Manchester.

⁵Sheavyn, p. 129.

men were at the time attached and loyal to the court which punished them. John Prynne, of the opposing faction, suffered much more heavily for his *Histrion-Mastix, The Players Scourge or Actors Tragedie* (1633), which was taken at the time of its publication to be a slur on the queen for taking part in court masques.¹ G. Blakemore Evans informs us "With this 'libel' as a lever, the Star Chamber... sentenced Prynne to pay a fine of five thousand pounds to the King, to forfeit his position as a lawyer, to lose both ears, and to be exposed in the pillory."² By the forties, when Civil War was under way, and the Puritans were just as likely as the Royalists to make a public example of any one who exhibited bravado in print, the position of writers and publishers was even more precarious.

Coterie poets had another reason to keep them from publishing. Printers and publishers were a law unto themselves, exercising absolute control over material that had been sold to them.³ Poets resented this. Wither complained bitterly:

They make no scruple to put out the right Authors Name and insert another in the second edition of a Booke; and when the impression of some pamphlet lies upon his hands, to imprint new Titles for yt, (and so take mens moneys twice

¹Wedgwood, *Poetry and Politics under the Stuarts*, p. 46.

²"Notes", *Cartwright*, p. 709.

³And it was not always the author who sold a manuscript. *Sheavyn*, p. 78, records a complaint of Lodge at the piratical publication of certain of his poems 'owing to the base necessity of an extravagant melancholy mate'.

or thrice for the same matter under diverse names) is no iniury in his opinion. If he gett any written Coppy into his powre, likely to be vendible, whether the Author be willing or no, he will publish it; And it shall be contrived and named alsoe according to his owne pleasure: which is the reason so many good Books come forth imperfect, and with foolish titles.¹

Michael Drayton, too, inveighed against printers' errors, after the publication of the first part of *Polyolbion*:

Some of the stationers, that had the selling of the first part of this Poeme, because it went not away so fast in the Sale, as some of their beastly and abominable Trash (a shame both to Language and Nation) have either despightfully left out, or at least carelessly neglected the Epistles to the Readers, and so have cousoned the Buyer with imperfected Bookes."²

In spite of this Wither continued to have his works published during his lifetime. So did Drayton, resenting the behaviour of the chamber poets who neither wished nor needed to publish. In the introduction to the first part of *Polyolbion* he had complained,

¹*The Schollers Purgatory*, pp. 121-122.

²"To any that will read it", prefaced to the second part of *Polyolbion*", *Works of Michael Drayton*, J. W. Hebel (ed), 1961, Basil Blackwell for the Shakespeare Head Press, Oxford, IV, 391.

"In publishing... my Poem there is this great disadvantage against me; that it cometh out at this time when Verses are wholly deduc'd to Chambers and nothing esteemed in this lunatick age but what is kept in Cabinets and must only passe by transcription."¹

In song XXI in *Polyolbion* he again attacks the "cabinet poets" and in his "Epistle to Henery Reynolds" declares his own allegiance:

Myselpe, to those few men doe tye,
Whose workes oft printed, set on every post,
To public censure subject have bin most;

and refuses to consider

such whose poems, be they nere so rare,
In private chambers, that incloistered are,
And by transcription daintily must go.²

Jonson, like Drayton, repeatedly claimed "they are *Poets* that live by it, the poore fellows that live by it."³ and to live by it⁴ a poet had to publish though, as Jonson knew, "Poetry in this

¹"To the Generall Reader", *ibid.*, p. v.

²*Ibid.*, III, 230, 231.

³*Epiccoene*, Works V, 186.

⁴See section on patronage, pp. 30-41.

Latter Age hath prov'd *but* a mean Mistresse to such as have wholly addicted themselves to her".¹ For all that he took his work earnestly. His use of the term "Works" for his own poems and plays may have brought a snort from Suckling² but has been retained ever since. The attitude of Drayton and Jonson had classical authority, as Herrick reminds the Earl of Westmorland in a poem urging him to print his own "sweet numbers":

Why then are not these Verses hurl'd
Like *Sybel's* Leaves, throughout the ample world
.
Virtue conceal'd (with Horace you'l confesse)
Differs not much from drowzie slothfullnesse.³

Whether or not they intended to publish, most Caroline poets were immensely serious about their art. Even Suckling, for all his cheekiness about Jonson and Carew⁴, polished his own poems, corresponded with Lord Dudley North on the subject of poetry, and was sent verses by fellow poets for approval and correction.⁵

¹"Discoveries", *Works* VIII, 583. To Jonson poetry was a mean mistress. As Waller wrote ("To Mr Creech", *Waller*, 218) "Death found surly Ben exceeding poor."

² He told them plainly he deserv'd the Bayes
For his were call'd Works, where others were but
plaies.

"The Wits: A Session of the Poets", *Suckling*, p. 73.

³"To the right Honourable Mildmay, Earle of Westmorland, *Herrick*, pp. 172-173.

⁴See p. 8.

⁵See Thomas Clayton's General Introduction, *Suckling*, p. lxxv.

Randolph rated his poetry as the mainstay of his life:

This is my Mannor-house, and men shall see
I live here Maister of my family,¹

and continues some pages later:

O humane blindness! had we eyes to see
There is no wealth to valiant poetry.²

Carew speaks frequently of the immortalising power of verse³ and

Herrick, who sings of Heaven and hopes "to have it after all"
displays a constant respect for "His Poetrie his Pillar".⁴

Their concern shows through in their lyrics whether circulated in
manuscripts like Herbert's, or published like Herrick's in what
must have seemed huge editions of up to 1,500.⁵

¹"On the Inestimable Content he enjoys in the muses, to those
of his Friends that dehorte him from Poetry," *Randolph*, p. 25.

²*Ibid.*, p. 28.

³As in "Ingrateful beauty threatned", *Carew*, p. 17.

⁴*Herrick*, p. 5.

⁵H. S. Bennett, *English Books and Readers, 1603-1640*, 1970, ~
U. P., Cambridge, p. 234.

CHAPTER FOUR

Themes of the Caroline Lyricists

Certain themes recur constantly in Caroline verse. The most important of these, love, the nature of life, politics and social occasions, magic, the abnormal and the comic, are treated from many angles, with varying degrees of sensitivity, knowledge and sophistication.

The poet of the time, like Peacham's "Compleat Gentleman" or any of the contemporary portrayals of a Renaissance gentleman,¹ was an accomplished creature. The classical commonplace carved on the roof of Michel de Montaigne's library:

I am a man, and nothing human is alien to me²
could have served as a motto for Carew or Herrick, Randolph or Suckling, Lovelace or Davenant. Because knowledge was so much more integrated than it is today, the many interests of these and other Caroline poets overlapped so that, for instance, classical and Christian, secular and religious, court and country ideas, experiences and allusions could be, and were, used together. In

¹For example, Castiglione's *The Book of the Courtier* (trans. Hoby, 1561), Roger Ascham's *Scholemaster* (1570), Seventeenth century manuals include William Cecil's *Certaine Precepts for the Well-Ordering and Carriage of a Man's Life* (1617) or Richard Braithwait's *The English Gentleman* (1630), or *The English Gentlewoman* (1631). A comprehensive bibliography is given in Ruth Kelso's *The Doctrine or the English Gentleman in the Sixteenth Century*, 1929, University of Illinois Press, Urbana.

²M.M. Checksfield, "Montaigne", *Portraits of Renaissance Life and Thought*, 1964, Longmans Green, London, p. 152. The source is Terence, *Heauton Timorumenos*, I, i, 25: "Homo sum; humani nil a me alienum puto".

the lyrics of Caroline poets, as in the work of Donne and Shakespeare but not, to any degree, of earlier sixteenth century poets, art fused with science, passion with scholarship.

1. Amatory Verse

Many Of the best Caroline lyrics were about love, as were most Elizabethan lyrics.¹ The basic themes and conventions² - deception and suffering, fickle fortune, the vanity of physical pleasure - persisted, but were interspersed with notes of delight and fulfilment. Perhaps because of the personal involvement of the poet which Donne and Shakespeare so heightened, love poems³ instead of being charming exercises, took on a new edge. Donne was not celebrating a stylized pastime in his urgent:

... since thou thought'st it best,

Not to dreame all my dreame, let's act the rest.⁴

Nor was Shakespeare when he used conventional amatory landscape⁵

¹ Almost every poem in *England's Helicon*, 1600, ed. H. Macdonald, 1949, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, for instance, could be considered amatory.

² See above, pp. 41-50, for Petrarchan conventions of romantic love.

³ Excluding epithalamia, which will be discussed in the section on occasional verse.

⁴ "The Dreame", *Donne*, p. 37.

⁵ See H. M. Richmond, *Renaissance Landscapes*, 1973, Mouton, The Hague, pp. 77-89.

to produce imagery as provocative, both intellectually and sensually, as this:

I'll be a park, and thou shall be my deer;
 Feed where thou wilt, on mountain or in dale.
 Graze on my lips, and if those hills be dry,
 Stray lower, where the pleasant fountains lie.¹

What Elizabeth Pomeroy had written in her study of lyrics from the Elizabethan miscellanies: "Love is treated as a ground for instruction..."² was no longer true. Joseph Hall had shown his scorn of the Elizabethan sonneteers in lines like these:

The love-sicke Poet, whose importune prayer
 Repulsed is with resolute dispayre
 Hopeth to conquer his disdainfull dame,
 With publique complaints of his conceiued flame.³

¹"Venus and Adonis", *Shakespeare: The Poems*, 1966, University Press, Cambridge, p. 12.

²*The Elizabethan Miscellanies*, p. 55.

³*Virgidemiarum, The Poems of Joseph Hall*, ed. A. Davenport, 1949, University Press, Liverpool, p. 18.

Donne, and others after him, believed that poetry should come from experience rather than from a working over of such conventional ideas as that the lover will be eternally faithful and adoring whatever the woman's response, and that beautiful hair is like golden wire. For "whining"¹ love poetry such as the anonymous "A Forsaken Lover's Complaint" with its refrain,

Alas! Alas! None ever lov'd like me²

he substitutes contentment and security:

Who is so safe as wee? where none can doe
 Treason to us, except one of us two.³

Genuine lovers can forget suspicion:

And now good morrow to our waking soules,
 Which watch not one another out of feare;
 For love, all love of other sights controules,
 And makes one little roome,an everywhere.⁴

¹"I am two fooles, I know,
 For loving, and for saying so
 In whining Poetry"
 "The triple Foole", *Donne*, p. 16.

²*Wit and Mirth, or Pills to Purge Melancholy*, ed. T. D'Urfey, 1719-20. Reprinted 1959, Folklore Library Publications, New York., III, 53-54. The line is in the direct tradition of "continually bewailing of lovers" referred to in *The Book of the Courtier*, (*Castiglione*, p. 27).

³"The Anniversarie", *Donne*, p. 25.

⁴"The Good-Morrow", *idem*, p. 7.

Indeéd,

Nothing else is.¹

In the same vein William Habington wrote,

To me

Ther's nought beyond this. The whole world is she.²

Such lines build up a natural background for his prose foreword to the second part of *Castara* in which he introduces "The Wife" as "the sweetest part in the harmony of our being."³ Milton was to carry on the tradition⁴ with his salutation,

Haile wedded love.⁵

However, the belief that poets must derive their understanding of love directly from experience rather than from established conventions, that,

Love's not so pure, and abstract, as they use
To say, which have no Mistresse but their Muse,⁶

¹"The Sunne Rising", *Donne*, p. 11.

²"To the Right Honourable, the Lord P.", *Habington*, p. 73.

³"Castara", *idem*, p. 55.

⁴For the tradition of wedded love, see Grierson, *Cross Currents in English Literature in the Seventeenth Century*, pp. 146-150.

⁵"Paradise Lost, Bk IV", *Milton*, I, 92.

⁶"Love's Growth", *Donne*, p. 33.

does not at all mean that all early seventeenth century love poetry is characterised by serenity and calm satisfaction. The conventions, originally based on experience, reinforced patterns of behaviour. Physical attraction persisted outside marriage; men and women continued to transfer their affections and to change their moods. But when their ways became the stuff of poetry it was more often in specific and not in general or idealized situations. Both Jacobean and Caroline gentlemen wrote poems about a range of feelings¹ towards women - scorn, flippancy, self-contempt, anguish, cruelty, sensual delight. Donne's "Second Anniversarie" may have been written about his "Idea of a Woman and not as she was"² but other poems of his, and, still more, poems by others written subsequently, in Charles I's day, are about a particular woman and a particular relationship. George Wither had written:

Be shee meeke, kinder, than,

Turtle-Dove, or Pelican:

If shee be not so to me

What care I, how kind she be,³

and Thomas Beedome echoed the same idea:

¹Joan Bennett in fact claims that "the greatness of Donne's love poetry is largely due to the fact that his experience of passion ranged from the lowest depths to the highest reaches" ("The Love Poetry of John Donne", *Five Metaphysical Poets*, p. 93.)

²Recorded in Jonson's "Conversations with Drummond", *Works* I, 133.

³"Sonnet 4, *The Mistresse of Philarete*, 1626, *Juvenilia*, Part III, 854.

What care I though she be faire,-
 Haire, snow-like hand, or Sun-like eye,
 If in that beauty I not share,
 Were she deformed, what care I?
 What care I though she be foule,-
 Haire, swarthy hand, or sunne-burnt eye,
 So long as I enjoy her soule
 Let her be so, why, what care I?

 Be her heart mine, her hand or eye
 Be what it will, why, what care I?

Though the idea that what matters is not beauty nor behaviour,
 but the nature of the bond between two people, is similar in the
 two poems, the tone is vastly different. The former has a twinkle
 of humour, of negligent fun:

If she slight me, when I woose,
 I can scorne and let her goe;
 For, if shee be not for me,
 What care I, for whom she be².

The other has a ring of quiet sincerity:

So long as I enjoy her soule,
 Let her be so.³

¹"The Choyce", *Poems Divine and Humane*, 1641, reprinted in *Rare Poems of the Seventeenth Century*, p. 19.

²"Sonnet 4", *Juvenilia*, III, 855.

³"The Choyce", *Rare Poems of the Seventeenth Century*, p. 19.

Aurelian Townshend is just as serious:

Tis not how witty, nor how free,
 Nor yet how beautifull she be,
 But how much kinde and true to me.¹

Another of the poems cast in the same die, one attributed to Jonson, takes Wither's stanzas one by one and counters them with moralistic fervour. For instance, to this stanza:

'Cause her fortunes seeme too high,
 Should I play the foole and die?
 He that beares a noble mind,
 If not outward helpe hee find,
 Think what with them he would do,
 That without them dares to woo.
And unlesse that mind I see,
What care I how great she bee?

the poet answers,

'Cause her fortunes seemes too low,
 Shall I therefore let her goe?
 He that beares an humble mind,
 And with riches can be kind,
 Think how kind a heart he'd haue,
 If he were some seruile slave.

¹"Upon Kinde and True Love", *The Cavalier Poets*, p. 259.

And if that same minde I see,
 What care I how poore she bee?¹

A similar variation in tone is apparent within the work of some Caroline lyricists. Suckling who could be both flippant as in

Never believe me if I love,²

or cynical:

There never yet was woman made,
 Nor shall, but to be curst,³

yet could be determinedly honest and respectful as in these lines:

I must confess, when I did part from you,
 I could not force an artificial dew
 Upon my cheeks. . . .
 Numbers of painted words may show much skill
 But little anguish⁴.

Other poems of the period show devotion to the loved one, as in the first stanza of Owen Felltham's "Song":

When Deare I doe but thinke on thee
 Me thinkes all things that lovely bee
 Are present,⁵

¹"Master Jonson's Answer to Master Withers", "Poems Ascribed to Jonson", *Works* VIII, 441.

²"The careless Lover", *Suckling*, p. 57.

³"Women's Constancy", *idem*, p. 61.

⁴"To my Lady E.C. at her going out of England", *idem*, p. 29.

⁵"Poems wrongly printed as Suckling's", *idem*, p. 101.

or Henry King's promise to his dead wife:

I shall at last sitt downe by thee.¹

This insistence that love can outlast death occurs elsewhere.

John Dowland in "Love's Constancy" exclaims,

Earth, heaven, fire, air, the world transformed
shall view

'Ere I prove false to faith, or strange to you.²

The idea that love transcends time does not belong exclusively to Caroline verse³ nor does the allied idea, that lyrics can immortalize a loved one.⁴ James Graham, Marquis of Montrose, made this promise to his beloved:

I'll make thee glorious by my pen
And famous by my sword.⁵

The same sentiment is expressed in an anonymous song, set by John Wilson:

Tell me where thy beauty lyes
In my Mistresse, or mine eyes
Is she fayre? I made her so.⁶

¹King, 71.

²*English Madrigal Verse*, p. 458.

³McEuen, p. 135, traces even this back to the classics, citing Tibullus I, IV, 65-66:

quem referent Musae, vivet, dum robora tellus,
dum caelum stellas, dum vehet amnis aquas.

⁴See J.B. Leishman, "Poetry as immortalization from Pindar to Shakespeare", *Themes and Variations in Shakespeare's Sonnets*, 2nd edn., 1963, Hutchinson, London, pp. 27-41.

⁵*English Lyrics from Chaucer to Poe*, pp. 216-217.

⁶"Canto 1", *Cheerfull Ayres*, 1660, printed by W. Hall for Ric. Davis, "the first Essay (for ought we understand) of printing Musick that ever was in Oxford."

Stanley gives the obverse of this;

Though when I lov'd thee thou wert fair,
 Thou art no longer so;
 Those glories all the pride they wear
 Unto opinion owe¹.

Carew and Herrick both assume their poetry has the same immortalizing and destructive power.²

Theorizing about love took other forms also. Platonic love, a natural development of the Petrarchan concept of romantic love, had been at the heart of Spenser's sonnets to the woman he hoped to marry, "my souerayne saynt, the Idoll of my thoughts"³ and in Elizabethan and Jacobean lyrics, such as Pembroke's "Disdain me still" or Donne's "The Undertaking", but after Henrietta Maria and her compatriots had brought the cult in a sophisticated form into the English court, platonic love became a frequent theme in English lyrics.⁴

James Howell described what was happening in 1634:

¹"The Deposition", *Minor Poets of the Caroline Period*, III, 130.

²See below, pp. 307 and 349.

³"Sonnet lxi", *Amoretti*, *Spenser's Minor Poems*, p. 402.

⁴Earl Miner attempts to "lay the ghost of the supposed cavalier cult of Platonic love" (*The Cavalier Mode*, pp. 216-223), but the poems belie him. Arthur Vincent, in his preface to his edition, *Poems of Thomas Carew*, p. 24, traces the idea of platonic love to the indirect, if not the direct, influence of Pietro Bembo and other continental Renaissance poets.

The Court affords little news at present, but that there is a Love call'd Platonick Love, which much sways there of late; it is a Love abstracted from all corporeal gross Impressions and sensual Appetite, but consists in Contemplations and Ideas of the Mind, not in any carnal Fruition.¹

Prestwick in his poem, "How to Chuse a Mistress" talks of his ideal as "cloth'd in Vertue", with a body simply,

Fit to support this face, enclose the mind.²

Edward Herbert wrote three poems called "Platonick Love" and frequently refers to "that rare and secret property"³ in poems with other names.

George Daniel develops the idea:

We distinguish nothing to
The outward Forme, as lovers doe
Nor value by the rule, of sence.
We know noe Sexes difference,
Equall in Pre-eminence.

¹*Epistolae Ho-Eliaanae*, ed. I. Jacobs, 1892, D. Nutt, London, p. 317.

²*Rare Poems of the Seventeenth Century*, pp. 174-175.

³"The Thought", *Edward Herbert*, p. 44.

To the Sympathising mind,
 Neither kinder, neither bind,
 But in either's brest wee move,
 And Affections Equall prove;
 This is pure Platonicke Love¹

The same vogue shows through in poems like Jonson's "Epode", Suckling's "Against Fruition", Randolph's "A Platonicke Elegy", Carew's "To the Queere", as well as in entire plays such as Jonson's *The New Inn* and Suckling's *Aglaure*.

Murmurs of disapproval at the use of the techniques of Elizabeth sonneteers in religious verse and translations were being heard. Joseph Hall, for instance, objected to the way

¹"Pure Platonicke", *The Cavalier Poets*, pp. 109-200. It is only fair to mention that Daniel is only putting forward a way of considering love, and not claiming it as his own. He follows this poem with another called "Anti-Platonicke" in which the suitor, crying out for "buxome youth" confesses:

My blood burnes: I cannot hold;
 Strong desires make us bold.

Similarly Cartwright in "No Platonique Love" considers but rejects "this thin love".

Tell me no more of Minds embracing Minds,
 And hearts exchanged for hearts.

(Cartwright, pp. 494-495.)

Robert Southwell, a devout and God-fearing cleric, had rendered *The Song of Solomon*, itself surely a kind of love poem, in English.

Great Salamon sings in the English Quire
 And is become a newfound Sonetist ,
 Singing his love, the holy spouse of Christ:
 Like as she were some light-skirts of the rest
 In mightiest Ink-hornismes he can thither wrest.¹

Yet inevitably, however much Puritans might denounce the habit, secular and divine love continued to be linked in the prevailing analogical tendency of relating all experience. Religious imagery, allusions and parallels all recur in love poems of the period, just as secular imagery and references do in devotional poems. This anonymous lyric, for instance, has them through all four stanzas:

Hard harted faire, if thou wilt not consent
 alone to place me thyne in thy proude Eye,
 yet let thy grace so farr at least relent,
 yt I may serve thee as a vottarye.

when I protest was never Holye fires
 halfe so religious in his vestry Rites
 as I wilbe in servinge thy desires
 And keepinge vigill to thy sweet delights

¹*Virgidemiarum, Hall*, p. 19.

my Hymnes shall raise thy beauty and thy pittye
 whylst my morne Mattins Tune but myne owne moane
 thy Sacred name shalbe my Eu'nsonge dittye
 and all my Orizons shalbe thee Alone!

O I will fast from Eu'ry loue but thee,
 And Only pray yt thou wilt favor me.¹

Louis Martz has examined in considerable depth the ways that habits of introspection influenced the religious verse of the early seventeenth century.² Since many of the religious poets wrote secular verse also, from Donne's time on, it is not difficult to see how the habit also affected amatory verse, especially that in which the poet tended towards self-analysis as in Henry King's "A Renunciation".

Josephine Miles goes so far as to consider the shift between, say, the secular poems of Carew and the sacred poems of Vaughan "one of tone and emphasis and not of content",³ and analyses the

¹B.M. Loan Ms 35, fol. 4^v, reprinted in J.P. Cutts, *Seventeenth Century Songs and Lyrics*, 1959, University of Missouri Press, p. 140.

²*The Poetry of Meditation*, pp. 39-70. William H. Halewood is similarly concerned with the religious verse of the mid to late seventeenth century. (*The Poetry of Grace*, 1970, Yale University Press, New Haven).

³*The Language of Poetry in the 1640's*, p. 7.

frequency of certain words in a large sample of secular and religious verse of the time¹ to support her contention. While it is difficult to accept that Carew's passion in, for instance, "The Rapture", is as closely related to the feeling in a poem like Vaughan's "The Retreat" as she believes, it is true that the dichotomy we tend to impose on religious and mundane experience did not exist in the seventeenth century. When Donne uses terms like "divorce", "enthrall", "ravish" in Holy Sonnet XIV² he was simply holding what we tend to consider disparate experiences together in his mind. Lovelace reaffirms for Ellinda:

The sacred Vowes that I did sweare

.

For as in Adoration

This is Loves true Devotion³

Suckling writes of Mrs A.L.:

I'm sure thou art No Mortal creature

But a Divine one thron'd in humane feature

Non est mortale quod opto⁴.

Waller calls his beloved's room "heaven" and "paradise".⁵

¹The 1640's, for her purposes, include verse written long before, but first published then, such as Donne's, and verse not published till much later, like most of Milton's, but possibly being first drafted in the decade before Charles I's death.

²"Batter my heart", *Donne*, p. 328.

³"To Ellinda, that lately I have not written", *Lovelace*, pp. 43-44.

⁴"Non est mortale quod opto: Upon Mrs A.L.", *Suckling*, p. 26.

⁵"Of her Chamber", *Waller*, p. 26.

Henry King, already Prebend of St Pancras at St Paul's and later to become Bishop of Chichester, calls his dead wife, his "Saint".¹ Carew and, to a greater extent, Herrick give people divine attributes.²

In some Caroline verse the rhythms, as well as the language and imagery, suggest the liturgical. A nameless love poet pleads:

Ah love! where is thy Abydinge?

or in my hart, or in her Eyes resydinge.³

Platonic and spiritual though the Caroline lyricists could be, there was also a strong classical strain of sensual frankness, even coarseness, in their amatory verse.⁴ This may have come directly from Roman authors such as Horace and Juvenal; or, as A. J. Smith thinks, indirectly from the influence of Italian thinkers, Giordano Bruno, M. Equicola, Speroni and Leone Ebreo who gave theoretical justification for physical union, and then exulted in describing it.⁵ Whatever the source, both sexual suggestiveness and detail had persisted for centuries within the English tradition, burgeoning in various of the *Canterbury Tales*,

¹"An Exequy", *King*, p. 68.

²See, for instance, p. 410 below.

³B.M. Loan 35, f3^v reprinted in *Seventeenth Century Songs and Lyrics*, p. 9.

⁴As in "A Dream Broke", *Cartwright*, p. 485.

⁵"The Metaphysic of Love", *Discussions of John Donne*, p. 155.

Sir Gawaine and the Greene Knight and even in early sixteenth century verse such as Wyatt's lovely lyric, "They flee from me that sometime did me seek."

By the end of the sixteenth century the kind of poet Joseph Hall denounced,

What, he, that earst to gain the ryming Goale
The worne *Recitall-post of Capitolle*,
Rhymed in rules of stewish ribaldry,
Teaching experimentall Baudery?
Whiles th'itching vulgar tickled with the song,
Hanged on their vnreadie Poets tongue,¹

was familiar enough to taint the reputation of poetry in the eyes of the Puritans, and prompt apologies such as Sidney's *Defence of Poesie*, for poetry itself, and for its right to include all aspects and extensions of experience in their proper place.

In Caroline lyrics physical love-play is treated in a variety of ways. Sometimes the poet gives a delicate glimpse of what happens in dreams if not in life as in the simple but sweet lyric:

I never laie me downe to rest
but my deerest love I see
And laughing then she doth me feede
With what shee waking keepes from me.

¹*Virgidiarum*, Hall, p. 19.

Walking waking alasse shee doth me pine
 Lett me but sleepe and all is myne.¹

Randolph sharply concludes one poem with the statement:

we may doe
 What youth and pleasure prompts us to.²

Suckling, describing the interesting Lady Carlisle, confesses he did not notice the rare perfumes Carew described because he was consulting how he could,

In spite of masks and hoods descry
 The parts deni'd unto the eye.³

This show of eagerness gives the poem the same kind of warmth and intimacy that characterises his high-spirited "A Ballade Upon a Wedding".

Some contemporary poets objected to the licentious cynicism with which Suckling and others "Such as shall catch the wanton eare"⁴ wrote about love. Crude, selfish and cynical, poems like "A Candle"⁵ and the anonymous "Panders, Come Away"⁶ may be. But

¹*Ch.Ch. Ms 439, f.5 reprinted in J.P. Cutts' Seventeenth Century Songs and Lyrics, p. 179.*

²"Upon Love fondly refus'd for conscience sake", *Randolph*, p. 130.

³"Upon my Lady Carlisles walking in Hampton Court Garden", *Suckling*, p. 31.

⁴"Versa est in luctum cythara mea. Iob", *Habington*, p. 119.

⁵*Suckling*, p. 19.

⁶*Love and Drollery*, p. 232. This poem lists by name several women, their price, reputation and state of health as far as it could concern the men.

for all that, the ring of direct feeling and experience is heard, while it is quite lost in a poem such as that written by Drummond of Hawthornden about his bride-to-be who died the night before they were to be married. He remembers:

With roses here she stellified the ground.¹

In contrast some of the frankly sensual poems of the period, such as Cartwright's "Whiles early light springs from the skies"² have a splendid freshness and immediacy. Sometimes physical pleasures are given an elaborate stylized setting as in this poem, probably also by Cartwright:

See what a lovely bedd of fragrant Roses
hath curteous flora spread, and deckd with posies
to entertaine thy louerlyer skinne, sitt downe
dis-roabe thy selfe, and crowne
Desire with Joy, it is no sinne;
a sugred kisse,
leades to my blisse,
Joue when he wakes will wish hee here had beene.³

Cartwright can be more explicit, more vigorous, as he orders,

From thy waste thy girdle throw

.

I can hear thee curse, yet chase thee,

¹Sonnet, *The English Poets*, ed. T.H. Ward, II, p. 28.

²Song from "The Ordinary", *Cartwright*, p. 335.

³"To Splendora, A Morning Salutation", listed among "Doubtful Poems", *idem*, p. 567.

Drink thy tears, yet still embrace thee.
 Easie riches is no treasure,
 She that's willing, spoils the pleasure.
 Love bids learn the restless fight,
 Pull and struggle whilst ye twine:
 Let me use my force tonight.
 The next conquest shall be thine.¹

Sometimes, especially with Herrick² but in the verse of other Carolines too, this immediacy grows out of almost domestic interest³ in trivialities and day-to-day concerns, as opposed to the "climactic moments of love"⁴ with which the Elizabethan lyricists were caught up. Lovelace wrote a poem on "A Black Patch on Lucasta's Face" and another on "Her Muffe". Richard Corbett prepared a provocative message called "Little Lute (Upon one comminge to visit his Mris, and shee being absent)". In Suckling's "A Ballade. Upon a Wedding"⁵ the details bring the poem alive:

Her fingers were so small, the ring
 Would not stay on which they did bring.

In the next stanza:

Her feet beneath her Petticoat,
 Like little mice stole in and out.

¹"A Song of Dalliance", *idem*, pp. 467-468.

²Herrick is for ever using small details of clothing, food, drink, flowers and domestic animals. This characteristic will be discussed below, p.383.

³This itself has classical antecedents, as in the verse of Catullus.

⁴*Richmond*, p. 144.

⁵*Suckling*, pp. 79-84.

Waller wrote a poem about a lady playing with a snake, a topic which would have seemed trivial in pre-Jungian times, though the message:

Strange! that such horror and such grace
Should dwell together in one place¹

could be considered the starting point for many of Yeats's *Crazy Jane* poems. His exquisite little lyric "On a Girdle" again takes an apparently unimportant object to lead into the abandoned glee of the closing lines:

Give me but what this ribband bound
Take all the rest the sun goes round.

In another poem he writes about a lady fishing and in another "Of her passing through a crowd of people", just as Herrick takes the way Julia walks, or James Shirley muses on his mistress as she dances. Lovelace composed three poems about being physically separated from Lucasta, although, as he insists, such separation was not important.

Discrepancy in ages and the consequent possibility of rejuvenation of the old by the young, was a favourite topic, not

¹"To a Fair Lady, Playing with a Snake", *Waller*, p. 175.

²"On a Girdle", *idem*, p. 95.

³"Upon a Lady's Fishing with an Angle", *idem*, pp. 244-246.

⁴*Idem*, p. 51.

⁵"I stood and saw my mistress dance", *Poems*, 1646, London, p. 17.

⁶"Night: To Lucasta", "Ode Calling Lucasta from her Retirement", and "To Lucasta in Prison", *Lovelace*, pp. 126, 105-106, and 48-51.

only of poems by known authors like Waller's "To a very young lady", Herrick's "To a Gentlewoman objecting to him his gray hairs", Jonson's "Ten Lyrick Peeces", Cartwright's "To Chloe who wished herself young enough for me", and King's "Paradox. That it is best for a Young Maid to marry an Old Man.", but in little-known anonymous poems too.

Here is the first stanza of one touching example found by J.P. Cutts:

disdaine me not sweet love though I be Ould
greene is my love all though my hayres be graye,
nor am I Coulde,
noe matter what ye younge men saye
I have my blood as Hot, as red as they.¹

Money mattered, and was mentioned, sometimes bitterly, sometimes lightheartedly. Wither says:

'Twas I that paid for all things,
'Twas others dranke the wine
.
No riches now can raise me
No want make me despair.²

An anonymous poem, "A Copy of Verses at a mon(e)y Marriage", purports gay acceptance of the practice of marrying for wealth:

No Gypsie nor no Blackamore

¹*Seventeenth Century Songs and Lyrics*, p. 87.

²"A Love Sonnet", from *A Description of Love*, 1620, reprinted in *The Oxford Book of Seventeenth Century Verse*, pp. 294-295.

No Bloomesbery nor Turnbold whore
 Can halfe so black, so foule appeare,
 As she I chose to be my Deare.
 She's wrinkled, old, she's dry, she's tough,
 Yet mony makes her faire enough.¹

Thomas Randolph, though he wrote comparatively few love poems for a popular secular poet of his time, yet registers, more than once² a shudder at such commercialism:

Wives are growne traffique, marriage is a trade
 And when a nuptiall of two hearts is made,
 There must of moneyes too a wedding be,
 That coine as well as men may multiplie.³

This attitude, appropriate in such a 'son of Ben', was not held by all the Caroline poets, many of whom shared in the current loosening of social values, and took especial delight in "witty" challenges to Petrarchan love conventions. Suckling, for instance, in poems like "A Peddler of Small-Wares" associates sex and money,⁴ though in fairness it must be noticed that of the two poems which are probably most responsible for giving him the reputation of a materialist, "Love and Debt Alike Troublesome" is listed among the

¹*Choyce Drollery*, 1656, ed. J. G. Ebsworth, 1876. Printed by R. Roberts, Boston, Lincolnshire, p. 88.

²See also Precept 37, *Randolph*, pp. 65-66.

³"On the Inestimable Content he injoyes in the Muses", *idem*, p. 28.

⁴*Suckling*, pp. 19-20.

Dubia by Clayton and the breezy but egotistical "Profer'd Love Rejected" is a translation of a French poem, "A Phillis" from *Les Satyres du Regnier*, in which the male poet similarly exults in a progressive lowering of the monetary value of one night's lodging with a woman.¹ Suckling did, of course, choose to translate the poem.

Contemporaries who could be just as cruel, especially in their epigrams,² made no such attempts at brutal bargaining. When Herrick mentions money it is usually with a rueful but not bitter regret that he lacks it.³ If Herrick does want to introduce bargaining into a love poem he does it with some other coinage than money, as in the whimsical "Kissing Usurie".

Just as the Carolines wrote about ordinary objects and exchanges of daily life in the course of their love poems, so too they used familiar, even ordinary speech rhythms rather than the formal eloquence of much Elizabethan verse. Whereas Marlowe's passionate shepherd promised his love:

By shallow rivers, to whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigals
.
The shepherd swains shall dance and sing
For thy delight each May morning.⁴

¹See *Suckling*, p. 210.

²Consider Jonson's "On Gypsee", *Works VIII*, 39, or Herrick's "Upon Jollies wife", *Herrick*, p. 62.

³As in his charming "Lyrick for Legacies", *idem*, p. 88, in which he begs his gentle friends to accept "such coyne as these" his lyrics instead of gold or silver of which he has none "for use or show".

⁴*Elizabethan Lyrics*, p. 135.

the Caroline lover swings more idiomatically into intimate conversation:

Deere, my deere, why are you cruell,¹

or

Come, come, sweet Love, why dost y^u stay,²

or

Admit (thou darling of mine Eyes)³

or, more gaily,

Silly Heart forbear⁴

Another anonymous poet advises the world:

Go search the valleys; pluck up every rose
 You'll find a scent, a blush of her in those,
 Fish, fish for pearl or coral, there you'll see
 How oriental all her colours be;
 Go, call the echoes to your aid, and cry
 Chloris! Chloris! For that's her name for whom I
 die.⁵

"Chloris", like any of the stylized names used in the early seventeenth century, may sound unfamiliar to the twentieth century

¹*Seventeenth Century Songs and Lyrics*, p. 82.

²*Ibid.*, p. 66.

³*Carew*, p. 110.

⁴*Seventeenth Century Songs and Lyrics*, p. 42.

⁵"Tell me, you wandering spirits of the air," J. Playford's *Select Musical Airs and Dialogues*, 1652, reprinted in *Seventeenth Century Lyrics*, p. 263.

ear, but the very act of calling on the girl by name for help brings the poet close to the reader, as does the ring of despair in the order "Go search the valley" and in the explanation "For that's her name for whom I die". The whole stanza shows how melodious the rhythms of speech can be. When Oliver Elton wrote about "the now long lost cadence of the seventeenth century"¹ he had King's "Exequy" in mind but he could just as well have been thinking of one of the many anonymous lyrics of the time, or of William Davenant's "Song", of Richard Lovelace's "To Althea from Prison", of Owen Felltham's "When Deare I doe but thinke on thee", of John Suckling's "Why so pale and wan, fond lover", of William Browne's "So shuts the marigold her leaves" or of a host of other poems by Thomas Carew or Robert Herrick. In each one a realistic situation, and the personal conviction of the speaker combine, with delicacy and musical rightness.

"Song",² for example, is a highly planned lyric. Dawn is set for the listener by the vivid image of the lark rising, shaking off the dew from the chill of night and looking for warmth at a girl's window. The stanza closes with an urgent couplet asking her to "Awake" so that the morning, using her eyes as mirror, can prepare herself for a fair day. Davenant then moves from the lark, his symbol of the natural world, to the merchant, the seaman and the ploughman who stand for the world of men. They use stars and sun to plan their lives, while the lover is still waiting for

¹*The English Muse*, 1933, G. Bell and Sons, London, p. 230.

²*Davenant*, p. 173.

his source of light, his dawn. The closing couplet not only echoes the last couplet of the first stanza but uses the "Vailes of Lawne" to suggest her eyes, her garments and gauze drapery and also the rising morning mists through which the lark appeared.

Though the reasoning behind Davenant's dawn is involved, its execution gives the impression of utter simplicity. Line and stanza lengths, metre and rhyme are all regular. Every word is familiar; none has more than two syllables. There is a high proportion of long vowels and liquid consonants which contributes to the smooth sound of the poem. Though fanciful, the imagery is unforced. Yet there is a haunting, even hypnotic aura to the lines. The summons could not be sweeter.

Waller's "Go, Lovely Rose"¹ is another lyric which holds the ring of speech and the lilt of song together. Again the underlying idea is abstruse but the expression crisp and clear. In twenty short lines Waller uses the rose not only to show his mistress,

How sweet and fair she seems to be,

but also to remind her that her beauty, like that of the rose, can only be appreciated if visible to men. She, like the rose, must make the most of time, 'gather the day' as the philosophers had taught. "Sweet" and "fair", which Josephine Miles sorts out

¹Waller, p. 128.

as the adjectives most indicative of 1640's¹, are used together, easily, at the end of the first stanza, and again at the end of the poem. Each of the four stanzas is perfectly balanced. The poem is directed against waste, and uses the threat of death which comes so quickly to a rose and is "the common fate of all things rare", but Waller starts and finishes positively, with his firm admiration for the "lovely rose" and all things "so wondrous sweet and fair." The magic lies as much in the sound as in the imagery. H. C. Beeching,² admiring Waller's sensitive handling of sound, notes especially his fondness for balance within a line and for a pause at the end of a couplet, his careful placing of polysyllabic words, his emphatic rhymes, and his complete absence of the seventeenth century habit of eliding vowels.³ Certainly all these traits exist in "Go, Lovely Rose" but it is not necessary to be aware of them to enjoy the exquisite cadence of the poem.

George Herbert in a letter to his mother written when he was only sixteen reproved "the vanity of those many love-poems, that are daily writ"⁴ and later parodied in "The Banquet" both the content and the technique of Caroline love poems. But to those less devout and single-minded than was Herbert, Caroline amatory lyrics can present a lovely store.

¹*Language of Poetry in the 1640's*, p. 4.

²"A Note upon Waller's Distich", *A Miscellany*, Presented to F. J. Furnivall, 1901, Clarendon Press, Oxford, pp. 4-9.

³At its most extreme in "i' th' very height o' th' Fever" from "To Mr Davenant for Absence", *Suckling*, p. 39.

⁴*Herbert*, p. 363.

II. Philosophical Verse

In the early seventeenth century philosophical verse, or that concerned with abstractions, with understanding the nature of ideas, events, people and things, was written on a range of topics. Some of the amatory poems of the time could themselves be considered philosophic. For instance, James Shirley condenses into his witty poem, "Upon his M. Dancing",¹ not only sharp pictures of himself and the woman but also and more importantly, his calm and detached observation that spiritual inflexibility can co-exist with physical agility within the same person:

I stood and saw my Mistris dance,
 Silent, and with so fixed an eye
 Some might suppose me in a trance,
 But being asked why,
 By one that knew I was in love,
 I could not but impart
 My wonder, to behold her move
 So nimbly with a marble heart.

The very fashion of theorizing about love which Dryden was to object to in Donne's work,² but which the later Carolines adopted eagerly, could itself be called philosophic. So could the way the Caroline lyricists, either within single poems or in linked

¹*James Shirley, : Poems*, 1946, Scolar Press Facsimile, Menston, 1970, p. 17.

²See above, p. 54.

companion and answer poems examined opposed¹ or varying² aspects of love, physical or platonic.

The worth of a theoretical approach to amatory poetry is put forward forcibly in these lines of Edward Herbert, himself a philosopher of considerable standing:³

Yet as a rising beam, when first 'tis shown,
Points fairer, then when it ascends more red,
Or as a budding Rose, when first 'tis blown,
Smells sweeter far, then when it is more spread,
*So all things best by principles are known.*⁴

To understand the nature of love, as of life, the poet is saying, we must realise that nature and man alike are insignificant; their presence is a passing phase, no more.

Like to the Falling of a Starr;
Or as the Flightes of Eagles are;
Or like the fresh Spring's gawdy hew;
Or Silver Dropps of Morning Dew;
Or like a Wind that chafes the flood;

¹In *Sloane 1446*, for instance, there are two poems, each without ascription, entitled "In Praise of Woemen" and "In Dispraise of Women". And in *Bod. Ms Malone 18* there is a poem ascribed J. Beaumont, "Of his Mistris two natures".

²Such as the many imitations of Marlowe's "Come live with me and be my love".

³Sidney L. Lee, in his introduction to Edward Herbert's *Autiobiography*, considers attitudes and methods in *De Veritate* "at least two centuries ahead of [their] time", (p. xxxv).

⁴"The Green Sickness Beauty", *Edward Herbert*, p. 67. The italicising is mine.

Or Bubbles which on Water stood;
 Even such is Man, whose borrow'd Light
 Is streight Call'd in, and Pay'd to Night.¹

The image of man's life as a falling star is borrowed by other poets of the time. Francis Quarles, for instance, in "An Elegie upon the Reverent, learned and my honoured Friend, Dr Wilson, of the Rolles" begins his sixth stanza:

This day a starre is falne, whose golden head
 Guilt everie eye with flame.²

Observers can remember the glory of a star - or a person - but must keep it, however bright, in perspective. "An Inscription" is a graphic reminder of the transience of all natural phenomena, including human life:

Grass of levity,
 Span in brevity,
 Flowers' felicity,
 Fire of misery,
 Winds' stability,
 Is mortality.³

King's poem, "The Dirge", expounds the same theme more wearily:

What is th'Existence of Man's Life?

¹"Sic Vita", a poem variously attributed, and first printed in *Poems by Francis Beaumont*, 1640, but almost certainly written by Henry King. Margaret Crum includes it in her authoritative edition, *King*, p. 148.

²*Quarles*, III, 19.

³From Stow's *Survey of London*, 1618, reprinted *Unfamiliar Lyrics* p. 110.

But open Warr, or Slumber'd Strife.

.

It is a Dreame, whose seeming Truth

Is moralizd in Age and Youth.¹

James Shirley gave his equally grim reminder of man's mortality in sharp metonymy:

Sceptre and Crown

Must tumble down,

And in the dust be equal made,

With the poor crooked scythe and spade.²

As George Herbert put it:

Man and the present fit; if he provide,

He breaks the square.

This houre is mine: if for the next I care,

I grow too wide,

And do encroach upon deaths side.³

Bitterness replaces this calm acceptance of the inevitability of death in Davenant's poem, "The Souldier going to the Field":⁴

¹*King*, pp. 177-178.

²Calchas's song "The glories of our blood and state", from *The Contention of Ajax and Ulysses, The Dramatic Works and Poems of James Shirley*, ed. W. Gifford and A. Dyce, Russell & Russell, New York, VI, 397. The poem is based on idealism such as that of Plato who insisted on the permanence of the spiritual and equally on the impermanence of all earthly things. Only the soul outlasts death.

³"The Discharge", *Herbert*, p. 145.

⁴*Davenant*, p. 176.

For I must go where lazy Peace
 Will hide her drouzy head;
 And, for the sport of Kings, encrease
 The number of the Dead.

Whatever might happen to the individual, time moved on inexorably.

Still do the Stars impart their light
 To those that travell in the night;
 Still Time runs on, nor doth the Hand
 Or Shadow on the Diall stand.¹

Since "time runs on" relentlessly,² bringing old age and death to each of us, all we can do is to "gather the day", trust the future as little as possible and make the most of each moment while we can, as Horace had taught:

Carpe diem quam minimum credula postere.³

The message, contained in so many Caroline lyrics, was familiar earlier. It is, for instance, explicit in this anonymous plea:

Do not, oh, do not prize thy beauty at too high a rate,
 Love to be loved while thou art lovely, lest thou love
 too late.⁴

¹"Falshood", *Cartwright*, p. 468.

²For an explanation of the attitude of poets in the immediately preceding reigns towards time, see Gary Waller's unpublished thesis "Time in Elizabethan and Jacobean Literature," 1970, University of Cambridge.

³*Odes*, 1, XI, 8. Max Patrick refers readers to several sources such as Ausonius *Idyl*. 14 and Catullus V. (*Patrick*, p. 118) and K. McEuen gives numerous classical versions of the *carpe diem* theme.

⁴"Do not, oh, do not prize", R. Jones, *Ultimatum Vale*, 1608, reprinted *Unfamiliar Lyrics*, p. 105.

In different ways the drinking songs urging convivial living,¹ the libertine and seductive lyrics ordering or coaxing women to taste the pleasures of love while their beauty makes it possible, the poems urging women to marry, and the epithalamia all argue that happiness is to be sought from physical satisfaction.² The theme is expressed at its gayest in the anonymous 'The Angler's Song':

We'll banish all sorrow,
And sing till tomorrow,
And angle and angle again.³

Cowley can be almost as carefree:

I'll sing away the day
For 'tis but a folly
To be melancholly,
Let's live here while we may.⁴

¹Such as the catch which the greybeards sing in Richard Brome's *The Jovial Crew* (ed. Haaker, 1968, Edward Arnold, London, p. 95.)

Old sack, and old songs, and a merry old crew,
Can charm away cares when the ground looks blue.

²See J.E. Wellington's unpublished thesis, "An Analysis of the Carpe Diem theme in Seventeenth Century English Poetry (1590-1700)", 1956, Florida State University.

³Quoted first by Walton, *The Compleat Angler*, p. 431.

⁴Alupis's song, *Love's Riddle*, 1638, Act III, sc. 1, *The Complete Works in Verse and Prose of Abraham Cowley*, ed. A.B. Grosart, 1881, reprinted A.M.S. Press, New York, I, 52.

So can Herrick:

Thus, thus, we live, and spend the houres
 In Wine and Flowers:
 And make the frolick yeere,
 The Month, the Week, the instant Day
 To stay
 The longer here.¹

In that "Ode to Sir Clipseby Crew" Herrick describes his way of life to his patron:

Here we securely live, and eate
 The Creame of meat,²

but the mood of frank hedonism is countered in many other poems with one of seriousness, even gloom:

The more I muse, the more I hast my end
 Thus Time doth mee, and I do Time abuse,³

wrote Alexander Craig. Herrick was constantly aware of the waste of "those mites of Time",⁴ and that "while time serves.. we are but decaying."⁵

¹Herrick, p. 198.

²Idem.

³"Sonet to Lesbia", *Craig*, p. 159.

⁴"Upon Himself", *Herrick*, p. 171.

⁵"Corinna's Going to a Maying", *idem*, p. 69.

Philosophic and abstract topics such as time do not only appear incidentally or as the underlying idea in a poem ostensibly on another subject, as in Waller's "Go, lovely Rose". Often as in Herrick's "Upon Time" or George Herbert's "Time", or Milton's "On Time", they supply both title and the entire substance of a poem. In religious poetry, such as Herrick's *Noble Numbers*, Herbert's *The Church*, and most of Milton's early volume, *Poems*, this might be expected, but it occurs frequently in secular verse too. The plethora of poems entitled "Platonick Love" or "Anti-Platonick Love" has already been noticed.¹

Alexander Craig has lyrics with titles like "Against Pryde", "Of True Friendship" and "To the Envious". Edward Herbert wrote poems such as "An Ode upon a Question moved, Whether Love should continue for ever ", and "A Meditation upon the Wax-Candle burning out". William Browne wrote one called "A Solitary Life" and Thomas Randolph an "Eclogue on predestination". William Hammond wrote a quaint poem called "Husbandry" which combines the theoretical and the tangible:

Coyness shuts Love into a Stove;
 So frost-bound lands their own heat feed;
 Neglect sits brooding upon Love,
 As pregnant snow on winter seed.²

¹Above, p. 149.

²*Caroline Minor Poets*, II, 490. Saintsbury shows great affection for this poem. "How many pieces do I remember like "Husbandry?" I shall not say how many lest I should have to say how few." (*Ibid.* 486.)

John Beaumont¹ wrote one poem called, "An Act of Contrition", and others with names like "Of Sicknesse", and "Against Inordinate Love of Creatures".

Yet although this awareness of the transience of life and the problems of men show through in many Caroline lyrics, it is accompanied by the certainty that life is worthwhile, and that the individual matters. The same poet who cried

Vaine triviall dust! weake man!²

also advised a friend:

Direct your eye-sight inward, and you'le find

A thousand regions in your mind

Yet undiscovered. Travell then, and be

Expert in home Cosmographie.

This you may doe safe both from rocke and shelve:

Man's a whole world within himselfe.³

The air of assurance recalls that of Ben Jonson:

Men that are safe, and sure, in all they doe,

Care not what trials they are put unto.⁴

¹Father of the John Beaumont whose poem on Jonson was discussed earlier (p. 65) and brother of Francis Beaumont, the dramatist.

²"Versa est in luctum cythara mea", IOB, *Habington*, p. 119.

³"To my honoured friend Sir Ed. P. Knight", *idem*, p. 92.

⁴"An Epistle answering to one that asked to be Sealed of the Tribe of Ben", *Works* VIII, 218.

III Pastoral and Country Verse

From the pettiness and corruption of this life, the poet could and frequently did move into an unreal world, the realm of the pastoral. Here, outside the normal confines of space and time, in a conventional setting of shepherds, shepherdesses, a fair countryside and perennial spring, he could comment freely on human ideals and behaviour. Drayton had stated, "The subject of Pastorals, as the language of it, ought to be poor, silly, and of the coursest Woofe in Appearance. Neverthelesse the most High and most Noble Matters of the World may bee shadowed in them."¹ E. K. in his gloss on Spenser's *The Shepherd's Calendar* had called the pastoral a convenient form "to unfold great matter of argument covertly".²

The nature of a happy life or "Which happinesse you would beg first"³ was the "great matter" which received most attention in pastoral lyrics. The secular poet, a courtier or university man, considered the complicated and often dissipated life of the city to which he belonged⁴, and compared it with the simpler and

¹Preface to *Poems*, 1619, facsimile 1969, Scolar Press, Menston, p. 422.

²"The Epistle Dedicatory to the Shepherds Calendar", *Elizabethan Critical Essays*, I, 131.

³"On the Inestimable Content...", *Randolph*, p. 23.

⁴See E.K. Chambers in *The English Pastoral*, p. 171. "One must realize that pastoral is not the poetry of country life, but the poetry of the townsman's dream of country life." Where the dream had become a reality, as for instance with Herrick, it was not by choice, and the poet remained urban by education and sophistication.

purèr- if also earthier - life of the country, along lines that can be traced back to classical and biblical literature.¹

Not that the setting used by the Carolines was anything but English. Sidney, at the turn of the century, had chosen the name *Arcadia*, but by the 1630's Randolph is insisting on the attractions of the English country side:

...methinks our *English* pastures be
As flowery as the Lawnes of *Arcadie*,
Our Virgins blith as theirs, nor can proud Greece,
Boast purer ayre, nor sheer a finer fleece.²

Milton's "Hedgerow-elms" and "Chequer'd shade"³ evoke an English scene more surely than Jonson does when he uses English place

¹McEuen points out (pp. xii, xv) the influence of Theocritus's *Idylls* and Virgil's *Ecloques*, especially on Herrick, Randolph and Lovelace, and J. Hallet Smith (*Elizabethan Poetry*, pp. 3ff) investigates biblical origins of late sixteenth century pastoral lyrics, stressing the theme of the twenty-third psalm, "The Lord is my Shepherd" and the New Testament concept of Christ as the Good Shepherd. In 1526 the term "pastor" began to be used of a shepherd of souls, one who saw to the spiritual care of a "flock" of Christians. (O.E.D.)

²"An Eclogue on the noble Assemblies revived on Cotswold Hills by M. Robert Dover", *Randolph*, p. 119. The games, revived by a Captain Dover, lasted till 1852. See C. R. Ashbee, *The Last Records of a Cotswold Community*, 1904, Essex House Press, Chipping Camden.

³"L'Allegro", *Milton*, II, 139, 140. I think a strong feeling for the English countryside comes through in this as in other pastoral verse of Milton's, in spite of G.G. Greg's reminder that his details are awry, that for instance of the three kinds of berries and eleven kinds of flowers mentioned in "Lycidas...", none of the former would have been ripe and nine kinds of the flowers would have been over on August 11 when King was drowned. (*Pastoral Poetry and Pastoral Drama*, 1906, Sidgwick and Jackson, London, p. 134.)

names:

All the grass that *Rumney* yeelds,
 Or the sands in *Chelsey* fields,
 Or the drops in silver *Thames*.¹

Several of the English pastoral poems use as their setting the more desolate parts of England. John Beaumont, for example, begins a lyric with this stanza:

A shepherdesse, who long had kept her flocks
 On stony Charnwood's dry and barren rocks
 In heate of Summer to the vales declin'd
 To seeke fresh pasture for her lambes, half pin'd.²

From here it is a short step to poems which are not strictly pastoral, but which use a familiar and realistic landscape³ or dwelling. William Browne's "Lydford Journey" supplies a glum example:

This town's enclos'd with desert moors,
 But where no bear nor lion poorr,
 And nought can live but hogs;
 For, all o'erturn'd by Noah's flood,
 Of fourteen miles scarce one foot's good
 And hills are wholly bogs.⁴

¹"Kisse me, Sweet", *Works*, VIII, 103.

²"A Shepherdess", *Beaumont*, p. 152.

³H.V. Richmond in his essay "Rural Lyricism: A Renaissance Mutation of the Pastoral", *Comparative Literature*, Summer, 1964, No. 3, p. 202, discusses this 'painterly context' derived from late Renaissance artists, Breughel, Claude, Poussin and Rubens, in later seventeenth century poems, principally Marvell's garden poems and Milton's *Paradise Regained*.

⁴*The Cavalier Poets*, p. 50.

William Lathum, in an elegy to a fellow Cambridge student, describes his home in these words:

my poore Tenement,
 Whose bulke and all the stuffe, both warp and woofe,
 Is all of clay, the floor, and the rooffe:

 The thatchie coverings now nigh falne away:

 My Kitchen smoakes, my larder is to blame;
 And from the Studds each where the home doth shrink,
 And the breeme cold blowes in at every chinke,
 The brases and supporters of my house
 Tremble, and waxen wondrous ruinous.¹

The picture hardly idealizes the simple life, any more than does that of Sir John Denham of "cottages and smoky cells".²

But in most of the poems set in the country the simple surroundings provide perfect happiness. Rüstvig traces the origins of English verse in praise of country life to the publication of John Ashmore's *Certain Selected Odes of Horace* in 1621, with its

¹"Prosopopeia corporis animae valedicturi: adios a rivederci", *Phyala Lachrymarum, or a Few Friendly Teares*, 1634, reprinted in *Rare Poems of the Seventeenth Century*, p. 141.

²"Somnus the humble god", *The Sophy*, 1642, reprinted in *The Treasury of Unfamiliar Lyrics*, p. 201.

appendix of *beatus ille* poetry.¹ However Puttenham, years before, had pointed poets to the history and the allegorical potential of the pastoral:

The Poet devised the *Eglogue*... not of purpose to counterfait or represent the rustically manner of loues and communication: but vnder the vaile of homely persons, and in rude speeches to insinuate and glaunce at greater matters, and such as perchance had not bene safe to haue bene disclosed in any other sort, which may be perceiued by the Eglogues of *Virgill*, in which are treated by figure matters of greater importance than the loues of *Titirus* and *Corydon*. These Eglogues came after to containe and enforme morall discipline, for the amendment of mans behaiour...²

¹Maren-Sofie Røstvig, *The Happy Man*, 2nd edn 1962, Norwegian Universities Press, p. 14. Certainly mediæval and earlier Renaissance poems of very different kinds, such as Chaucer's *Nun's Priest's Tale* or Marlowe's "The Passionate Shepherd to his Love" contain references to the attractions of country living, but Røstvig shows the difference between the unrealistic formalized "The Herdsman" of *England's Helicon* and later poems with an English country setting such as William Browne's "The Happy Life" with its farmer-fisher-scholar:

His plough, his flock, his scythe and rake
Do physic, clothe and nourish him.

He might have had more difficulty with "The Wood-mans walk" by Shepheard Tonie (*England's Helicon*, p. 196).

My first dayes walk was to the Court,
Where Beautie fed mine eyes:
Yet found I that the Courtly sport,
did maske in slie disguise
For falshood sate in fairest lookes,
and friend to friend was coy;
Court favour fill'd but empty bookes,
and there I found no joy.

²Puttenham, pp. 38-39.

And Ashmore was only one of many who directly or indirectly translated classical pastorals into English. Both Jonson, beginning,

Happie is he, that from all Businesse cleere,
As the old race of Mankind were¹,

and Randolph, beginning,

Happy the man which farre from city care,
(Such as ancient Mortals were),²

translated Horace's ironical second epode, "Beatus ille qui procul negotiis".³ Randolph also translated Claudianus's "De Sene Veronensi" which has a similar opening:

Happy the man that all his dayes hath spent
Within his owne grounds, and no farther went.⁴

Theocritus's *Idylls* supplied Jonson, Randolph, Carew and Herrick with a taste for realism and with many of the names they use such as *Tityrus*, *Corydon*, *Thyris* and *Daphnis*.⁵ Virgil's *Eclogues* gave a city man's pattern of idealized shepherds and shepherdesses singing of their feelings and beliefs, which later poets were to reproduce with countless variations. The country is always seen as an ideal, an ideal which Stone shows had a

¹"In Praises of a Countrie Life", *Works* VIII, 289.

²*Randolph*, 49.

³*Horace: The Odes and Epodes, with an English Translation by C.E. Bennett*, 1964, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., p. 364.

⁴*Randolph*, p. 48.

⁵*McEuen*, 189. Earlier poets did use the same names but less often, an obvious example being Nicholas Breton's "Phillida and Corydon."

particular historical appropriateness in the reign before the Civil War.

The ideology of the Country... is that vision of rustic arcadia that goes back to the Roman classics and which fell on the highly receptive ears of the newly educated gentlemen of England who had studied Virgil's *Georgics* at Oxford or Cambridge. It was a vision of environmental superiority over the City: the Country was peaceful and clean, a place of grass and trees and birds, the City was ugly and dirty and noisy, a place of clattering carts and coaches, coal dust and smog, and piles of human excrement. It was also a vision of moral superiority over the Court; the Country was virtuous, the Court wicked; the Country was thrifty, the Court extravagant; the Country was honest, the Court corrupt; the Country was chaste and heterosexual, the Court promiscuous and homosexual; the Country was sober, the Court drunken; the Country was nationalist, the Court xenophile; the Country was healthy, the Court diseased; the Country was outspoken, the Court sycophantic; the Country was the defender of old ways and old liberties, the Court the promoter of administrative novelties and new tyrannical practices; the Country was solidly Protestant, even Puritan, the Court was deeply tainted by Popish leanings.¹

¹*The Causes of the English Revolution*, p. 105.

The good people in English pastorals divide into those who enjoy a frugal life in the country, and those who set an example of clean living and warm hospitality in their great country houses.

Rowland Watkyns gives a quaint but charming example of the first kind in his lyric, "The Wish":

A little house, a quiet wife,
 Sufficient food to nourish life,
 Most perfect health, and free from harm,
 Convenient clothes to keepe me warme.
 The liberty of foot and mind,
 And grace the ways of God to find.
 This is the summe of my desire,
 Until I come unto heaven's quire.¹

The anonymous "Country Life" is a much more stylized expression of the same ideal.

Will you know
 where pleasures grow
 and true content abides
 by day it lyes
 fore Shepherds Eyes
 at night by Shepherds sides.
 ye simple flowr is or perfume

¹*The Cavalier Poets*, p. 267.

ye woolly fleece o^r rayment
 a bower of Eglantine our tombe
 not curst for want of payment
 w^{ch} thus much to Princes implies
 He sweetly rests y^t sweetly dyes.¹

The picture Mildmay Fane gives in "My Happy Life: To a Friend" is just as contented:

I settle to a Countrey life.
 And in a sweet retirement there
 Cherish all Hopes, but banish fear.²

In the course of his poem he mentions thirty-five kinds of birds affectionately:

Turkeys are my Domestick friends,
 but he also likes,

th'Owl

Rufft like a Judge and with a Beak
 As it would give the charge and speake.

Robert Chamberlain dismisses all ceremony and all imaginary marvels, in contrast to simple country pleasures.

Yet these are nothing to the sweet that dwells
 In low-built cottages and country cells.

.

¹*Ms Bod. Don. c. 57 fol 96^r*, reprinted in *Seventeenth Century Songs and Lyrics*, p. 419.

²*Otia Sacra*, 1648, reprinted in *Rare Poems of the Seventeenth Century*, pp. 20-21.

What are great offices but cumbring troubles?
 And what are honours but dissolving bubbles?
 What though the gates of greatness be frequented
 With chains of glittering gold? He that's contented
 Lives in a thousand times a happier way
 Than he that's tended thus from day to day

 Th' imbroider'd meadows, and the crawling streams
 Make soft and sweet his undisturbed dreams.
 He revels not by day nor in the nights,
 Nor cares he much for musical delights:
 And yet his humble rooffe maintains a quire
 Of singing crickets round about the fire.¹

An unknown poet insisted:

We all pearls scorn,
 Save what the dewy morn
 Congeals upon each little spire of grass.²

But only a courtier brought up in high culture would have perceived the dewdrops as pearls, the meadows as imbroider'd or the flowers as perfume. The country estate is seen as providing an ideal setting for a praiseworthy way of life for gentlemen. Only rarely is country life decried, and city life praised in contrast. Habington, for instance, wonders how any intelligent being could willingly,

¹*Nocturnal Lucubrations*, 1638, reprinted in *Rare Poems of the Seventeenth Century*, pp. 20-21.

²"A Description of the Country's Recreations" ascribed Ignoto, *The Poems of Sir Walter Raleigh with those of Sir Henry Wotton and other Courtly Poets*, 1540-1640, p. 108.

turne himselfe t' a beast

And graze ith' Country. Why did nature wrong
 So much her paines, as to give you a tongue
 And fluent language; If converse you hold
 With Oxen in the stall, and sheepe ith' fold?¹

And Jane Cavendish begins a lyric,

Thou art so pritty, younge and witty
 As you are fitt for nothing but a city.²

Finally there are those songs in which the singer takes a carefree delight in the country, not in one place but in many.

His Pot and his Toast in the morning he takes,
 And all the day long good Musick he makes;
 He wanders the world, to Wakes and to Fairs,
 And casts his cap, and casts his cap,
 At the court and her cares.³

At least the tinker travels where work may be. The beggar doesn't even take that trouble:

Come away! why do we stay?
 We have no debt or rent to pay;
 No bargains or accounts to make,
 Nor land or lease to let or take:
 Or if we had, should that remore us

¹"To my worthy Cousin Mr E.C. In Praise of the City Life, in the long Vacation", *Habington*, p. 77.

²"To hir sister", *Bod Ms Rawl Poet 16*, fol. 11^r.

³Anon. "He that a Tinker a Tinker would be", *Tudor and Stuart Love Songs*, ed. J.P. Briscoe, 1902, Gay and Hancock, London, p. 52.

When all the world's our own before us,
 And where we pass and make resort,
 It is our kingdom and our court?
 'Cuckoo', cries he; 'jug, jug, jug, 'sings she;
 From bush to bush, from tree to tree;
 Why in one place then tarry we?¹

From the free nomadic existence of the tinker or the beggar it was a far cry to life in the great country houses of England such as that in which Peacham's gentleman lived with "learned pleasure and delight".² Some patrons and poets moved between the court and country mansions, as did Lucius Cary from Tew, (until he became "gone with Divinity"³ and stayed away from the court altogether) and Ben Jonson. Other country gentlemen stayed on their estates all the time, epitomising stability in an age of disquiet, like the third Earl of Southhampton who wrote from his home at Titchfield in 1623, "I have been wholly a country man and seldom seen either at the Court or London. In this life I have found so much quiet and content that I thinke I should hardly ever brooke any other; sure I am I envy none."⁴

¹Richard Brome, *A Jovial Crew*, 1652. Reprinted in *A Treasury of Unfamiliar Lyrics*, 1938, Victor Gollancz, London, p. 189. Ault footnotes "remore" in line 5 of the poem as meaning "hinder" or "delay".

²*The Compleat Gentleman*, 1622, enlarged 1634, ed. G.S. Gordon 1906, Clarendon Press, Oxford, p. 123.

³"The Wits", *Suckling*, p. 75.

⁴C. C. Stopes, *The Life of Henry, Third Earl of Southhampton*, 1922, University Press, Cambridge, p. 449.

Where the master or mistress of such a house belonged in a tradition of poetry and patronage¹, poets were made welcome as friends and honoured guests, contributing to and benefiting from the atmosphere of culture, scholarship² and comfort.

This appreciation was expressed in a group of poems sometimes called "the country house poems"³ which celebrate the hospitality offered by certain of the landed gentry.

Life on the country estates described in these poems is still simple and wholesome but the setting is neither "barren" outdoors nor "smoaky" indoors.

The first two, Jonson's "To Penshurst" and "To Sir Robert Wroth", both written about 1612,⁴ are based to a considerable extent upon Latin poems, especially Martial's epigram LVIII, Book III.⁵ But the actual English properties are clearly described. Here is Penshurst, home of Sir Robert Sidney:

¹As did, for instance, Lady Mary Wroth, wife of Sir Robert Wroth to whom Jonson wrote one of his country-house poems, daughter of Sir Robert Sidney, master of Penshurst, and niece of Sir Philip Sidney.

²*Aubrey*, p. 56, "His House was like a Colledge, full of learned men".

³See, for instance, G.R. Hibbard, "The Country House Poem of the Seventeenth Century."

⁴See notes in *Ben Jonson; Poems*, ed. I. Donaldson, 1975, O.U.P. London, p. 87.

⁵See *McEuen*, pp. 22-23 and the commentary in *Works*, XI, 34-36. Horace's second epode, and Virgil's *Georgic* II, 493-540, and Juvenal IV, 68-69, are also shown to have contributed ideas and phrases.

The lower land, that to the riuer bends,
 Thy sheepe, thy bullocks, kine, and calues doe feed:
 The middle grounds thy mares, and horses breed.

 And if the high-swolne *Medway* faile thy dish,
 Thou has thy ponds, that pay thee tribute fish.¹

The other estate is Durance, home of Sir Robert Wroth to whom the poem is addressed, and very much a country retreat. There,

A-bed canst heare the loud stag speake.²

In each house the welcome is sure and the poet is grateful.

But what can this (more then expresse their loue)
 Adde to thy free prouisions, farre aboue
 The neede of such? whose liberall boord doth flow,
 With all, that hospitalitie doth know!³

Though Penshurst is a great house, it is "faire" not in "polished pillar, or a roofe of gold" but in "walkes", beech and chestnut, in game which "for thy messe is ready to be killed"⁴

¹"To Penshurst", *Works* VIII, 94.

²"To Sir Robert Wroth", *ibid.*, 97.

³"To Penshurst", *ibid.*, 95.

⁴The suggestion of nature offering itself to man, as part of the picture of co-operation or what Rivers calls "mutual dependence" (p. 41) occurs several times in the poem. It may be exaggerated but belongs within a known poetic tradition. See Martial *Epigram* X, xxx, 21-24; Juvenal *Sat.* IV, 69; Virgil *Georgics* II, 501-502. Other seventeenth century poets to use the idea include Carew ("To Saxham", lines 21-28) and later Marvell, ("The Garden", lines 34-39, and "Bermudas", lines 21-24).

and fruit "that every child may reach", a house not for show but to be lived in:

Now, PENSHEVRST, they that will proportion thee
 With other edifices, when they see
 These proud, ambitious heaps, and nothing else,
 May say, their lords haue built, but thy lord
 dwells.¹

The entire description of wholesome plenty and a mood of friendship in a place where locals come with gifts "though they haue no sute" and the traveller can feel that "There's nothing I can wish, for which I stay" is so graphic that it is hard to find any part W.M. Evans could have had in mind when she called the poem "solid, heavy and monotonous".²

"To Penshevrst" reads in places like an answer to a section of Joseph Hall's *Virgidemiarum* in which he describes a country house that is anything but welcoming:

The marble pauement hid with desart weede,
 With house-leeke, thistle, docke, and hemlock-seed³

And if that is not sufficiently uninviting:

. . . if thou chance cast vp thy wondring eyes
 Thou shalt discerne upon the Frontispice,

¹"To Penshevrst", *Works*, VIII, 96.

²Evans, *Ben Jonson and Elizabethan Music*, p. 42.

³"Hous-keping's dead", *Hall*, p. 80.

ΟΥΔΕΙΣ ΕΙΣΙΤΩ^{grauen vp on hie,}

A fragment of olde *Platoes* Poesie:

The meaning is, Sir foole ye may be gone,

Go backe by leaue, for way here lieth none.¹

At Penshurst,

Here no man tells my cups; nor, standing by

A waiter, doth my gluttony enuy

But giues me what I call, and lets me eate,

He knowes, below, he shall finde plentie of meate,²

whereas at the house Hall described,

. . . the scornefull wayter lookes askile,

And pouts and frowns, and curseth thee the while,

And takes his farewell with a iealous eye,

At euery morsell hee his last shall see.³

Perhaps the poem which comes closest to "To Penshurst" is Herrick's "A Panegerick to Sir Lewis Pemberton" in which the stress is again on the hospitality and example offered by the host from his noble home.

Other poems compare the attractions of the country to the ostentation of court and city without associating them with any particular place. Randolph's "An Ode to Master Anthony Stafford to haste him into the country" is one of these:

¹*Ibid.*

²*Works* VIII, 95.

³*Hall*, p. 83. Several other poems which celebrate the friendship and comfort offered by the "stately Mannors of the Great", ("Precept 24, *Randolph*, p. 61) will be discussed below in the chapters on Carew and Herrick.

I will the country see,
 Where old simplicity,
 Though hid in gray
 Doth look more gay
 Than foppery in plush or scarlat clad.¹

No house is mentioned, nor any of the comforts of hearth or table associated with particular homesteads. In fact only the sixth stanza with its references to hunting indicates that the speaker and the friend addressed are members of the gentry:

Ours is the skie,
 Where at what fowle we please our Hauke shall flye;
 Nor will we spare
 To hunt the crafty foxe, or timorous hare,
 But let our hounds runne loose
 In any ground they'll choose.²

William Habington's "To my noblest Friend, I.C. Esquire", is a less light-hearted version of the same theme. He begins by looking, realistically, at both country and court.

Sir,
 I hate the Countries durt and manners, yet
 I love the silence; I embrace the wit
 and courtship, flowing here in a full tide.
 But loathe the expence, the vanity and pride,

¹*Randolph*, p. 80. Anthony Stafford, according to the notes in Helen Gardner's *The Metaphysical Poets*, 1957, Penguin, p. 318, was the uncle of William Stafford, whose children Randolph tutored.

²*Randolph*, p. 81.

And finally asks himself:

Why not repaire
 To the pure innocence oth' Country ayre:
 And neighbor thee, deare friend? . . .
 There might not we
 Arme against passion with Philosophie?¹

This poem is set against a backdrop of "kind Nature's huswifery" as are other poems of the time. Occasionally, as in William Strode's "O Westwell Downes" or Randolph's "An Eglogue on the noble Assemblies revived on Cotswold Hills, by M. Robert Dover." they presented the reader with a sweep of English countryside. More often the Caroline poets wrote about flowers or small animals. They would have had in mind Catullus's *Carmen* III in which he grieves over the death of Lesbia's sparrow, remembering its playfulness and cunning tricks, and the whole anacreontic tradition of poems to or about tiny creatures like the cicada. But this does not entirely explain the accurate presentation of details that can be found in poem after poem.

Instances of close observation of nature can be found, though rarely, in the work of the poets who so affected the Carolines. Donne, for instance, described

. . . a small blew shell, the which a poore
 Warme bird orespread, and sat still evermore,

¹*Idem*, p. 96.

²See *McEuen*, pp. 177, 215.

Till her inclos'd child kickt, and pick't it
 selfe a dore.¹

And Jonson asks:

Have you mark'd but the fall o' the Snow
 Before the soyle hath smutch'd it?
 Have you felt the wooll o' the Bever?
 Or Swans Downe ever?²

In a grateful outburst to nature Wither had sung:

In my former dayes of blisse
 Her diuine skill taught me this,
 That from everything I saw
 I could some inuention draw:
 And raise pleasure to her height,
 Through the meanest objects sight.
 By the murmure of a spring,
 Or the least boughes rusteling.³

The "meanest objects" of the Carolines almost always seem to be the smallest or the youngest, rather than objects that might be despised, although Patrick Carey reminds readers:

¹"The Progresse of the Soule", *Donne*, p. 302.

²"Her Triumph", *Works* VIII, 134-135.

³"The Shepherds Hunting", *Juvenilia*, Mmlv.

That crawling worm there see:
 Ponder how ugly, filthy, vile it is.
 When thou hast seen and loath'd it, know that this,
 This base worm thou dost see,
 Has quite devoured thy parents; shall eat thee.¹

In similar vein George Daniel describes a maggot in "The Spring".
 More typically, however, in the same poem Daniel notices attractive
 creatures:

Lambs joyous friske, and play now with each other,
 Neglect the Teate, and leave the Ewe, their mother.²

An anonymous poet gives the same impression of having actually
 watched the lambs:

Two harmless lambs are butting one another;
 Which done, both bleating run, each to his mother.³

William Browne has watched birds just as closely:

Little wrens but newly fledged,
 First by their nests, hop up and down the hedge;
 Then one from bough to bough gets up a tree,
 His fellow noting his agility,
 Thinks he as well may venture as the other,
 So fluttering from one spray unto another

¹"Nulla Fides", *Triolets*, 1651, reprinted in *Minor Poets of the Caroline Period*, II, 477.

²"The Spring", *Rare Poems of the Seventeenth Century*, p. 51.

³"A Description of the Country's Recreations", *The Poems of Sir Walter Raleigh with ... other Courtly Poets*, p. 108.

Gets to the top, and then embolden'd flies,
 Unto a height past ken of human eyes.¹

Sometimes nature is shown as a manifestation of God. This is most evident in religious poems such as Vaughan's "The Night" but does emerge incidentally in secular poems like William Drummond's "To the Nightingale":

Sweet bird, that sing'st away the early hours,
 Of winters past or coming void of care,
 Well pleased with delights which present are,
 Fair seasons, budding sprays, sweet-smelling flowers,
 To rocks, to springs, to rills, from leafy bowers
 Thou thy Creator's goodness doth declare.²

Even the poems that clearly derive from classical origins have their particular distinctions. Take, for instance, the poems almost certainly suggested by Catullus.³ Richard Brome's "A Bonny Bird" with its quick light syllables is very much an English poem:

A bonny bonny bird I had
 A bird that was my marrow;
 A bird whose pastime made me glad,
 And Philip, 'twas my sparrow.

¹*Britannia's Pastorals*, ed. H. Thompson, n.d. W. Tweedie, London, pp. 107-108.

²*The English Poets*, p. 35.

³In his poem on the death of Lesbia's sparrow, *Catullus*, III, "Lugete, o Veneres Cupidinesque".

A pretty play fere, chirp it would,
 And hop and fly to fist,
 Keep cut, as 'twere a usurer's gold
 And bill me when I list.
 Philip, Philip, Philip, it cries
 But he is fled and my joy dies.¹

Cartwright's sparrow is not just a motive for a lover to show empathy with his beloved's grief but, after the first few lines, a sharp little creature:

He would chirp and flatter me,
 He would hang the Wing a while
 Till at length he saw me smile,
 Lord how sullen he would be.²

The friendly ease of the last line brings the reader close to the poet and his bird as though he could hear him speaking aloud. And some of the ideas in the poem have no resemblance to anything in the first *Lesbia's* lament.³

As for Herrick, steeped as he was in Catullus,⁴ he had a pet sparrow himself, and it is his own quaint feeling for its death he

¹*The Northern Lass*, 1632, reprinted in *Songs and Lyrics*, ed. F. Boas, 1945, Cresset Press, London, p. 153.

²*Cartwright*, p. 447, cf. John Skelton's "Phyllyp Sparrow":
 Lord, how he would pry/After the butterfly
 (reprinted in *The Oxford Book of Light Verse*, 1938, O.U.P., London, p.65.).

³For instance, the whimsical question:
 Whence will Cupid get his Darts
 Feather'd now to pierce our hearts. (See *McEuen*, p.177).

⁴*McEuen* (pp. 167-172) calls him "the most Catullian of the tribe of Ben" and shows in detail where he translated, paraphrased or imitated verses by Catullus.

captures when he asks:

Why doe not all fresh maids appeare
To work Love's Sampler onely here.¹

Herrick remembers and mentions Lesbia ("too-too-kind" he calls her) in order to compare his sparrow with hers but makes no attempt to evoke a picture of the bird in its lifetime as Cartwright had done, or as Marvell was to do of the fawn in "The Nymph Complaining for the Death of her Fawn".

Lovelace wrote several poems on small creatures: "The Grassehopper", "The Ant", "The Snayl", "A Fly caught in a Cobweb", "A Fly about a Glasse of Burnt Claret" and "The Toad and Spyder: a Duel". None of them has classical models.² Each time Lovelace treats the creature observantly. The "speckl'd Toad" "in his slime . . . doth float" and the "Snayl" "on Sallads dost feed" and "sleep'st. . . in a Jelly." The tone is always moralizing. The grasshopper that

swing'st upon the waving haire
Of some well-filled Oaten Beard,³

can remind the reader of Burns's "wee sleeket, cowrin, tim'rous beastie"⁴ in that it becomes a reason for the poet to express his affection for the "poor verdant foole", expose the cruelty and stupidity of some human behaviour, and at the same time announce

¹"Upon the death of his Sparrow. An Elegie", *Herrick*, p. 103.

²Though *McEuen* (p. 110) does suggest that "The Grassehopper" may owe something to Horace and the Anacreontic poets, and Lovelace's editor, C.H. Wilkinson, shows that certain lines derive from Pliny, Ovid and Virgil (*Lovelace*, 263, 315).

³"The Grassehopper", *Lovelace*, p. 38.

⁴"To a Mouse", *The Poetical Works of Robert Burns*, ed. W.H. Davies, n.d. Collins, London, p. 82.

his own values:

Thus richer than untempted Kings are we,
 That asking nothing, nothing need.
 Though Lord of all what Seas imbrace; yet he
 That wants himselfe, is poore indeed.¹

The grasshopper serves to show that the only real summer man can find is in himself.² George Herbert extends this tenderness to ". . . all the creatures both in sea and land"³; to plants and kinds of weather:

Rain, do not hurt my flowers, but gently spend
 Yourhony drops: presse not to smell them here:
 When they are ripe, their odour will ascend,
 And at your lodging with their thanks appeare.⁴

Both Lovelace and Herbert in quite different ways have used nature to show their feelings about their own lives and the world around them.

IV. Occasional and Social Verse

In Caroline times it was the custom to celebrate public and private occurrences in verse. Births, marriages and deaths,

¹*Lovelace*, p. 40.

²See Brooks, Purser, Warren, *An Approach to Literature*, p. 379.

³"Providence", *Herbert*, 117.

⁴*Idem*, p. 120.

coronations and assassinations, accidents, illnesses and recoveries, the publication of a book, the reception of a play, the burning of a bridge or a tavern, the felling of a symbolic cross, a severe frost or a storm at sea - anything and everything could be and was cause for a song.

The practice, of course, especially for royal occasions, was not new. When Prince Henry died in 1612, elegies and epitaphs were written by Jonson, Donne, Chapman, Drummond, Edward Herbert, Campion, Heywood, Sylvester, Wither and others. The next year the Princess Elizabeth was married to the Elector Palatine and a spate of epithalamia followed, eight of which are included in R. H. Case's collection, *English Epithalamies*. Martin Opitz, deriding German memorial verses and epithalamia of the time, stated bitterly, "No wedding or funeral can take place without them".¹ And the same could be said in England where equally the poet was seen as "the first historiographer, the first observer of all natural causes and effects."² The occasional poems of seventeenth century England provide a close commentary on trends of behaviour, on personal relationships, and on religious and political thought, a commentary especially valuable if E. M. Tillyard's opinion, "The English habit of mind between 1560 and 1660 is more remote from our

¹Martin Opitz, *The Book Concerning German Poetry*, 1624, transl. O. M. Perlsweig, and reprinted in Allan H. Gilbert's *Literary Criticism, Plato to Dryden*, p. 566.

²Puttenham, pp. 7-8.

own than we are usually prepared to admit"¹ is right.

The poets of the early seventeenth century were profuse in poems to their fellow poets. When a collection of poems appeared, and especially when one appeared posthumously, like Randolph's, it would be prefaced by a considerable group of poems in praise of the poet. And within the body of any collection there were usually several poems written to literary associates as well as those to patrons. Cartwright, for instance, wrote his commendation, "Upon the Dramatick Poems of Mr John Fletcher" opening with the claim:

Shakespeare to thee was dull.²

Much of what was written as a stamp of approval for newly published work or for public use for recitation at court,³ at weddings, farewells, and at funerals must be discounted, and was, even in its own day.

'Tis the preheminance
of friendship onely t'impute excellence,⁴

Donne had warned. And Owen Felltham sounds a similar note:

¹*The Elizabethan World Picture*, p. vii.

²*Cartwright*, p. 52.

³And it is worth remembering J.W. Saunders's view - that the early seventeenth century court was the social and political heart of the nation ("The Stigma of Print", p. 162).

⁴"The Storme: To Mr Christopher Brooke", *Donne*, p. 175. G. Blakemore Evans in his introduction to his edition of Cartwright calls those words of Donne's "the general epitaph of all commendatory verse" (*Cartwright*, p. 40).

"For Flattery, no man will take Poetry *literal*, since in commendations it rather shows what men should be, then what they are."¹

When a poem had not only to honour friendship (as in the verses Jonson and Drayton wrote about each other) but to serve as an obituary also, the eulogies were even more fulsome.² Cleveland could open his own contribution to a collection of memorial poems³ on a fellow student with the lines:

I like not teares in tune; nor will I prize
His artificiall grief, that scannes his eyes,⁴

but other poets were prepared to recognise the danger every writer of public obsequies faced. Cartwright admitted,

I doe confesse the over-forward tongue,
Of publick duty turns into a wrong.⁵

¹*Resolves*, 1620, quoted by B.C. Clough in *The Metaphysical Poets*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1920, p. 52.

²After all, to quote Dr Johnson, "The writer of an epitaph should not be considered as saying nothing but what is strictly true. Allowance must be made for some degree of exaggerated praise. In lapidary inscriptions a man is not upon oath" (*Boswell's Life of Johnson*, 1791, ed. C.B. Tinker, 2nd edn, 1953, O.U.P. London, p. 662).

³I use this term deliberately, partly to include epitaphs, and partly because the term "elegy" had a wide contemporary meaning, covering a poem of general lament, a plaintive love lyric, or even an epigram. See A. L. Bennett's essay "The Principal Rhetorical Conventions in the Renaissance Personal Elegy", *Studies in Philology*, 51 (1954), pp. 107-126.

⁴*Iusta Edouardo King, naufrago ab amicis moerentibus*, 1638, Columbia University Press facsimile, 1939, New York, p. 9.

⁵"On his Majesties recovery from the small Pox, 1633", *Cartwright*, p. 448.

And Henry King acknowledged;

At common graves wee have poetick eyes
Can melt themselves in easy Elegyes.¹

But he himself, paying tribute to Donne as "Rich Soule of Witt and Language"² is deliberate in his praise, as was Carew in his "Elegie upon the death of the Deane of Pauls, Dr Iohn Donne", still regarded as one of the most perceptive criticisms ever written of Donne as a poet.³

It is, in fact, in another elegy on Donne that Edward Herbert lays down a pattern for commendatory verse on poet or patron, family, friend or public figure:

Praises, like Garments, then if loose and wide,
Are subject to fall off: if gay and py'd
Make men ridiculous; the just and grave
Are those alone, which men may wear and have.
.
For since praise is publick inheritance,

¹"Upon the Death of my ever Desired Freind Dr Donne, Dean of Paules", *King*, p. 76.

²*Ibid.*

³It is, for instance, no accident that J.B. Leishman should call his book on Donne, *The Monarch of Wit*, Carew having pronounced in his closing lines:

Here lies a King, that rul'd as hee thought fit
The universall Monarchy of Wit.

(*Carew*, p. 74).

If any Inter-Commoner do chance
 To give or take more praise then doth belong
 Unto his part, he doth so great a wrong,
 That all who claim an equal interest,
 May him implead untill he do devest
 His usurpations, and again restore
 Unto the publick what was their before.

Praises should then like definitions be;
 Round, neat, convertible, such as agree
 To persons so, that, were their names conceal'd,
 Must make them known as well as if reveal'd.¹

Funeral poems varied in character and quality, ranging from unkind snatches such as Edward Herbert's "Epitaph of a stinking Poet":²

Here stinks a Poet, I confess,
 Yet wanting breath stinks so much less,
 to the formal pastoral "Lycidas"³, in which Milton uses his upright fellow scholar Edward King, drowned so young, to show up the corruption of many of the clergy of the day:

How well could I have spar'd for thee young swain,
 Anow of such as for their bellies sake,
 Creep and intrude, and climb into the fold?

¹"Elegie for Doctor Dunn", *Edward Herbert*, p. 58.

²*Idem*, p. 29.

³*Milton*, II, 168.

Memorial verses to King, including "Lycidas", were collected in *Iusta Edouardo King, naufrago ab amicis moerentibus*, in 1638, as were those to Jonson (most notable for the absence of any contributions by Carew or Herrick, by Henry King, or by either George or Edward Herbert)¹ in *Jonsonus Virbius*. Another volume, *Verses by the University of Oxford on the Death of the Most Noble and Right Valiant Sir Bevill Grenvill, alias Granvill, kt, who was Slain by the Rebels at the Battle of Lansdown-Hill, near Bathe, July the 5, 1643*, contains thirteen lengthy and pedestrian poems. And some of the extant manuscript collections have a considerable number of poems on deaths.²

Although funeral poems were often written about people not personally known to the poets, they were normally meant and taken most earnestly, as is indicated in the opening lines of an epitaph by Crashaw:

¹Masson tells readers, "The gist of all the panegyricks, various as they were in style, was that English poetry had died with Ben. The panegyricks themselves went near to prove it." (*Life of Milton*, Macmillan & Co., rev. edn, London, 1881, I, 467.

²*BM Ms Sloane 1446*, for instance, has "An Elegie on Queene Anne", "On the Death of the La: Haddington", "On twoe children, dyeing of one disease and buried both in one grave", "Sir George Radney before he killd himselfe", "An Elegie of ye death of the Lady Pemstone sent out of France", "On the death of Mr Francis Lancaster stab'd", "On the Marchioness of Winchester who died in Childbedd", "On the death of Sir Jo Walter", "On a Infant unborne and the mother dyinge in travell", "On one drowned in the Snowe", "An Epitaph on Mr Jo: Smith Chaplaine to the Earle of Pembroke", "An Elegie on Henry Skipp drowned at Bradly in Darbisheire", "On the King of Swedens death", "Another", "A Forsaken Lady that died of love", "Upon loseing a deere friend", and "Another on the same". Other manuscripts such as *B.M. Harley 6917*, could supply similar, though shorter, lists.

The modest front of this small floore
 Beleeve mee, Reader, can say more
 Then many a braver Marble can.¹

Most of them have three functions, to praise the dead person, to mourn his death, and to comfort those who are still alive, the first two being most important in public obsequies such as the collection on Granvill, and the last in poems written for someone personally known and loved, like Jonson's simple moving lyric "To my First Sonne" or Henry King's intellectually and emotionally demanding poem, "An Exequy to his Matchlesse never to be forgotten Freind". But there are several examples of funeral poems that were never meant to praise, lament or console. The murder of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, a much loved and much hated man,² for instance, produced several poems which praised Buckingham but a plethora of others that did not.³ An anonymous one purported to be spoken by Buckingham himself ironically encapsulated the hatred he engendered not only among the Puritans but among some of the Royalists too.

¹"Upon Mr. Ashton a conformable Citizen", *Crashaw*, p. 192.

²"Two Kings' delight, the people's hate", ("Epitaph on the Duke of Buckingham", *The Poems of James Shirley*, ed. R.L. Armstrong, 1941, King's Crown Press, New York, p. 15).

³For instance, *Ms Rawl. poet 84* contains "Verses Directed to Jn ffelton, the Murtherer of the Duke", "ffelton who murdered the Duke of Buckingham at Portsmouth hanging in chaynes" and a third in Latin "In Obitum Ducis Buckinghamiae". Herbert Berry in his monograph, *Sir John Suckling's Poems and Letters from Manuscript*, 1960, Univ. Of Western Ontario Studies in Humanity, No. 1, London, Ontario, p. 26, mentions a manuscript held by the Huntingdon Library which contains 11 poems about Buckingham, all condemning him. Margaret Crum (*First Line Index*, II, 1222) lists 111 mentions of the First Duke of Buckingham in poems in manuscripts held in the Bodleian Library.

I that my Country did betray
 Undid the King, that let me sway
 His scepter, as I pleas'd: brought down
 The glory of the English Crowne.
 The Courtiers' bane, y Countrye's hate:
 An Agent for the Spanish state
 The Romist's freind, the Gospell's foe
 The Church and Kingdome's overthrow
 Doe heere in odious darknesse dwell
 Untill my Soule returne from Hell
 With Judas: then I shall inharite
 Such portion, as all Traytors merit.
 If Heaven admitt of Treason, Pride and Lust,
 Expect a damned Soule among the just.¹

An anonymous lyric, "On the Duke of Buckingham", begins by asking his ghost fearfully,

And art returned againe with all thy faults?²

Other poems on allied subjects include incidental condemnation of the Duke. One of the broadside ballads written before Buckingham set off for Rhé banters:

¹"An Epitaph upon George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham"; no ascription. *Bod. Ms Rawl*, 26, fol. 78^r.

²*Bod Ashmole* 36, fol 50^v.

And wilt thou go, great Duke, and leave us here
 Lamenting thee? And eke thy pupil dear,
 Great Charles? Alas who shall his sceptre sway
 And kingdom rule, now thou art gone away.¹

And the spirited poem for which Jonson was mistakenly arrested, written by Zouch Townley to Buckingham's assassin, contains these lines:

Let the Dukes Name solace and crowne thy thrall
 All wee by him did suffer, Thou for all
 And I dare boldlie write, as thou dar'st dye,
 Stout ffelton, England's Ransome, heere doth lye.²

It is not surprising that Townley fled to Holland when the poem, his gesture of bravado meant for private circulation among his friends, surfaced for public notice. Law and custom alike ordained that poems should reverence the king and those he cared for.³

¹"Upon the Duke of Buckingham's going to Ré", reprinted in *The Pack of Autolyceus*, p. 137.

²"To his confined ffriend Mr ffelton", reprinted in *Works*, I, 243-244. In the report of the examination of Jonson by the Attorney-General on October 29, 1629, from the *State Papers, Domestic, Charles I*, CXIX, 33, Townley is called "a scholler and a divine... and a student of Christchurch in Oxford". (*Works* I, 242).

³Historians show that both James I and Charles I had the closest possible relationship with Buckingham. For instance, J.P. Kenyon (*The Stuarts*, p. 58) quotes from a note by James to his "sweet child and wife" and "sweetheart": "I pray thee haste home to thy dear dad by sunsetting at the furthest... and so Lord send me comfortable and happy with thee this night." Charles I's deference to Buckingham over the most minor matters raised murmurings throughout England. In a letter dated Shrove-eve, 1626-7, Rev. Joseph Mead tells Sir Martin Stuteville, "I doubt not that you have heard of the play in Christmas, which was begun again at the Duke's entering, the king having heard one full act." (Thomas Birch, *The Court and Times of Charles I*, 1848, Henry Colburn, London, I, 191.)

Donne's "Ecclogve" had given the position:

The Princes favour is defus'd o'r all,
From which all Fortunes, Names, and Natures fall.¹

Even a poet like Wither who was to leave the Royalists utterly by the time Charles I marched to Scotland, earlier in the century had written an epithalamium for Princess Elizabeth's marriage and a memorial poem for Prince Henry's death,² had constantly censured those within Parliament who "prate as if they might make and unmake *Kings*"³ and had insisted that however the king behaved it was not for Parliament to interfere:

If in thy King (oh Britaine) ought amisse
Appeares to be; twixt God and him it is.⁴

John Taylor only two years before Charles I's execution declaimed:

There's not a grace, a virtue or an Art
But are enthron'd in thy Princely Heart.⁵

¹ *Donne*, p. 132.

² See above, p. 199.

³ *Britain's Remembrancer*, p. 461.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 449.

⁵ *The Kings Most Excellent Majesties Wellcome to his Owne House*, 1647. Facsimile Reprint, 1872, Turner and Reeves, Cambridge, p. 2. This contrasts sharply with Milton's description of life under a monarchy in *The Ready and Easy Way* written only twelve years later, in which a king serves only to "bestow the eating and drinking of excessive dainties, to set a pompous face upon the superficial actings of state, to pageant himself up and down in progress among the perpetual bowings and cringings of an abject people, on either side deifying and adoring him for nothing that can deserve it.... A king must be adored like a demigod, with a haughty and dissolute court about him, of vast expense and luxury, masks and revels, to the debauching of our prime gentry." (*Complete Prose Works*, VI, 121-2.)

Carew fixed Charles I and Henrietta Maria as stars in heaven and described Charles as "That Darling of the Gods and men".¹ Anonymous "Verses spoken in St John's Library on the entertainment of the King and Queene by a younge Schollere", dated 1636, ask:

Were they not Angells sang, did not mine eares
 Drinke in a sacred Anthem from yon sphears?
 Was not *Christ* with *Charles* and *Marie's* name
 Names wherin dwells all Musicke? Tis the same.²

Cowley calls Charles "blessed alchemist" and acknowledges himself and his fellow courtiers as

Happy who did remain
 Unborn till Charles's reign.³

Ballads of the time⁴ show that even in the ferment of civil war a

¹"Vpon the Kings sicknesse", *Carew*, p. 36.

²*Bod. Ms Malone 19*, fols 52^r-52^v.

³"Ode in Commendation of the Time we live under", *Cowley*, I, 31.

⁴An ordinance "to seize upon all ballad makers" was enacted on Feb. 13, 1647. However some loyal songs were still being printed secretly as is shown in Sir Francis Wortley's *Lex Terrae*, 1648, reprinted in W. Chappell's *Popular Music of the Olden Times*, 1855-1859, Chapell & Co., London, I, 417.

Bless the printer from the searcher...
 Bless all poor ballad makers,
 Those who have writ for the King, for the good
 King.

And, of course, ballads continued to be sung at private gatherings.

Royalist could declare:

I can tell

All things will be well

When the King enjoys his own again.¹

And when it was known that Charles I would never "enjoy his own again" he became a martyr:

Here Charles the First and Christ the Second lyes², wrote Owen Felltham. And only three months after the execution, Royalists were singing:

Our fainting hope now only rests

On thy succeeding son.³

It is impossible to establish how much of the king worship was inspired by Charles I himself, and how much derived from a staunch belief that divinity doth hedge a king. Today, three and a half centuries later, opinion on the king's character is sharply divided. H. M. Richmond, literary critic steeped in the work of the court poets,⁴ praising the particularly happy social climate of Charles I's court, attributes it to Charles's dignified and precise character, and to the elegance and sophistication of

¹"When the king injoyes his owne againe", probably by Martin Parker, *Chappell*, II, 437.

²"An Epitaph to the Eternal Memory of Charles I", *Lusoria*, 1661, printed for A. Seile, London, p. 39.

³"A Coffin for King Charles", dated 23 April, 1649, in *The King's Pamphlets*, reprinted in *Chappell*, II, 440.

⁴*The School of Love*, p. 260.

his queen.¹ But the historian Lawrence Stone, gives an opposite portrayal of Charles and his father; "James had no charisma whatever, and Charles very little."²

Even in the early seventeenth century, among royalists as among Puritans, the distinction between the person and the office of king was recognised. An ardent Royalist like Suckling, author of the lines:

Awake (great Sir) the Sun shines heer,
Gives all Your Subjects a New-yeer,
Onely we stay till You appear,
For thus by us Your Power is understood,³

could also write *Aglaura* which raises basic questions about the behaviour of kings without removing them to the respectably distant past as, say, Shakespeare had done. Even Herrick, who dedicated *Hesperides* and its first poem in particular "To the Most Illustrious, and Most Hopefull Prince, Charles, Prince of Wales",⁴ and called the prince's father, Charles I, "the best

¹As for instance in Jonson's "To the King. On his Birth-day" (1632) or Davenant's "To the King on New-yeares day 1630. Ode".

²*The Causes of the English Revolution*, p. 89. Stone gives numerous examples of blameworthy behaviour of both kings.

³"On New-Years day 1640. To the King", *Suckling*, 84.

⁴*Herrick*, p. 3.

of Kings"¹ and "a Publike Light"² wrote:

So many *Kings* and *Primates* too there are,
Who claim the Fat, and Fleshie for their share
And leave their Subjects but the starved ware.³

Though Suckling and Herrick recognised that a monarch could take advantage of his subjects, neither of them suggested that Charles ever did. They would have joined strongly in Thomas Wright's "Vive le Roi"⁴ which Chappell calls the "God Save the King" of the Stuarts, or in the anonymous "A Health to the Royal Family".⁵

Every royal occasion seemed to be celebrated in song. The anonymous "Jack of Lent's Ballot, on the welcoming of Queen Henriette Maria" to England, is found in many collections.⁶

¹"To the King, upon his comming with his Army into the West", *idem*, p. 25.

²"To the King", *idem*, 236.

³"Bad Princes pill their People", *idem*, 272.

⁴Thomas Wright's *A la Mode*, 1647; reprinted *Chappell*, II, 429.

And now the Royalists will sing
Aloud *Vive le Roy*;
The Commons will embrace their King
With an unwonted joy.

⁵*Pepys Coll*, II, 217, reprinted *Chappell*, II, 426.

Come, give's a brimmer, fill it up,
'Tis to great Charles our King,
And merrily let it go round,
Whilst we rejoyce and sing.

⁶e.g. *Choyce Drollery*, p. 21.

John Beaumont wrote "An Epithalamium upon the Happy Marriage of our Soverayne Lord, King Charles, and our Gracious Lady, Queene Mary." Jonson, doubtless to earn his royal pension¹, wrote numerous poems, ranging from the dutiful condolence, "To K. Charles and Q. Mary for the losse of their first-borne, An Epigram Consolitaire", to the rollicking drinking-song, "The Dedication of the King's new Cellar". Davenant, after succeeding Jonson in 1637, wrote poems for each royal occasion, including seven addressed directly to the Queen, praising her or giving her cautious advice.²

Other poets were just as prolific. William Cartwright wrote a poem "On his Majesties recovery from the small pox, 1633", one "To the King on his Majesties Return from Scotland", one "On the Birth of the King's Fourth Child, 1635", another "To the King on the Birth of the Princess Anne, March 17, 1636", yet another "To the Queen after her dangerous delivery, 1638" and so on and on.

As well as courtly poems of this kind popular oral poems, mostly in ballad form, sung and reproduced in penny broadsheets, celebrated the royal pair and expressed warmth and loyalty to

¹See above, p. 36.

²"To the Queen", *Davenant*, p. 139.

But you (with yours) your vertue does advance,
When you perswade him (in the Peoples cause)
Not to esteeme his Judges more then Laws.

them. In "A Warning-piece for engrossers of corn" the writer, far from blaming the king for the famine and the power the 'corn-engrossers' are wielding, prays:

The Lord preserve our King and blesse
him from the treacherous hands of those,
That are his Enemies, yet professe
They love him yet prove secret foes.¹

Similarly, a ballad by John Lookes registered for publication on September 23, 1639,² concludes with the stanza:

God blesse our Gracious King and Queen
and our brave English fleet
And give them victory on the seas,
when they with foes do meet.²

Ben Jonson firmly condemned the "extemporall dinne of balladry"³ and Herrick, too, expressed his contempt:

Curse the blind & lame
Base Ballad-mongers, who usurpe thy name
And fowle thy Altar.⁴

But among most of their contemporaries, ballads were extremely popular. The oral tradition of ballads and folk-songs continued to flourish⁵, perpetuating the perennial themes of love and hate

¹*The Pack of Autolykus*, p. 397.

²"A famous sea-fight", *ibid.*, p.30.

³"Conversations with Drummond", *Works*, I, 145.

⁴"His farwell unto Poetrie", *Herrick*, p. 412.

⁵Introduction, *A Pepsyan Garland*, p. xii.

trust and fear, sex and violence, while the more sensational tid-bits were reproduced in the ballad broadsheets which Hyder E. Rollins calls "the equivalent of modern newspapers".¹ Peacham described them as a source of topical information: "For a peny you may have all the Newes in England, on Murders, Clouds, Witches, Fires, Tempests and what not, in one of Martin Parkers ballads."² "A hundred havens has the ballad monger to traffic at", wrote Thomas Middleton "and new ones still daily."³ Yet such ballads were not expected to be short-lived:

Who makes a ballad for an alehouse door,
Shall live in future times for ever more.⁴

Much of the ballad poetry was openly didactic. "A Warning Piece for engrossers of corn"⁵ written about 1623 was meant to show hoarders their own greed and to let others know what they were up to. The anonymous "A Warning for all desperate Women, by the example of Alice Davis who for killing her husband was

¹*Ibid.*, p. xi.

²"The Worth of a Peny", 1641, quoted in *Bush*, p. 48.

³*The World Tost at Tennis*, 1620, *Works*, ed. A.J. Bullen, 1964, A.M.S. Press, New York, VII, 154.

⁴Introduction to *A Pepsyian Garland*, p. xx from *Parnassus Plays*, ed. Macray, p. 83. In fact many ballads disappeared at least until they were reprinted in such collections as *The Roxburghe Ballads* (1871-1997) the *Bagford Ballads* (1878), those gathered this century by Hyder E. Rollins (e.g. *A Pepsyian Garland* *The Pack of Autolyucus*) together with anthologies such as De Sola Pinto and A. E. Rodway's *The Common Muse*.

⁵Reprinted in *The Pack of Autolyucus*, pp. 31-35.

burned at Smithfield the 12 of July 1628 to the terror of all the beholders"¹ and the parallel "A Warning for Wives"² by Martin Parker, describing Katherine Francis's crime, were presumably intended to protect husbands from vicious wives, just as Parker's "News from the Tower Hill"³ was supposed to protect young men from unprincipled young women.

Chappell reports that in 1642 ballads respecting "the great deeds of Oliver Cromwell at Worcester and Edgehill were gravely proposed to Parliament to be sung in place of Christmas-carols"⁴, presumably to boost the morale of the Puritans. A ballad like "The Zealous Puritan" written in 1639, encouraged Puritans to try a new life in a new land:

Stay not among the Wicked,
Lest that with them you perish,
Let us to New-England go
And the Pagan People cherish;

¹A *Pepysian Garland*, pp. 288-292.

²*Ibid.*, 300-304.

³*Ibid.*, pp. 376-397.

⁴No 6 of "Certaine Propositions offered to the consideration of the Honourable houses of Parliament", reprinted *Chappell*, II, 416.

Then for the truth's sake, come along, come along,
 Leave this place of superstition.
 Were it not for me, that the Brethren be,
 You would sink into Perdition.¹

Lilly's *A Collection of Ancient Ballads and Broadsides* contains poems with such titles as "A new Ballad against Unthrifths" and "Of evyll tounge".

Didacticism in lyrics other than ballads, if it exists at all, is usually more subtle, aiming at loosening rigid attitudes, rather than reprimanding wrong ones.² Carew sees honour as a tyrant because of the restraint it would impose on lovers. Suckling condemns any play of coyness in women:

¹*The Rump; or An Exact Collection of the Choycest Poems and Songs Relating to the Late Times, by the most eminent wits from anno 1639 to anno 1661, 1662.* Printed for Henry Brome, London, p. 1. Compare with George Herbert's lines from *The Church Militant* commenting on but, unlike this poem, not encouraging the flight:

Religion stands on tip-toe in our land
 Readie to passe to the *American* strand.

In 1637 Charles I issued an edict that no-one would be allowed to emigrate unless he had a certificate of conformity to the Church of England (*Chute*, p. 230).

²Outright moralizing of this kind is frequent in Wither's long poem, *Britain's Remembrancer*, which condemns the idle who

Sate down to eate and drinke, and rose to play.
 They spent their hours in laughter and in song
 And grew regardlesse of the poore man's wrong.
 (p. 34).

"Female gentry" are blamed for being "frenchified", (p. 356), "aged folk" for being "froward avaricious", (p. 422), children for being "forgetfull of their duty" (p. 422), and even Magistrates "doe bad examples give" (p. 422).

I hate a fool that starves her Love
 Onely to feed her pride¹

and advises a friend that it is pointless to play the role of the dejected lover if his advances are not welcomed.² Lovelace insists that the only true freedom is freedom of spirit:

Stone Walls doe not a Prison make,
 Nor I'ron bars a Cage;
 Mindes innocent and quiet take
 That for an Hermitage.³

Besides the poems that show the attitudes of some of Charles I's courtiers there are many other lyrics in which

¹"Loves Siege", *Suckling*, p. 66.

²"Why so pale and wan fond Lover", *idem*, 64. In a footnote Clayton supplied a title he found in one manuscript, "A gent: having repulse from a gent: woeman, A freind gives him counsell."

³"To Althea, From Prison", *Lovelace*, p. 79. An interesting parallel to this poem exists in T. Weaver's *Bod. Ms Rawl. Poet*, 211, fol. 14^v:

I am not Captive I, I find
 My souls still free and unconfin'd
 And th[ough] my body have [pe] doome
 To be cagd up in a close room
 Yet since my word is guiltless, this
 No Bond[a]ge nor no Thralldome is.

bóth the facts and the attitudes supply a revealing picture of Caroline politics. With no adequate source of royal finance, Charles I, like his father, resorted to such expedients as trafficking in knighthoods, a practice reproved in such verses as this:

Knighthood, in old time, was counted an honour,
Which the blest spirits did not disdain;
But now it is used in so base a manner,
That it's no credit, but rather a stain.
Tush, it's no matter what people do say,
The name of a Knight a whole village will sway.¹

The notorious tonnage and poundage also drew comment:

We must reare up in spite of Church and King.
Against the Papists we have gott the day:
Blinde Bishops onely now stand in our way,
But we will have a trick to tame their pride, -
Tonnage and poundage ells shall bee deny'd.²

With the Thirty Years' War ravaging and impoverishing the Continent, many Englishmen wanted stability above all things, and were disturbed by Buckingham's eagerness for war, especially when

¹"Come to the Court, and be all made Knights", *B.M. Add Ms 5832*, fol. 205^r, reprinted *Chappell*, I, 327.

²"Against the Opposing the Duke in Parliment, 1628", *Corbett*, p. 83. This poem gives a currently held attitude, but not that of Corbett himself. It is followed by "An Answere to the Same, lyne by lyne" which is utterly loyal.

English attempts on the continent, such as those at La Rochelle in 1627 and 1628, miscarried.¹ Jonson's words,

We all love peace,

And pray the fruites thereof, and the increase,²

though directed at the god of fire, could have been the cry of all those out of sympathy with the war-happy spirit Buckingham fostered, the spirit of Martin Parker's ballad, "Let us to the wars again".

The poems on Buckingham and his murder,³ though often touched off by personal antipathy, indicate the tension that had been mounting in England, especially over finance and foreign policy, even before Charles came to the throne with his French wife and her Catholic court. Without Buckingham at his side, the only way Charles could see to quell the unrest was his summary dissolution of Parliament in 1629. Taking advantage of the respite, the court again turned its attention to art, song and masques. Rubens in 1630 painted the picture which he called *The Blessings of Peace*. Fanshawe wrote "An Ode, upon occasion of the Majesties Proclamation in the Year 1630" which tells readers that "War is all the World about" except in

¹See D. L. Keir, *The Constitutional History of Modern Britain*, 3rd edn 1948, A. and C. Black, London, p. 186.

²"An Execration upon Vulcan", *Works*, VIII, 212.

³See above, p.205.

in Your State."¹

By the 1640's none of the poets had illusions about "calme securitie"² in England, least of all near the King. This "envious, ignorant Age"³ could just maintain stability while Charles was able to do without Parliament. But the instant the Scottish rebellion made it necessary for him to ask for money there was trouble, much of which was recorded in verse. *Bodleian Ms Rawlinson* 26, for instance, indicates unrest in lively anonymous verses entitled "To the Lower House of Parliament", "To the Parliament, November 1640", often in doggerel such as this:

Tremble you silly Comm[ons]: are you vext
That Lambs feed on you? Lyons may be next.³

And *Bodleian Rawlinson* 211 has a group of high-spirited poems written by T. Weaver during the Civil War, and often relating to incidents in the war. Weaver, though he misses no chance to laugh at "a Papist priest" or a "sister of Comunion" is a firm Royalist. Mostly he scorns the "savage Roundheads" as in this mock-serious song:

All you [yt] would no longer
to a Monarch be subjected
Come away to Guild-Hall
And there be Liberated

¹"On New-Years day 1640. To the King", *Suckling*, 85.

²"In Answer of an Elegiacall Letter...", *Carew*, p. 77.

³"An Answer to Mr Ben Johnson's Ode...", *Randolph*, p. 84.

Regard no Proclamations
 They're subjects fitt to jeast on
 Harry Elsing's farr
 Better than C. R.¹

Every major incident drew the attention of the poets. One which took place early in the decade was the execution of Thomas Wentworth, by order of the Parliament but with the King's assent.² Cartwright expressed the combination of shock and bewilderment felt by all who had seen in Wentworth the best hope for the royalist cause.

Must Axioms hence grow sadly understood,
 And thus we see, 'Tis dangerous to be good.³

However, dedicated as the court poets were to the Royalist cause, they did not glorify war. Even Lovelace's extraordinary paradox,

I could not love thee (Deare) so much
 Lov'd I not Honour more,⁴

shows an awareness of the need to explain his situation to the woman he leaves behind. Davenant also, leading court poet of his day, expressed the pangs of separation:

¹"Upon the dissolution of the Parliament, May 5, 1640", *Bod. Ms Rawl. 26*, fol. 85^r.

²"The Price of Anarchie", *Bod. Ms Rawl. Poet 211*, fol. 73^v

³"Upon the Death of the most hopefull the Lord Stafford", *Cartwright*, p. 537. Two other poems on Wentworth's execution exist in *Bod. Ms Douce 357*, and one of the two is also in *Bod Ms Tanner 465*.

⁴"To Lucasta, Going to the Warres", *Lovelace*, p. 18.

Can I in War delight,
 Who being of my heart bereft,
 Can have no heart to fight.¹

Sometimes a poet gave a glimpse of the misery the women suffered, as in verses written "To a Fair Lady weeping for her Husband Committed to Prison by the Parliament".² Others, like Vaughan, made incidental reference to

the rage

Of an Incensed, stormie Age.³

Lovelace makes constant political asides in his poems.⁴

Herrick asks,

Where shall I goe,

Or whither run

To shun

This publique overthrow?⁵

Anonymous poets could be, and were, even more explicit about what was happening in the Civil War. A Puritan vigorously criticises the cruelty with which Archbishop Laud had tried to impose his High Church policies:

¹"The Souldier going to the Field." *Davenant*, p. 175.

²*The Rump*, pp. 129-131.

³"An Epitaph upon the Lady *Elizabeth*", *The Works of Henry Vaughan*, ed. L.C. Martin, 2nd edn, 1957, Clarendon Press, Oxford, p. 63.

⁴Consider for instance "The Snayl", "The Grasse-hopper", "The Vintage to the Dungeon", "A Lady with a Falcon on her fist".

⁵"Upon the troublesome times", *Herrick*, p. 211.

Within this six years six eares have
 Been cropped off worthy men and grave
 for speaking what is true. . .

But this I say, that your lewd life
 Did fill both Church and State with strife
 And Trample on the Crown.¹

However it was not unknown for a poem to surface, commending a stance that would subordinate at least the Church in England to Rome:

What Englands church allow
 my Conscience disallowes
 the Church can haue noe sham
 which holds the pope supream
 with seruice scarce diuine
 with table bread and wine
 who the comunion flyes
 is Catholicke and wise
 that England flowrish best
 shall nere bee my request.²

But the occasional poems commending the anti-Catholic actions of Parliament, and the rare openly pro-Catholic poems

¹"A Prognostication on Will. Laud, late Archbishop of Canterbury", quoted without source in *The Oxford Book of Light Verse*, pp. 147-150.

²B.M. Add Ms 24665, reprinted in *Seventeenth Century Songs and Lyrics*, p. 172.

are far-outnumbered by the Royalist poems that mock the sanctimoniousness of the Puritans. Some will be noted in the discussion of humorous verse,¹ but others abound.

One scornful example is reprinted in J. P. Cutts's collection:

Say puritan ist come to passe
that thou must heare a play or masse
which wouldst thou Chuse
truly in such a doubtfull case
itt well becomes the child of grace
doe as the spirit doth infuse.²

The same poem mocks at Puritan disapproval of church trappings such as

the holy bellows which inspire
the organs sweet
and the
glorious paint
in rich church windowes.

As might be expected, such an order as that made in 1643 that Cheapside Cross, and other crosses that had served as landmarks of distinction, were to be pulled down as popish and superstitious, aroused strong feeling. The scorn reached its height in 1647

¹Below, pp. 264-270.

²*Drexel Ms 4041*, reprinted in *Seventeenth Century Songs and Lyrics*, p. 282. Stained glass windows were wilfully broken by the Puritans, at least as early as 1632 when the 'Creation' window of St Edmund's, Salisbury, was attacked. See J.A.W. Bennett and H.R. Trevor-Roper's notes to Corbett's poem "Upon Faireford Windowes" for a survey of the topic. (*Corbett*, pp. 156-157.)

when what Percy calls "the beautiful Gothic obelisk" of Charing Cross was demolished:

The Committee said, that verily
To popery it was bent;
For ought I know, it might be so
For to church it never went. . . .

Methinks the common-council shou'd
Of it have taken pity,
'Cause, good old cross, it always stood
So firmly to the city
Since crosses you so much disdain,
Faith, if I were as you,
For fear the King should rule again
I'd pull down Tiburn too.¹

Those who fought for Charles sang songs to keep their spirits high. Cutts has a stirring example:

Come drawer some wine or wele pull down your Signe
for wee are all Souell compounders
wele make the house ringe with healths to y^e King
and confusion unto his Confounders. . .

.

¹"The Downfall of Charing Cross", *Reliques of Ancient Poetry*, I, 259.

And next heers A cup to y^e queene fill itt up
wert poyson we would make an end ont
may charles and shee meete and tread one y^r feete
both presbiter and independant.¹

Sometimes a song written earlier in a particular context was taken up later, such as the prisoner's song from William Cartwright's *The Royal Slave*, first performed in 1636:

A pox on our jailor and on his fat jowl.
There's liberty lies in the bottom o'th' bowl.
A fig for whatever the rascal can do.
Our dungeon is deep, but so are our cups too
Then drink we a round in despite of our foes
And make our hard irons cry chink in the close.²

Others were written for specific occasions, such as this anonymous one which celebrated Charles I's brief return to London after the Scottish rebellion:

Sing and be merry King *Charles* is come back
Lets drink round his health with Claret and Sack:
The Scots are all quiet, each man with his pack
May cry now securely, come see what you lack.
Sing and be merry boyes, sing and be merry,
Londons a fine Town so is London Derry.³

¹"Come drawer some wine or wele pull downe your Signe", *Drexel Ms 404*, reprinted *Seventeenth Century Songs and Lyrics*, p. 67.

²Reprinted in John Wardroper's *Love and Drollery*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1964, p. 190, with the comment (p. 293) that it was later sung and remembered fondly by imprisoned Cavaliers.

³"Upon the Kings Returne to the City of London when he came last thether from Scotland and was entertained there by the Lord Mayor", *Poematia*, 1656, Oxford, p. 50.

The Rump contains over two hundred Royalist songs such as "The Character of a Roundhead", 1642, with the swinging refrain:

O such a rogues a Roundhead.¹

The cynics had their say too, especially about Charles's position:

To make *Charles* a great king, and give him no
power

To honour him much, and not obey him an howr
To provide for his safety, and take away his Tower,
And to prove all is sweet, be it never so sower,
The new Order of the Land, and the Lands new Order.²

In mock exaggeration they praised the Parliament:

Most gracious, omnipotent
And everlast^{ing} Parliament,
Whose power and majestie
The greater then all kings by odds;
Yea, to account you less then Gods
Must needs be blasphemie.³

But beneath all the bravado lay a mood of desperation. An anonymous poem which calls for help first from the "gracious King",

¹*The Rump*, pp. 42-43.

²"The new Order of the Land", *ibid.*, pp. 47-49.

³"A Panegyrick", Kings Pamphlets, Folio Broad-sides Vol. 5, June 5, 1647, reprinted in Thomas Wright's *Political Ballads*, 1841, Percy Society, London, pp. 8-13.

then from the "long wisht for Parliament", from the law, from the church, and finally, from God, describes England in the late 1640's:

England! once Europs envye now her scorne,
 Ambitious to bee forlorne,
 selfe by selfe torne,
 stand amaz'd,
 thy woes are blaz'd,
 by sylence best,
 & wanting words,
 Ev'n wonder out y^e rest.
 . . .
 In fight
 what's might,
 y^{ts} right,
 Statuts are over-aw'd,
 & Co^mon Law, by Co^mon Law outlaw'd.¹

Such poems - and there is a vast array of them still unprinted - offer a mass of political comments which could be of great use to a literary historian.

Information on the social customs of the time is just as plentiful, and has been just as little used. Although there is an array of usually idealized pictures of life in the country,

¹"England! once Europs envye now her scorne", *B.M. Add Ms. 11608*, reprinted in *Seventeenth Century Songs and Lyrics*, p. 94.

mōst Caroline lyrics have a court setting. There the courtier, brought up on all the manuals of court behaviour, could be seen much of the time.

In a period when the visual arts were flourishing as never before, it could be expected that the courtier would care greatly about personal appearance, his own and that of others. One of the ballads discovered by Hyder E. Rollins gives an intriguing recreation of his dress:

Greate hose be comely for the legge,
 and makes one semely cladde;
Frenche cappes are nowe the fashion,
 and therefore must be had;

Pincke pumpes are good to let in wynde,
 and must in heat be worne;
 Cut elbowes are as coole as they,
 and cannot be forborne;
 In sommer bumbast makes a brest,
 wher lately ther was none -
 In wynter bumbast kepes from cold,
 when harvest heate is gone.

And gaskins now are worne for ease,
 to stretche both leg and arme;
 Each one hath now a dagger gotte
 to save himselfe from harme;

A handsome hatte is not without
 a tassel hanging downe,
 And custome byddes us now, to weare
 a felt with loftye croune.¹

Since Elizabeth's day the young and relatively frivolous at court had made fun of anyone who overstepped the limits of ostentation.² It is therefore hardly surprising than an ex-bricklayer's apprentice who had not inherited but earned his position at court, and whose fierce moral standards kept him constantly discriminating between the genuine and the sham, should make harsh comments about those who put undue emphasis on externals, "Sir Cod the Perfumed" and those like him. Not that Jonson disapproves of courtly dress - except when it exhibits "the new *french*-taylors motion, monthly made".³ He disapproves rather of those who move,

. . . in clothes braue enough
 To be a courtier,⁴

but do not in any other way justify their existence in this "money-gett Mechanick Age".⁵

¹*Old English Ballads Chiefly from Manuscripts*, 1920, University Press, Cambridge, p. 275.

²As in illustrated in *Twelfth Night* by the tricking of Malvolio.

³"On English Monsieur", *Works* VIII, 56.

⁴"On Some-thing that walkes some-where", *ibid.*, 30.

⁵"An Expostulacon wth Inigo Jones", *ibid.*, 404.

Others besides Jonson condemned welldressed, empty-headed fops:

Those puckfist cockbrained coxcombs, shallow
pated,

Are things that by their tailors are created.¹

Some of the harshest censure probably comes from the pen of R.C., Gent. "In adulantes Aulico",²

Base sycophantes, crumb-catching parasites,
Obsequious slaves which bend at every nod,
Insatiate harpies, gourmandizing kites
Epicures, at [h] eists, which adore no God
But your owne bellies and your private gaine,
Got by your oily tongues bewitching traine . . .
.
Avaunt, ye fauning cures, and leave the court.

Thomas Randolph reproduces a creature just as despicable, one whom courtiers call a "States-man", statesmen a "Courtier", ladies "a meere scholler", scholars "of any other tribe but theirs":

When I beheld thee cringe in some faire Hall
And scrape proportions Mathematicall,

¹John Taylor, *A Kicksey-Winsey*, 1619, Mather Walbank, Grayes Inne Gate, p. 10.

²*The Times' Whistle, and other Poems*, 1616, reprinted n.d., Early English Text Society, No. 48, Greenwood Press, New York, pp. 135-136. J.M. Cowper who edited this volume considered that R.C. was Richard Corbett, but Corbett's modern editors, J.A.W. Bennett and H.R. Trevor-Roper, do not print the poem, and utterly dismiss the ascription. (*Corbett*, p. 174).

Varying thy mouth as 'twere by Magick spell
 To circle, ovall, square, and triangle,
 And take a virgin by the Ivory hand
 Minting words to her, none can understand.¹

Such isolated glimpses, provided by 'Cavaliers', or "those of quality. . . loyally inclined"² do not justify a sweeping condemnation of the character of every courtier. Skelton shows that the word 'Cavalier', often used for a seventeenth century court poet, can have quite wrong connotations of smoothness and ease, and should instead evoke a picture of a man "much engaged in the social round, and at once entertained and disquieted by the pleasures and frivolities of his culture".³

A fairer and pleasanter aspect of life is seen in lyrics in which the poets are describing social situations they take part in themselves. Here is Drayton, encouraging the gay scene at a wedding:

Violins, strike up aloud,
 Ply the gitterne, scowre the crowd,
 Let the nimble hand belabour
 The whisteling pipe, and drumbling taber:
 To the full the bagpipe racke,
 Till the swelling leather cracke....

¹"A Character. Aulico-politico-Academica", *Randolph*, pp. 134-135.

²Perez Zagorin, *Court and Country: The Beginnings of the English Revolution*, 1969, Routledge & Kegan Paul, p. 344. He claims that the term derives from Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*, 1704, but O.E.D. traces it to 1589 on the authority of Dr Johnson, and certainly Herrick uses it, referring to Charles as a "brave Prince of Cavaliers" ("To the King", *Herrick*, p. 25)

³*Cavalier Poets*, 1960, Longmans Green, London, p. 23.

In maskes, in dances, and delight,
 And reare banquets spend the night:
 Then about the roome we ramble,
 Scatter nuts and for them scramble:
 Over stooles, and tables tumble,
 Never thinke of noyse nor rumble.¹

This time Jonson is inviting a friend to share a meal with him at his home:

Tonight grave sir, both my poore house, and I
 Doe equally desire your companie . . .
 No simple word,
 That shall be vtter'd at our mirthfull boord,
 Shall make vs sad next morning: or affright
 The libertie, that wee'll enjoy to night.²

In the same poem Jonson gives a description of the rich promised meal:

Yet shall you have, to rectifie your palate,
 An olive, capers, or some better sallade
 Ushring the mutton; with a short-leg'd hen
 If we can get her, full of eggs, and then,
 Limons and wine for sauce. . .

¹"The Muses Elizium", *Drayton*, I, 274-275. The lines recall Puttenham's description of the row deliberately raised to drown "the skreeking and outcry of the young damosell.... Old nurses (appointed to that seruice)... used... to suppress the noice by casting of pottes full of nuttes round about the chamber... So as the Ladies and gentlewomen should have their eares so occupied what with Musicke, and what with their handes wantonly scambling and catching after the nuttes, they could not intend to harken after any other thing". (*Puttenham*, p. 51). The odd words 'scamble' and 'scambling' particularly indicate that Drayton had this passage in mind.

²"Inviting a Friend to Supper", *Works*, VIII, 64-65.

He need [̄ eth̄] not a napkin,
 His fingers for to wipe
 His kitchin's in his box
 His roast meat in his pipe.¹

Masques were enjoyed both by performers and audience,² but entertainment was not always so formal. There are poems about hunting,³ cockbaiting,⁴ dancing,⁵ drinking, "till all complain o' th' headache, the falling, or the gout."⁶ One poem, discovered by J. P. Cutts, even makes high entertainment of a cat fight:

The higeous noyse and blowes increace
 and whilst most fought some would keepe peace
 but they no Constable regard
 kings Cruce nor Justice is not heard
 for they cry mew; still they cry mew
 The Catts that are of the^ins of court
 they thought att first itt had bin sport
 and so the hungry blades came there
 in hopes they might have gott good Cheare...⁷

¹"Tobacconist", *Bod. Ms. Poet Rawl.* 26, fol. 6^r.

²Above, pp. 93-94.

³e.g. William Basse, "The Hunter's Song", c. 1627, *Sportive Wit*, 1656, reprinted in *Seventeenth Century Lyrics*, p. 35.

⁴e.g. Martin Lluelyn, "Cockthrowing", *Men-Miracles*, 1646, reprinted *Seventeenth Century Lyrics*, p. 191.

⁵e.g. William Strode, "My limbs I will fly", *The Floating Island*, acted 1636, reprinted *Seventeenth Century Lyrics*, p. 121.

⁶Nathaniel Whiting, "The Tinker and the Monks", *Le hore di Recreatione*, 1637, reprinted *Seventeenth Century Lyrics*, pp. 124-125.

⁷"The Catts as other creatures doe", *Seventeenth Century Songs and Lyrics*, p. 337.

In contrast to all this joviality there are the poems dealing with the quieter life in the country.¹ There, as at court, selfish behaviour could be sure of a reprimand. John Collop commends one country gentleman:

Thou not inclosest to fence out the poor,
But an inclosure art to keep their store.²

Henry King, in his extended paraphrase of Isaiah V, 8-30, takes the same contemporary English tendency to enclose common lands as local target for his warning, "The Woes of Esay".

Woe to the worldly men, whose covetous
Ambition labours to joyne house to house,
Lay field to field; till their Enclosures edge
The Playne, girdling a Country with one hedge:
That leave no place unbought, no peece of Earth
Which they will not engrosse, making a dearth
Of all Inhabitants, untill they stand
Unneighbour'd, as unblest, within their Land.³

There are besides these, countless other snapshots of the daily conduct of life in early seventeenth century England.

¹See also above, pp. 175. ff.

²"A Character of a Compleat gentleman", *Poesis Rediviva*, 1656, reprinted *Rare Poems of the Seventeenth Century*, p. 29.

³"The Woes of Esay", *King*, 136.

James Howell reminds readers:

The cunning thief that lurks for prize,
At some dark corner watching lies.¹

An anonymous drinking song makes reference to "infectious ayre" and "London smoke"². John Taylor labels Newgate, "the University of stealing"³. Henry King gives a glimpse of the shadow plague cast over the century in his touching epitaph, "On two children dyeing of one Disease, and buried in one Grave."⁴

In all classes the women were expected to be useful as well as decorative, procreative and obedient. Their wishes were acceded to when it suited, but only then. Castiglione, less than a century before, had commended a king who recognised the importance of art and so gave a painter whose work he approved a beautiful woman "whom he (the king) loved so dearly... not regarding the displeasure of the woman."⁵

Convention required the constant and sometimes extravagant praise of personal appearance in amorous verse.⁶ Randolph, although he purports to describe "a soule and body equally divine"

¹Upon black Eyes, and becoming Frowns", *Epistolae Ho-Eliauae*, 1645, reprinted *Seventeenth Century Lyrics*, p. 173.

²"About with this brimmer my bullyes", *Seventeenth Century Songs and Lyrics*, p. 5.

³*A Kicksey-Winsey*, p. 18.

⁴*King*, p. 72. *Crum* points out that the reference could not be to King's own children, except in fear only (Introduction, p. 10).

⁵*Castiglione*, pp. 80-81.

⁶The platonic love poems and the group of lyrics which stress the quality of a relationship rather than the appearance of the woman, are notable exceptions.

in his "A Character of a perfect Woman"¹ in fact spends almost all his hundred and four lines on his perfect woman's physical attributes.

However when it comes to selecting a wife, Randolph, the bachelor, claims to have other ideas:

If e're I take a wife I will have one

Neither for beauty nor for portion;

But for her vertues; and I'le married bee

Not for my lust, but for posteritie.

.

And be her face what 'twill, I'le thinke her
faire

If shee within the house confine her care,

Not daub'd with pride and prodigalitie.²

In one poem, entitled "An Epithalamium" the mention of posterity, incidental in Precept 37, becomes much more explicit:

Me thinks already I espy

The cradles rock, the babies cry,

And drousy Nurses Lullaby.³

In another poem of the same name he prays,

Heaven send a sweetefac'd heire, a chopping boy,

To make thee sport at home.⁴

¹*Randolph*, pp. 165-166.

²"Precept 37", *idem*, p. 65.

³"An Epithalamium", *idem*, p. 56.

⁴"An Epithalamium", *idem*, p. 157.

And in part of the epithalamium to George Goring and his bride the emphasis is again on progeny and procreation.¹

In each case the "bedding ballad"² urged the marriage pair to reproduce their kind with all possible speed. And if the woman should die in childbirth - as she not infrequently did, medicine and hygiene being what they were³ - she had served her purpose:

As Gilly flowers do but stay
To blow, and seed, and away.⁴

Women as well as men were reminded to keep procreation firmly in mind when choosing a partner:

Maydes, with yong men do not linck
Such for structure are unfitt
And like Wood, that's greene, will shrinke
Not having tyme to ripen it.

¹"In auspiciatissimas nuptias Nobilissimi Iuvenis Georgii Goringe", *idem*, p. 151.

²The term seems to have been first used by Puttenham (p. 53) and remained current right through Caroline times.

³For a description of the insanitary conditions, see Carl Bridenbaugh, *Vexed and Troubled Englishmen, 1590-1642*, 1968, Clarendon Press, Oxford, pp. 102-106.

⁴"Upon a Lady that dyed in child-bed, and left a daughter behind her", *Herrick*, p. 126. There are a number of other epitaphs, both in manuscripts and in printed collections, on women who died in childbirth. Perhaps the loveliest is the early Milton's "An Epitaph on the Marchioness of *Winchester*" who died at 23 in childbirth:

Gentle Lady, may thy grave
Peace and quiet ever have,
(*Milton*, II, 134).

Then season'd Timber take, or none
To rayse Posterity upon.¹

Having committed herself to a husband, the woman has much to remember:

To keep him good, his wife must be
Obedient, mild, her huswifery
Within doores she must tend; her charge
Is that at home; his that at large.²

Later in the same poem she has her place clearly explained again.

Care thou at home, and let him care at large
Thou hast enough thyselfe for to employ
Within doores, 'bout thy house and huswifery.³

William Habington's Castara as a young girl is not given any such advice, but is submissive because she knows no other way to be.

She obeyes with speedy will
Her grave Parents wise commands.
And so innocent, that ill,
She nor acts, nor understands.
Womens feete runne still astray,
If once to ill they know the way.⁴

¹"Pedlar's song", *Bod Ms Rawl. Poet 26*, fol. 81^r, No ascription.

²Patrick Hannay, "The Argument: Marriage ordain'd. The Man made Head", *A Happy Husband, or, Directions for a Maide to Choose her Mate*, 1618, University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 12747, A5.

³"A good Wives description", *idem*, C3^v.

⁴"The Description of Castara", *Habington*, p. 71.

Later, in the part of *Castara* entitled "The Wife", Habington recognises the worth of companionship.

I'le with *Castara* sit

I'the' shade from heat of business¹

Sir Thomas Overbury too wanted a wife to be a friend, but one kept in her place by limited education:

Give me, next good, an understanding wife,
By nature wise, not learned by much art;
Some knowledge on her side will, all my life
More scope of conversation impart.²

Like so much in Caroline verse, this attitude has classical antecedents. Herrick is simply translating in the "The Wish":

Fat be my Hinde - unlearned be my wife.³

If women did show signs of intelligence they were either abused or assumed not really to belong to their sex.

Tho. Allen is severe with his "daughter Gillion" who ought to get on with her chores instead of meddling in theology:

These women that beene idle
Would bee well belt with a bridle.
That leave theyr worke, to play y Clarke,
And let the Wheele stand idle.

¹"To the Right Honourable HENRY Lord M.", *idem*, p. 71.

²*The Miscellaneous Works of Sir Thomas Overbury, Knt.*, ed. E.F. Rimbault, 1890, J. R. Smith, London, p. 40.

³Herrick, p. 294. Martin (*Commentary*, p. 560) gives Martial, II, 90, as the source: "sit mihi verna satur, sit non doctissima coniunx."

It shapes not with Shee-Ministers,
To disputen on the Bible.¹

Cowley, disposing of the abstraction, beauty, calls it,
Inconstant as thy shee-professors are.²

Intellectual distinction was a property of men; when women
were recognised as possessing it, they were praised as masculine.

Thus Jonson writes of the Countess of Bedford:

Onely a learned, and a manly soule
I purpos'd her.³

And he called the Countess of Rutland, "the most masculine
issue of her father's braine".⁴ Cartwright decided that he could
not call Lady Newburgh a woman, because she was not vain and
faithless:

I may not call her Woman, for she ne'r
Study'd the Glass and Pencill, could not swear
Faith to the Lover, and when he was gone
The same unto the next, and yet keep none.⁵

¹"Rob, Will and Davie", *Bod Ms Rawl Poet.* 26, fol. 6^r.

²Abraham Cowley, "Beauty", reprinted in *Seventeenth Century English Minor Poets*, ed. Anne Ferry, Bell Publishing Co., New York, p. 86.

³"On Lucy Countesse of Bedford", *Works*, VIII, 52.

⁴"To Elizabeth Countesse of Rutland", *Ibid.*, p. 53.

⁵"On the Lady Newburgh, who died of the small Pox", *Cartwright*, pp. 542-544.

Women could be, and were, on occasion, serious patrons¹ and friends² in their own right. But if they attempted to be scholars or independent thinkers they were likely to be regarded as freaks, a role which some, such as Lady Eleanor Davis and Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle, willingly accepted.³ It was possibly preferable to that assigned to most women, indicated in Habington's carefree song:

Fine young folly, though you were
That fair beauty I did sweare
Yet you neere could reach my heart,
For we Courtiers learne at Schoole,
Onely with your sex to foole,
Y'are not worth the serious part.⁴

The status and the education of women considered⁵, it is not surprising that there are few extant Caroline poems written by women. Although there are several poems put into women's

¹The array of poems to Lady Magdalen Herbert, to Lady Mary Wroth, to the Countess of Newcastle, to the Countess of Bedford and so on, testify to this.

²King's "Exequy to my Matchlesse never-to-be-forgotten Freind" is the ablest possible testimony to this. But there is other evidence too, such as Donne's friendship with Lady Magdalen Herbert and the fine friendship between Michael Drayton and Anne Goodere, Lady Rainsford, that lasted from childhood to death. (John Buxton, Introduction, *Drayton*, 1, XIV)

³See ^{with} Thomas, pp. 137-138 for the bizarre exterior deliberately adopted by these two, "a response to the social obstacles of the day" since "women... were denied access to any of the normal means of expression afforded by Church, State or University."

⁴*The Queen of Arrogan*, Act IV, 1640, *Habington*, p. 152.

⁵See *Bridenbough*, pp. 332-336.

mouths, such as Donne's "The Token", or Randolph's "The Milk-maids Epithalamium" and some anonymous poems which appear to be spoken by women, like that beginning, "Ah, ah ye falce fatall tale I read",¹ it is difficult to find poems known to be written by women in England during the reign of Charles I. There are rare exceptions such as those by Margaret Cavendish mentioned above, one of whose poems from her first collection, *Poems and Fancies*, (1653), is touched on in this thesis in the section on philosophic verse, as is another by Jane Cavendish from an unpublished manuscript of verses by her, and an Elizabeth Brackley. Kenneth Allott prints in his commentary to Habington's poems, an answer to a poem by a woman who, he suggests, was Katherine Thimbelby. It is an assured little lyric with stanzas like this:

I rather thought 'twas frendship part
 To settle vertue in the hart
 Nor let it dye by womans art.²

Margaret Crum in her life of Henry King introducing her edition of his poems, quotes a poem by his sister Anne, which according to Mr Walton, "she ment to be an apologie" for undertaking a portrait of a friend, Mr Hales,

¹Ah, ah ye falce fatall tale I read", *Seventeenth Century Songs and Lyrics*, p. 8.

²"The ansure to these verses by Mrs K.T." *Habington*, LXI.

which all shood pardon when they understand
 the lines were figur'd by a woman's hand,
 who had noe Copy to be guided by
 But Hales imprinted in her memory.¹

Henry King wrote one poem "To my Sister Anne King who chid me in verse for being angry" and another "To a Lady who sent me a copy of verses at my going to bed", and there are contemporary references indicating female authorship which are not easy to follow up. For instance Ault records² that Owen Felltham ascribed the forlorn little poem "Believe not him"³ from *B.M. Stowe Ms 962*, c. 1640, to "a Gentlewoman" in *Lusoria*, 1661, but there is no indication who she was. And Drayton in his "Elegy upon the Death of the Lady Olive Stanhope" implies that Lady Stanhope was a poet when he mentions,

That Muse which was so graced by thee,⁴

but whatever poems she wrote seem unknown today.

Jonson could call individual women "my Muse"⁵ and "that purest light"⁶ but he also generalized about women as harlots⁷ or, at the best, men's shadows.⁸

¹King, p. 22.

²*Unfamiliar Lyrics*, p. 480.

³Reprinted *ibid.*, 148.

⁴Drayton, 1, 160.

⁵"Elegie on my Muse. The Truly honoured Lady, the Lady Venetia Digby", *Works VIII*, 283.

⁶"To Elizabeth Countesse of Rutland", *ibid.*, 115. Jonson is speaking in that phrase of Lucy, Countess of Bedford.

⁷"To a Friend", *ibid.*, p. 54.

⁸"Song that Women are bvt Mens Shaddowes", *ibid.*, 104.

Even a Bishop could dismiss working women with an incidental reference to "foule Slutts in Daries".¹

During the first half of the seventeenth century, the position of women showed little sign of change, but the unconscious arrogance of men like Corbett to members of the lower social orders could not last. The insolence of this anonymous snatch shows that a new spirit was emerging:

A glittering gallant from a prancing steed
Alighting down, desired a boy with speed,
To hold his horse awhile. He made reply
'Can one man hold him fast?' 'Twas answered, 'Aye'.
'If then one man can hold him, sir, you may
Do it yourself,' quoth he, and slunk away.'²

The exile of a queen and the execution of a king were the extreme but natural outcome of the changing nature of society Donne had recognised in the early years of the century:

'Tis all in peeces, all cohaerence gone;
All just supply, and all Relation:
Prince, Subject, Father, Sonne, are things forgot.'³

And right through Charles I's reign the fractious though superficially tranquil nature of society can be seen in the great range of contemporary published and unpublished lyric verse.

¹"The Faeryes Farewell", *Corbett*, p. 49.

²"A glittering gallant", *Witt's Recreations*, 1640, reprinted in *Love and Drollery*, p. 200.

³"An Anatomy of the World. The First Anniversarie", *Donne*, pp. 237-238.

V. Poetry of magic and the abnormal

The picture of familiar upper class living presented by early Caroline occasional and social verse is supplemented by an array of lyrics perhaps more alien to modern ears, those with fairy, occult or bizarre settings.

Although in the seventeenth century empirical science was gaining in recognition, superstition and a belief in good and evil spirits was common.¹ Scholars and courtiers alike believed, at least to some extent, in witches, if not also in fairies.² The third of the witchcraft statutes, passed in 1604, remained

¹See Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, 1971, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, p. 516.

²Thomas states that in the seventeenth century most of the clergy accepted the possibility of maleficent witchcraft (p. 265). Certainly Thomas Browne, scholar-physician, and in the seventeenth century sense of the word, scientist too (he tried to breed vipers in captivity, and he tested various weapons to test the strength of gunpowder, and to show what happens to bullets in flight and on impact) stated openly "We are in no way doubtfull that there are wiches ", ("Notes from Commonplace Books", *The Works of Sir Thomas Browne*, ed. G. Keynes, 2nd edn, 1964, Faber and Faber, London, III, 293). And Anthony Welden in his *Secret History of the Court of James I* (1811, John Ballantyne, Edinburgh, II, 45) describes a Dr Lamb who "having been arraigned for a witch, and found guilty of it, the people ... in the year 1628... rose against him, and with stones and staves, knocked out his brains." J. C. Cox (*The Parish Registers of England*, 1910, Methuen, London, p. 228) states that between 1649 and 1685 there were over three hundred trials of witches throughout England.

law until 1736.¹ Ritual cursing persisted.²

Royalty were thought to have healing powers³ as Herrick shows:

I kneele for help; O! lay that hand on me,
Adored *Cesar!* and my Faith is such,
I shall be heal'd, if that my KING but touch.
The Evill is not Yours: my sorrow sings,
Mine is the Evill, but the Cure, the KINGS.⁴

¹*Thomas*, p. 516.

²An instance of a form of this occurs in Thomas Randolph's play, *The Jealous Lovers*, when Tyndarus and his friend chant over the sexton and his wife as they are placed in their coffins:

Quiet sleep, or I will make
Erinnis whip thee with a snake,
And cruel Rhadamanthus take
Thy body to the burning lake,
Where fire and brimstone never slake.
Thy heart shall burn, thy hand shall ache,
And every joint about thee quake.
And therefore dare not yet to wake.

(*The Plays of Thomas Randolph*, ed. W. C. Hazlitt, I, 146).

Another is mumbled by Maudlin in Jonson's *The Sad Shepherd*

The Swilland Dropsie enter in
The Lazie Cuke, and swell his skin;
And the old Mort-mal on his shin
Now prick, and itch, withouten blin.

(*Works*, VII, 36)

³*Thomas*, p. 198, cites the case of a Presbyterian minister who found himself on trial as late as 1684 for "casting aspersions on the reality of the royal healing power."

⁴"To cure the Evill", *Herrick*, p. 62.

Yet even while Anglican divines were writing both occult and fairy poetry¹ the pragmatist Hobbes deliberated, "Beyond the actual work of nature a poet may now go, but beyond the conceived possibilities of nature, never".²

Not that poets themselves accepted Hobbes's dictum, then or later. "Poets", wrote Dryden, "may be allowed the liberty for describing things which really exist not, if they are founded on popular beliefs. Of this nature are fairies, pygmies and the extraordinary effects of magic: for 'tis still an imitation, though of other men's fancies."³

A long tradition of elves and gnomes in Celtic and Teutonic myths, and witches in ballads and Arthurian romances, lay behind late Renaissance fairy literature.⁴ Sometimes, as in *The Midsummer's Night's Dream* or *The Tempest*, a whole realm of fantasy was created and served as its own justification. At other times, as in *Macbeth* or *Hamlet*, the supernatural came outside the central narrative but had some strange bearing on it.⁵

¹Corbett as well as Herrick wrote several fairy poems.

²"The Answer of Mr Hobbes to Sr Will. D'Avenant's Preface before *Gondibert*", *Spingarn*, II, 62.

³"The Author's Apology for Heroic Poetry and Poetic Licence, prefixed to *The State of Innocence and Fall of Man*, an Opera, 1677", *Essays of John Dryden*, ed. W.P. Ker, I, 187.

⁴See Floris Delattre, *English Fairy Poetry*, 1912, Henry Frowde, London, pp. 15-60.

⁵In *Macbeth* the witches both give a supernatural dimension to the tragedy and also, by forewarning of the sequence of events, reduce our sense of Macbeth's responsibility for his actions. In *Hamlet* King Hamlet's ghost gives a similar supernatural aura to the play but also affects the development of the story, giving young Hamlet information which increases and confirms his suspicions.

More significantly, Spenser's long and serious poem, *The Faerie Queene*, presented, through a world of fairies, a fanciful but earnest allegory of what can and does happen in the real world. Using so ostensibly light and distant¹ a legend as that of Arthur and his court, Spenser created a poem which, beneath all its charm and polish, is moral, Christian and topical. Gloriana, "that Greatest Glorious Queene of *Faerie lond*"² is, and would have been so recognised by contemporary readers, "the most High, Mightie and Magnificent Emperesse Renovvmed for Pietie, Vertve, and all Gratiovs Government, Elizabeth. . ." ³ "my most dreaded Soueraigne".⁴ And the setting for the series of allegories which show the training, the character and the values of a brave man, is just as surely England, the "greatest Isle" mentioned in the Dedication.⁵ After such a precedent it was clear that supernatural and fairy lore had immense instructional and aesthetic potential, a potential just as available for lyrics as for longer poems.

¹Spenser claimed he chose the legendary age of Arthur as being "furthest from the danger of envy and suspition of the present time" (letter to Raleigh, "expounding the whole intention" of *The Faerie Queene*, (*Spenser's Faerie Queene*, ed. J.C. Smith, 1909, Clarendon Press, Oxford, III, 485).

²Dedication to *The Faerie Queen*, I, 5.

³*Ibid.*, I, 2.

⁴*Ibid.*, I, Bk. 2, Cant. x, 287

⁵*Ibid.*, I, 4.

Even John Donne whose poetry so often makes the reader newly conscious of his very blood and bones, was not above using and inverting the old Anglo-Saxon belief in the supernatural power of a mandrake.¹

Ben Jonson, weighty and fierce moralist though he was, loved a gay grouping of fairies and elves as in *Oberon, the Faery Prince* and has elsewhere occasional witches like Maudlin in *The sad Shepherd* and fairy songs as in *The Gipsies Metamorphos'd*.² Thomas Randolph's *Amyntas* is a light and airy pageant based on fairy lore. James Shirley's masque, *The Triumph of Peace*, has nymphs and satyrs in it, and also a "genius, or angelicall person."

In Milton's masque, *Comus*, Comus is himself a supernatural being, who carries a rod for charming in one hand and a magic glass in the other, and casts an evil spell on the Lady, over which her brothers are powerless. "Pert Fairies and the dapper Elves"³ are among his associates. One of the lyrics is sung by Sabrina, a water-nymph who is Goddess of the River, and the other two by attendant spirits. Yet for all this the final impression of the masque is serious. The captured lady is freed and presented unharmed, with her brothers, to her parents.

¹"Song", *Donne*, p. 8

2

The faery beame vppon you,
The starres to glister on you...
(*Works*, VII, 573)

³*Milton*, II, 179.

Here behold so goodly grown
 Three fair branches of your own,
 Heav'n hath timely tri'd their youth,
 Their faith, their patience, and their truth,
 And sent them here through hard assays
 With a crown of deathless Praise,
 To triumph in victorious dance
 O're sensual Folly, and Intemperance.¹

Innocence and goodness have won through. Such a poem shows that fairy poetry was neither amoral nor frivolous, and that Davenant's label for the theatre "the Poets Magick-Glass"² could have serious undertones.

Elaborate descriptions of fairy ceremonies and dress were especially favoured at the Caroline court.³ It was not unknown for these to be in prose.⁴ More often they were lyrics set into a masque, a play, or a long poem. Drayton in *The Muses Elizium* described preparations for a fairy wedding.⁵ William

¹*Idem*, II, 202.

²"Poem to the Kings^{most} Sacred Majesty", *Davenant*, p. 99.

³For example: Another sort there bee, that will
 Be talking of the fayries still,
 Nor never can they have their fill.
 (Nymphidia", *Drayton*, I, 179).

⁴Delattre in *English Fairy Poetry* makes several references to R. Scot's *Tom Thumbe, his Life and Death*, 1630, in which Tom was a quarter of a span, or about one inch, in height.

⁵This takes the whole of the Eighth Nymphall, *Drayton*, I, 268-275.

Browne, in the course of *Brittania's Pastorals*,¹ gives a detailed description of Oberon's banquet which may have influenced Herrick or have been influenced by him.²

Other fairy lyrics were written to stand alone. The anonymous³ author of "The Description of the King and Queene of Fayries, their habit, fare, their abode, pompe and state. Being very delightful to the sense, and full of mirth",⁴ wrote with delicacy and detail, yet ranged in reference from classical legends:

His breeches of the Fleece was wrought,
Which from *Iolchos* Iason brought;⁵

to the daily hurts of a serving girl:

About his neck a wreath of pearle
Dropt from the eyes of some poore girle
Pinched, because she had forgot
To leave cleane water in the pot.⁶

¹Book III, Song 1. For much fuller treatment of this idea, see Delattre, *English Fairy Poetry*, pp. 177-180.

²In "Oberon's Feast". See below, p.359 for discussion of this and other fairy poems by Herrick.

³Identified authoritatively by E. Hyder Rollins (*A Poeticall Rhapsody* II, 5) in a note on two other poems as Sir Simeon Steward.

⁴Printed for Richard Harper, 1635, and reprinted as an Appendix to Delattre's *English Fairy Poetry*.

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 204.

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 205.

An equally exact fairy poem was written by Bishop Corbett, "A Proper New Ballad intituled The Faeryes Farewell". It begins by alluding to the belief that fairies used to reward those who kept their homes clean:

Farewell, Rewards and *Faeries*,
 Good Houswives now may say;
 For now foule Slutts in Daries
 Doe fare as well as they;
 And though they sweepe theyr Hearths no less
 Then Maydes were wont to doe,
 Yet who of late for Cleaneliness
 Finds *sixe-pence* in her Shoe?

Later in the same poem Bishop Corbett recognises that fairy myths had had their day:

Wittness those Rings and Roundelayes
 Of theirs, which yet remaine,
 Were footed in Queene *Maries* dayes
 On many a Grassy Playne;
 But since of late *Elizabeth*,
 And later, *Iames* came in,
 They never daunc'd on any heath
 As when the Time hath bin.¹

¹*Corbett*, p. 49-50.

Yet occasional later poems continued to contain both precise descriptions, such as in "The Fairies Fegaries"¹ and light wild utterings such as in the anonymous "The mad-merry Pranks of Robin Goodfellow" which recalls the teasing sparkle of every Puck in English literature and legend.

When men do traps and engines set
 In loop-holes, where the vermin creep,
 That from their folds and houses fet
 Their ducks and geese, their lambs and sheep;
 I spy the gin, and enter in,
 And seem a vermin taken so;
 But when they there approach me near,
 I leap out laughing, ho, ho, ho!²

And even when the fashion for poems about the little people had passed, incidental allusions to them were still worked in to English verse.³

¹Reprinted in *English Fairy Poetry*, Appendix 1, from *The Mysteries of Love and Eloquence: on the arts of wooing and complimenting*. The preface is signed E.P. London, 1658. The British Museum attributes these initials to Edward Phillips, nephew of Milton and writer of *Theatrum Poetarum*. The sixth stanza of "The Fairies Fegaries" revives the notion Corbett described of fairies rewarding good housewifery (*English Fairy Poetry*, p. 214)

But if the house be swept,
 And from uncleanness kept,
 We praise the house and maid,
 And surely she is paid:
 For we do use before we go
 To drop a Tester in her Shoe.

²*B.M. Roxb. Coll. 1*, 230-1, *Seventeenth Century Lyrics*, p. 75. Ault gives 1631 as the registration date of the poem.

³For example, Milton's references to Queen Mab and Robin Goodfellow in "L'Allegro" and to the "swart faery of the mine" (*Comus*, *Milton I*, 435) are followed in later years by others to "faery elves" (*Paradise Lost*, *Ibid.*, I, 781) and "faery damsels" (*Paradise Regained*, *Ibid.*, II, 379).

When the early seventeenth century love of the strange and marvellous was not preoccupied with fairies, it turned to the socially grotesque, especially in ballads of ghosts, the devil, and mental and physical irregularities of nature, and to mad songs.

Many of the former are contained in *The Pack of Autolyucus; or Strange and Terrible News of Ghosts, Apparitions, Monstrous Births, Showers of Wheat, Judgements of God and Other Prodigious and Fearful Happenings as told in Broadside Ballads of the Years 1624-1693.*¹ A choice example of a ghostly ballad was sent by three men, Christopher Emmerson, George Dixon and Richard Higgins, as "A Warning-peice for Ingroosers of Corne;

BEEING. . .

A Warning-peice for Ingroosers of Corne;

BEING

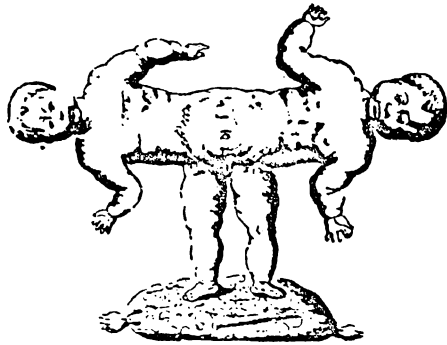
A true Relation how the *Divell* met with one Goodman *Jnglebred* of *Bowton*, within six miles of *Holgay* in *Norfolk*; as he was coming from *Linn Market*, and Bargain'd for a great quantity of *Barly* for eight shillings a Bushell and gave earnest; and when he came to fetch it, brought Carts and Horses (to their thinking) and while 'twas measuring the *Divell* vanished, and tore the *Barne* in pieces, and scattered all the *Corne* with such *Windes* and *Tempest*, which hath done such great harme both by *Sea* and *Land*, the like was never heard of before; the *Farmer* now¹ being distracted.²

¹Ed. Hyder E. Rollins. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1927. Most of the ballads are taken from collections of Anthony Wood and Samuel Pepys who in turn took them from the collection of John Selden, who died in 1654. All the ballads he collected had been printed by 1640.

²*The Pack of Autolyucus*, p. 32. Rollins hazards a guess that this is a version of a murder which actually took place in 1638.

Broadsides, Ballads, and Poems, 1851, No. 978). It is 17½ by 3½ inches in size, with the letter-press in roman and italic type. The "picture" itself has hardly any resemblance to the woodcut that appears on the ballad. The description of the child runs as follows:

THE
TRUE PICTURE
OF A
FEMALE MONSTER
BORN NEAR
SALISBURY.



ON Wednesday the 26. day of *October*, 1664. The Wife of *John Waterman*, a Husbandman, in the Parish of *Fisherton-Anger*, near *New Sarum*, or *Salisbury*, brought forth a wonderful Creature, which cannot be otherwise accounted than a Monster: It having two Heads, four Arms, and two Legs.

The Heads standing contrary each to other, one Head standing where the Feet should be.

There were two perfect Bodies downwards to the Navel, as if there had been two Children, and there they were both joyned together.

The Loyns, Hips and Legs issued out of the sides of the Bodies, just in the middle, where both Bodies were joyned together.

It was dissected, and there were found two Hearts, two Livers, and all the inward parts complete, as the outward to the Navel, except only that it had but two Kidneys.

There was but One Sex to both these Bodies, which was the Female.

This Monster lived two days, and during that time took Sustenance. It would not Suck, but did Eat with both Mouths; when the one cried, the other did so too, each imitating the other in several actions, and was seen alive by many hundreds of the neighbouring places, which flocked to see so strange a Creature.

The two inseparable brothers.

OR

A true and strange description of a Gentleman (an Italian by birth) about seventeene yeeres of age, who hath an imperfect (yet living) Brother, growing out of his side, having a head, two armes, and one leg, all perfectly to be seen. They were both baptizd together; the imperfect is called *Iohn Baptist*, and the other *Lazarus*. Admire the Creator in his Creatures.

To the tune of *The wandring Jewes Chronicle*.



TO England lately newes is come,
Which many parts of Christendome
haue by experience found
To be the strangest and most rare,
That fame did to the world declare,
since man first walkt o'th ground.

Storms were seen as one form of supernatural retribution, and illnesses and physical abnormalities¹ as another. The long established fascination with the unfortunate and the grotesque acquired new impetus with the dimly understood advances in medical science touched off by the publication in 1628 of Harvey's theory of the circulation of the blood.² Such an occurrence as the birth of Siamese twins was liable to be seized upon and distorted beyond credibility. One ballad "The Two Inseparable Brothers" describes a person with another human growing out of his side. Another, "Nature's Wonder" describes a girl child with two heads, four arms, and two legs.

Another gives an account of "A Monstrous Shape ... A Description of a female creature ... compleat in every part, save only a head like a swine"³. And in "The Lamenting Lady" a woman, for taunting another who had borne twins, was cursed by her to produce 365 children at once!

¹What we now know to be physical normalities were too. *Thomas (Religion and the Decline of Magic*, p. 6) identifies the green sickness which was given a sexual meaning by contemporary users of the term (as in "On Mistris N. to the Greene Sicknesse" and "Mrs Nevill on her greene sicknesse", *Carew*, pp. 113 and 129, or "The Green-Sickness Beauty", *Edward Herbert*, p. 67), as chlorosis, or anaemia, produced by a lack of iron from the diet, stemming from upper-class disdain of fresh vegetables.

²As *Exercitatio Anatomica de Motu Cordis et Sanguinis in Animalibus*. See F. L. Huntly, *Sir Thomas Browne*, 1962, University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, p. 8.

³Reprinted in Hyder E. Rollins's collection, *A Pepsyian Garland*, p. 122.

As many children at one time
 As daies were in the yeare:
 In bignesse all as newbred mice
 Yet each one shap'd aright.¹

In one grisly ballad² the body of a good-living solitary man
 was disinterred not once but twice after his burial to see if
 there had been foul play; the first time

Nothing at all amisse was found,
 but the second time the dead man's brother-in-law has

The corps washed clene all ore
 and it is realised that the murderers

. . . had broke his neck in sunder
 and that

With Dough they stopt his nose and eares.
 The cult of the abnormal surely reached its most abhorrent in
 a macabre introductory letter to the reader, prefaced by
 Alexander Craig to a collection of his poems:

Marie of Vitezokia beyonde Jordane, flying to Jerusalem
 when *Titus* and his *Romans* besieged the same, was enforced
 for hunger to kill her suckling Sonne, and having eaten
 the one halfe, the rest she reserved. The Enemies, smelling
 the sent of that ezecrable meat, threatned to kill her,

¹*Ibid.*, pp. 124-131. Wanley's *Wonders of the Little World*, 1674, contains other extraordinary examples.

²"A Marvelous Murther", reprinted in *The Pack of Autolyceus*, pp. 15-20, Hyder E. Rollins hazards a guess that the murder took place about 1638 and that the poem was written about then, on the grounds that 5 men and 1 woman were hanged at Chesterfield on March 15, 1638, and the crime in the poem is set at Chesterfield.

unlesse they were sharers with her. Then shee uncovered that part of her Sonne which she had left uneaten. At which sight they trembled, and horror fell upon them. Then sayd *Marie*, this is truly my Sonne, and my doing; eate you of it, as I have done; be you no more effeminate than a woman, nor more mercifull than a Mother. My *Poyems* and *Verses* are (beloved Lector) the birth of my braine, and the ofspring of my ill adventured youth. I have these yeares bygone luxuriously feasted and surfeited hereon, and have with the *Vitezokian* Woman, covered this part of my Child till now: I pray thee with patience, take a part with the Parent; next time (God willing) thou shalt fare better. . .¹

However, far-fetched tales were not always so gruesome. Some, like Martin Parker's still exaggerated but realistic ballad, "A Description of a Strange and Miraculous Fish"², so large that a man on a horse could stand in its mouth, simply catered for a long established fascination with the freakish³ and the unbelievable. In Ben Jonson's words, "If a ... Knight doe wonders i' the holy land, or else where kill Paynims, wild Boores, dun Cowes, and other Monsters; beget him a reputation, and marry an Emperours daughter for his Mistris; convert her

¹"To the Reader", *Poeticall Recreations*, 1623. Reprinted in *The Poeticall Works of Alexander Craig*, pp. 148-149.

²Reprinted without source in De Sola Pinto and A.E. Rodway's *The Common Muse*, Chatto and Windus, London, p. 168.

³It is intriguing to notice that the term "baroque" applied to art which is irregular or grotesque in form from the early seventeenth century on, probably came from the Portuguese term *baroco*, meaning a misshapen pearl (J.M. Cohen, *The Baroque Lyric*, 1963, Hutchinson, London, p. 11).

Fathers Countrey; and at last come home, lame, and all to be laden with miracles. . . These miracles would please, I assure you."¹

Mad songs, which appealed to both the popular and sophisticated imagination, were printed on ballad sheets, in verse and song collections, and written into personal commonplace books. Robert Graves, in his notes on "Mad Maudlin is Come"², talks of "the partiality of the period for bizarrarie". Some examples, like "Nonsense" possibly by Bishop Corbett, are discussed in the section on humorous lyrics.³ Others like "The Distracted Puritane",⁴ certainly by Corbett, belong with political verse. In both these poems a show of the absolute bewilderment and irresponsibility associated with madness allow the poet a freedom he might not otherwise have. The mad beggar has even more licence. In the words of John Taylor:

A common theefe, for euery groate he gaines,
His life doth venture, besides all his paines:
For euery thing he eates, or drinkes, or weares,

¹*The Magnetic Lady, Works, VI, 527-528.*

²*Loving Mad Tom: Bedlamite Verses of the XVI and XVII Centuries, 1927, ed. Robert Graves, Jack Lindsay and Peter Warlock. Reprinted 1970 Augustus M. Kelley, New York, p. 90. This collection, besides printing eleven poems with illustrations and "Musicks", has cross references to a whole host of variations of other mad songs.*

³Below, pp. 264-270.

⁴Below, pp. 285.

To lose his eares, or gaine a rope he feares.
 But for the beggar, be it hee or shee,
 They are from all these choaking dangers free.¹

When Selden said "More solid things do not show the Complexion of the Times so well as Ballads and Libells"² he could well have had verses like "The Distracted Puritane" in mind.

But most of the mad songs are wild dreamy snatches in the tradition of Ophelia's song in *Hamlet*, with nothing didactic about them. Herrick's "The mad Maids song"³ is an exquisite example:

Good morrow to the Day so fair;
 Good morning Sir to you;
 Good morrow to mine own torn hair
 Bedabled with the dew.

Jonson gives the gypsies three mad songs in his masque *The Gypsies Metamorphos'd*. Fletcher gives Stremon one in *The Mad Lover*.⁴ Duchess Rosauero has one in Shirley's play, *The Cardinal*. Some have reason, even wisdom, not far below the surface, reminiscent of the sayings of a court jester, like the famous anonymous lyric which begins

If all the world were paper,
 And all the sea was ink. . . .⁵

¹"The Praise of Beggery", quoted in *Loving Mad Tom*, p. 99.

²*Bush*, p. 48.

³*Herrick*, p. 156.

⁴For a discussion of the musical antecedents and inheritors of this song, see J.P. Cutts's article, "Music and the Mad Lover", *Studies in the Renaissance*, VIII, 1961, pp. 236-248.

⁵*Seventeenth Century Lyrics*, p. 154.

But whatever charm they have depends mostly on the
inconsequence of the matter and on the lilting rhythm.

I grant that Rain-bows being lull'd asleep,
Snort like a woodknife in a Ladies eyes;
Which makes her grieve to see a pudding creep,
For creeping puddings only please the wise.¹

VI. Humorous Lyrics

Humorous verse can come close to the poetry of make-believe and the bizarre. Although it may, and often does, have an underlying moral purpose, it is openly meant to amuse and entertain. When Sidney commented, "Poetry is the companion of camps"² it must have been humorous verse he had in mind, largely comic epigrams, cheeky lyrics and bawdy ballads.

Though most of the strong vein of satiric verse written in early Caroline times has been excluded by definition from this study, among humorous lyrics, especially the epigrams, as among the social and occasional verses already considered, there are many that are clearly satiric in intention. The ban laid upon satires and epigrams in June 1599 by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Archbishop of London had never been strictly observed. Donne and

¹Anonymous, "Non-sence", quoted in *Loving Mad Tom*, p. 90.

²*Defence of Poesie*, p. 105.

Jonson both wrote numerous examples,¹ as did many of the Caroline poets.

In lighter vein, during Charles I's time several humorous miscellanies were printed, such as the anonymous *Pasquil's Jestes, With Mother Burch's Merriments*, 1635, *A New Book of Mistakes, or Bulls with Tales and Bulls without Tales*, 1637, J. Lilly's *The Anatomy of Wit*, 1637, and Archibald Armstrong's *A Banquet of Jestes*, 1639. Most of the rhymed tidbits in these collections are worth scant attention now being either humdrum or of the kind to be whispered behind the hand, or scrawled on walls behind locked doors. But the poets of the day did produce a mass of comic poems which could be called lyrical and has survived in verse collections and song books. Many of them arise from the tendency of early Caroline poets like Randolph and Suckling deliberately to avoid pretension and enjoy a chuckle or a touch of frivolity. Skelton puts this down to their approach: "The Persona is usually that of the raconteur rather than the authority. . . . it can wink at us because it is never suggesting that man should be invariably devoted to high seriousness. . ." ² Sheer playfulness lies behind simple amusing lyrics such as this anonymous one:

Downe in a dale satt a Nimph weeping,
a Louely swayne satt by her sleepeing
she Jogg'd and Joggd to haue him wake,

¹ Donne wrote at least nineteen epigrams; Jonson has a hundred and thirty-three in his collection, "Epigrammes".

² *Cavalier Poets*, p. 28.

hee hunch't and punch't and nothing spake,
 shee gave him twenty and twenty kisses,
 beeside her sighes and amorous wishes,
 till eccho from hir plaints did chide him,
 wch made him wake and runne to hide him,
 In a pleasant thickett by,
 after him y^e Nimph did hie,
 And for his Churlishnes beefore,
 he pleas'd her soe, shee cry'd noe more.¹

Whether there is a persona or not, humour seems to develop either from what might be broadly called cruelty or from incongruity.

An obvious form of cruelty, reproof, can be directed at the poet himself or at others, and can range from gentle teasing to nasty or ribald insults to people or situations the poet simply does not care about. Jonson's jibes at courtiers and courtesans can be amusing, but his attack on Inigo Jones is not, and is not intended to be.

Jonson is one poet who is not reluctant to laugh at himself. In "To my Lady Covell"² he draws a self-portrait:

¹*Fitzwilliam Ms 52 D*. Reprinted in *Seventeenth Century Songs and Lyrics*, p. 91.

²*Works*, VIII, 230-231.

• • • a tardie, cold,
 Unprofitable Chattell, fat and old,
 Laden with Bellie.

And in "My Answer: The Poet to the Painter" he admits:

'Tis true, as my wombe swells, so my backe stoupes,
 And the whole lumpe growes round, deform'd and
 droupes,
 But yet the Tun at *Heidelberg* had houpes.¹

In "An Execration upon Vulcan"² the mood of the whole poem conveyed by the repeated "Pox on thee, Vulcan", is one of glee that he can get something of his own back on the god of fire in verse, rather than of distress that "twice-twelve-yeares stor'd-up humanitie"³ has been destroyed.

Randolph, whose sense of humour comes close to that of Ben Jonson's⁴ treated the loss of one of his fingers in what must have been a painful accident, as an occasion for levity:

But this I'le say for thee departed joynt,
 Thou wert not given to steale, nor pick, nor point
 At any in disgrace.⁵

¹*Ibid.*, 227.

²*Ibid.*, 202-212.

³*Ibid.*, p. 207.

⁴As was recognised in his century. Gerald Langbaine, *An Account of the English Dramatick Poets*, 1691, Oxford, pp. 411-412, wrote of Randolph, "His Gay Humour and Readiness at Repartee begat Ben Jonson's Love to that degree that he Adopted him his Son."

⁵"Upon the losse of his little finger", *Randolph*, p. 56.

And in another poem:

How much more blest are trees then men,
 Their boughes lopt off will grow agen;
 But if the steele our limbs dissever
 The joynt once lost is lost for ever.¹

And in both "A parley with his empty purse" and "Mr Randolph's Petition to his Creditors" he treats his own penury as a cause for joking.

In the work of such poets, laughing at others was not always unkind. Jonson could not afford it to be in his appeal to the Remembrancer of the Exchequer who had been tardy in paying Jonson's annual pension. The warning in the last line that Jonson would not supply any poetry for the court if the money were not paid soon, is as light and quick as the lines themselves:

Nor any least fit
 Of gambol, or sport
 Will come at the Court
 If there be no money;
 No Plover, or Coney
 Will come to the Table,
 Or wine to enable,
 The Muse, or the Poet,
 The Parish will know it.

¹"On the losse of his Finger", *idem*, p. 135.

Nor any quick-warming-pan helpe him to bed,
 If the chequer be emptie, so will be his Head.¹

Randolph in his "Apologie for his false Prediction that his Aunt Lane would be deliver'd of a Sonne"² asks a series of amusing questions such as:

Is Gipsisme quite repeald?

and makes some bright explanations:

If may bee

A fingers losse hath spoild my Palmistry,
 but is clearly affectionate towards his aunt. He also approves of the milkmaid who pleads

. . . so charitable be
 To get a man to pittie me³,

for knowing what she wants.

And the lyric "To one admiring her selfe in a Looking-Glasse"⁴ shows that Randolph admires her real face even more than she admires her reflection of it!

For I

A beauty know of richer grace
 (Sweet be not angry) 'tis your face.

¹"To Master John Burges", *Works*, VIII, 231-232.

²*Randolph*, pp. 67-70.

³"The Milkmaids Epithalamium", *idem*, p. 118.

⁴*Idem*, pp. 99-100.

In a similar mood of good-natured remonstrance, half praising and half chiding the system of patronage, Bishop Corbett wishes his son well:

I wish thee all thy mothers graces,
Thy fathers fortunes, and his places.
I wish thee friends, and one at Court,
Not to build up, but to support:
To keepe thee, not in doing many
Oppressions, but from suffering any.¹

Though there is an element of unkindness in the humour of some of the fairy lyrics discussed above, like "The Mad-Merry Pranks of Robin Goodfellow" in which Robin goes "laughing ho ho ho"² at spreading malicious gossip or stealing new-born babies, the actions are irresponsible, rather than deliberately cruel.

But the cynicism and nastiness of some of the epigrams of the day is a quite different matter. Ben Jonson derides their nature in his address to his own *Epigrammes*:

Thou should'st be bold, licentious, full of gall
Wormewood, and sulphure, sharpe, and tooth'd withal.³

¹"To his Sonne, Vincent Corbett", *Corbett*, p. 88.

²*Seventeenth Century Lyrics*, pp. 74-76.

³"To my Book", *Works*, VIII, 27.

Martial, coarse, witty, liberated and vicious, according to Herford and the Simpsons' estimation¹ of his epigrams, provided the model for what Jonson himself called "the ripest of my Studies"² in which he castigates "riot", "pride" and "selfe-love"³.

Although Jonson's "Epigrammes" by their very title "carry danger in the sound"⁴, many of them are kindly in intention and execution. There is, for instance one of great reverence to William Camden which can serve to remind readers of Camden's own description of epigrams simply as "short and sweet poems, framed to praise and dispraise".⁵ Yet Jonson did write some epigrams which are utterly vituperative, and no less malicious because of the exact direction of their satire, like this one:

Gvt eates all day, and lechers all the night,
So all his meate he tasteth ouer, twise:
And, striuing so to double his delight,
He makes himselfe a thorough-fare of vice.
Thus, in his belly, can he change a sin,
Lust it comes out, that gluttony went in.⁶

¹Commentary on the poems, *Works*, II, 342.

²Dedication of Jonson's "Epigrammes" to "The Most Noble William, Earle of Pembroke, *Works*, VIII, 25.

³*Ibid*, 26.

⁴*Ibid*, 25.

⁵"Certaine Poems, or Poesies, Epigrammes, Rhythmes, and Epitaphs", *Remaines*, 1614, reprinted in T. Hearne's *A Collection of Curious Discourses written by eminent Antiquaries*, 1771, p. 9.

⁶"On Gut", *Works*, VIII, 76.

Small wonder, perhaps, that Jonson himself became the butt of a number of epigrams, such as the one, probably by John Eliot, that begins with the lines:

Your verses are commended and tis true
That they were very good, I mean to you.¹

In Randolph's "Of Importunate Dunnes" an unctuous lender, impervious to the poet's brusque dismissal of him, begs for his money. Here are his words, set into the body of the poem in order to make the reader despise him as the borrower does:

Good Master Randolph, Pardon me, I pray
If I remember you forget your day.
I kindly dealt with you, and it would be
Unkind in you, not to be kind to me.
You know, Sir, I must pay for what I have,
My Creditors will be paid, therefore I crave
Pay me as I pay them Sir, for one Brother
Is bound in Conscience to pay another.
Besides my Landlord would not be content
If I should dodge with him for's quarters rent.
My wife lyes in too, and I needs must pay
The Midwife lest the foole be cast away.

¹"To Ben Jonson again, upon his verses dedicated to the Earl of Portland, Lord Treasurer", *On Jonson in his Lifetime, Works*, XI, 406.

And tis a second charge to me poore man
 To make the new born Babe a Christian,
 Besides the Churching a third charge will be
 In butter'd Habberdine and Frummetie.
 Thus hoping you will make a courteous end
 I rest (I would thou would'st) Your loving Friend.¹

Some of the cleverest snippets echoing the savage wit of
 Martial's *Epigrammata*, are anonymous, such as this:

Scilla is toothlesse, yet when she was younge
 She had both teeth enough and too much tounge
 What would I then of toothlesse Scilla say
 But that her tounge hath worne her teeth away.²

Or this:

I love thee for thy squinting eye
 It breeds no jealousie
 For when thou do'st on others look
 Methinks thou lookst on me.³

Or this:

She's wrinkled, she's dry, she's tough,
 Yet money makes her faire enough.⁴

¹*Ibid*, p. 132.

²*Bod. Ms. Douce*, f5, fol. 12^r.

³*Choyce Drollery*, p. 49. Even the titles of such collections as
 this and *Merry Drollery* and *Recreations for Ingenious Headpeeces*
 indicate the popular taste for comic wit.

⁴"A Copy of Verses of a mon(e)y Marriage", *Choyce Drollery*, p. 88.

Or this:

Come, let us kisse, that solitary Tusk,
 As Garlic strong, but wholesomer then Musk,
 Invites me neerer, yet; the hottest fires
 ne're scorch'd, as doe your ashes my desires.¹

John Hall instead of accepting an old woman for nasty reasons,
 scolds his impatiently:

Peace beldam ugly! thoult not find
 M'ears bottles for enchanted wind.²

The last examples serve to show that a mistress was just as
 likely to come in for cruelty as an oaf or a scoundrel. In
 the wake of Donne's "Anagram" there were a host of poems in
 praise of ugliness, all inversions of the traditional blazon.
 Suckling, tongue-in-cheek, describes an ideal "female creature"
 in such lines as these:

Her nose I'd have a foot long, not above,
 With pimples embroder'd, for those I love;
 And at the end a comely Pearl of Snot,
 Considering whether it should fall or not.³

Randolph enjoyed himself in a similar vein:

Contrive her belly round, a dining-roome,
 When Love and Beauty will a feasting come,

¹"A Young Man courting an old Widow", *Musarum Deliciae*, p. 39.

²"To an old Wife talking to him", *Minor Poets of the Caroline Period*, II, 209.

³"The deformed Mistress", *Suckling*, p. 33.

Another story make from wast to chinne,
 With breasts like Pots to nest young sparrowes in.
 Then place the Garret of her head above,
 Thatcht with a yellow haire to keep in Love...¹

In another poem "On sixe maids bathing themselves in a River"², Randolph makes fun of beauty, taking great delight in a student's fortune at finding the girls bathing and having to help them out, one by one. Since it was night he could not see but could feel freely. There were plenty of similar ribald swinging songs about women, with little depth or delicacy but great heartiness:

O Women, monstrous women
 Attir'd from head to heel,
 That them from Men you cannot know,
 Unlesse you doe them feel.³

Here is a high-spirited highwayman's song, with a rollicking coarseness which suits the subject matter:

I keep my Horse
 I keep my whore
 I take noe rent yet am not poor
 I travaile all the land about,
 And yet was borne to ne'ere a foote.

¹"To his well Timbred Mistresse", *Randolph*, p. 138.

²*Randolph*, 138-140.

³"Will Bagnalls Ballet", *Musarum Deliciae*, p. 78.

With partridge plumpe and woodcocke fine
 I often doe at midnight dine
 And if my whore bee not in case
 My hostess daughter takes her place.¹

As might be expected, many of the most entertaining drinking songs were about drink. Cartwright has a droll trifle, "At a dry dinner".

Call for what wine you please, which likes you best;
 Some you must drink your Venison to digest.
 Why rise you, Sir, so soon; you need not doubt,
 He that I do invite sits my meal out;
 Most true: But yet your Servants are gay men,
 I'll but step home, and drink, and come agen.²

In contrast Randolph wrote a rollicking "High and Mighty Commendation of a Pot of Good Ale" and a rowdy scholar's lament at that worst of disasters, a fire which burnt down his favourite tavern:

The dismal fire of *London-Bridge*
 Can move no heart of mine:
 For that but o're the water stood,
 But this stood o're the wine.³

¹"The Cuttpurse Songe" in *Edward Lowe's Commonplace Book*, B.M. Ms 29396, p. 100.

²*Cartwright*, p. 479.

³"On the Fall of the Mitre Tavern in Cambridge", *Randolph*, pp. 160-162.

However he promises to make up for lost time:

Wee'll be thy workmen day and night,
 In spite of bugbear-Proctors;
 We drank like fresh-men all before,
 But now wee'll drink like doctors.¹

While students sang of drink, others sang about students and the universities. Cartwright shows the suspicion the universities were held in:

When studies now are blasted and the times
 Place us in false lights and see Arts as Crimes
 When to heape knowledge is but thought to fill
 The mind with more Advantage to do ill.²

Corbett tells of the preparations Oxford made for a royal visit:

Their Colledges were new bepainted,
 Their Founders eke, were new besainted.³

An anonymous poem described the two institutions:

Now Cambridge is a merry town
 And Oxford is another,
 The Kings was wellcome at the one,
 And fared well at the other.⁴

¹*Ibid.*, p. 162.

²"To Philip, Earl of Pembroke, upon his Lordships Election of Chancellor to the University of Oxford", *Cartwright*, p. 541.

³"A Certaine Poeme. .", *Corbett*, p. 12.

⁴"On the Comedians of Oxford and Cambridge", *Bod, Ms Malone 19*, fol. 125^r. The same poem, with slight variations, exists in *Bod, Rawl 26*, fol. 50^r, under the title "A Song made on both the Universities."

Another, called "A Libell on the Universities" begins

The King and the Courte desirous of Spote¹.

Francis Quarles, himself a dedicated Royalist, caught the spirit of exuberance in Anarchus's song:

Wee'l down with all the 'Varsities
 Where Learning is profest;
 Because they practise and maintain
 The Language of the Beast
 Wee'l cry both Arts and Learning down,
 And, hey! then up goe wee.²

When Charles took Oxford as his headquarters in 1642 many students joined his army and received their share of mockery. Lluelyn in "The Spy of the Buttery" made the scholar soldiers ludicrous:

The *East* line *common souldiers* kept,
 The North the *Honest Townesmen* swept.
 The West was man'd by th' Loyall Schollers
 Whose *Gownes* you slave are black as *Colliers*
 They taw'd it faith, their *Gunnes* would hit,
 As sure as they had *studied* it.
 They ramm'd their Bullet, they would ha't in,

¹*Bod. Ms Eng. Poet e 97, fol. 13^r.*

²"Eglogue XI", *The Shepheard's Oracles, Quarles, III, 236.*

Bounce went the Noise, like Greeke and Latine.
 These Knaves talkt much o'th' *siege* of Troy
 And at this *siege* they leapt for Joy.¹

In an anonymous poem called "The Townsman's Petition of Cambridge" the town's spokesman grumbles:

And yet these schollers brag and vaunt
 As if they had good stoore
 But not a penny we can see
 Save one in twice seven year.²

Even when the king rewards the merchants by making the town a city for them, the gowns still come off better:

His majesty hath plann'd it,
 That they'll be ne'er the better;
 And so he means to send it
 All in a Latin letter;
 Which when it comes for to be read,
 It plainly will appear,
 The townsmen they must hang the head,
 And the scholars must domineer.³

Rivalry of another sort is treated playfully in "A Contention between a Wife, a Widow and a Maide", each beginning

¹*Men Miracles, with other Poems*, 1646, pp. 57-58.

²From *A Crew of Kind London Gossips*, 1656, attributed to Randolph by W.C. Hazlitt and included in his edition of Randolph, pp. 655-659, but not included in Thorn Drury's more reliable edition. The poem does have similarities with "On Importunate Dunnes", *Randolph*, pp. 131-134.

³"The Townsman's Petition...", *Op cit*, p. 659.

by insisting her state is most desirable and pitying the others, but each in the end admitting discontent:

W. Ther Never was a wife that like't her lot,
 Wid. Nor widdow but was clad in mourning weeds,
 M. Do what you will, marry or marry not,
 Both this estate and that repentence breeds.¹

In the tradition of Richard Johnson,² Randolph, Suckling and Herrick,³ all, incidentally, unmarried, make fun of marriage.

Suckling recounts:

Brohall our gallant friend
 Is gone to Church as Martyrs to the fire⁴

and Randolph tells us:

¹*An Academy of Complements*, 1640, H. Moseley, pp. 153-155.

²"Of the Inconvenience of Marriage", *The Golden Garland of Princely Pleasures*, 1620, University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 14674, f4v.

In bed what strives are bred by day
 Our puling wives do open lay
 None friends, none foes we must esteeme
 But whom they vouchsafe to deeme
 O 'tis of all our follies chiefe
 Our wo to woo, to wed our grief.

³See below, p.401.

⁴"Upon my Lord Brohalls Wedding", *Suckling*, p. 86.

I never meane to wed,
That torture to my bed.¹

Nothing seemed sacrosanct to those Carolines with a robust sense of humour. Suckling who himself provided and led a troop of soldiers to fight for Charles,² makes a pompous ass of the soldier who would fight on either side:

I am a man of war and might
And know thus much, that I can fight,
Whether I am i' th' wrong or right,
devoutly.³

One ballad, probably but not certainly, by Martin Parker, tells in a merry tale how a poor Northumberland farmer walked to London with his staff and his dog to explain a grievance to the king. The king solemnly examines the lease he is shown and orders the lawyer to pay our farmer one hundred pounds. Just as solemnly the farmer insists on giving the king a shilling for his trouble, and is then feasted before he returns.⁴

Randolph has Cullen cheerily insult all who droop around stupidly when they might be taking part in sport:

Coll: What Clod-pates, *Thenot*, are our *Brittish* swains,
How lubber-like they loll upon the plains?⁵

¹"An Ode to Mr Antony Stafford", *Randolph*, p. 81.

²Even if his efforts did provoke a cheeky lampoon, perhaps, by Sir John Mennis, entitled "Upon Sir John Sucklings most warlike preparations for the Scotish Warre" (*Suckling*, p. 208).

³"A Soldier", *idem*, p. 20.

⁴"The King and a Poor Northern Man" reprinted in W. C. Hazlitt's *Early Popular Poetry of England*, IV, 293.

⁵"An Eglogue on the noble Assemblies revived on Cotswold Hills, by M. Robert Dover", *Randolph*, p. 118.

An anonymous poet has his own idea of sport, dismissing others to take their chosen exercise, while he enjoys his own:

Go and choose [wt] sport you will
 As yor fancy doth invite
 Search out pleasures take your fill
 of ech senses best delight
 But let me [wn] I shall play
 sit and kisse my howers away.¹

Another poet, possibly Randolph, describes the spectator sport of cockfighting as dramatically as if two armoured nobles were duelling to the death. Absurdity is carried to its extreme as one of the cocks makes use of its dying moments:

Wherefore at length, opening his fainting bill
 He call'd a scrivener, and thus made his will.
 Imprimis, *Let it never be forgot,*
 My body freely I bequeath to th' pot,
 Decently to be boil'd; and for its tomb
 Let it be buried in some hungry womb.²

Cartwright banteringly lengthily on a writer who took his sport so seriously as to write a theoretical treatise on it.

Cartwright makes a pretence at admiration:

¹*Bod Ms Don. c. 57, fol. 38^r.*

²"The Combat of the Cocks", included in W.C. Hazlitt's edition of *Randolph*, pp. 667-670, but not by Thorn Drury's in his.

Reader, here is such a booke
 Will make you leape before you looke,
 And shift without being thought a Rooke.

The Author's aery, light and thin;
 Whom no man saw ere breake a Shin,
 Or ever yet leape out of's Skin.¹

The use of mathematics he specially commends:

Bee A. the horse, and the man B:
 Parts from the girdle upwards C,
 And from the girdle downwards D.

Thus would his horse and all his vectures,
 Reduc'd to figures and to sectures,
 Produce new diagrams and Lectures.²

Making fun of sport and pseudo-science was nothing to Cartwright who was game to tilt at religion itself, in an age when many intellectuals were clerics³ and resentment at being ordered to use a particular prayer book was enough to touch off

¹"On Mr Stokes his Book on the Art of Vaulting", *Cartwright*, p. 462.

²*Ibid.*, p. 463.

³The table showing the occupations of 200 Renaissance poets (*Sheavyn*, pp. 212-238) bears this out.

a national rebellion.¹

Cartwright jokes about attitudes to religion, not about religion itself. The brew he prepares in "The Chambermaids Possett"² shows how as an Anglican minister, he has his say about all extremes, about Catholicism and Calvinism alike.

The Milk it came hot from an Orthodox Cow
Ne'r rid by the Pope nor yet the Pope's Bull. . .

Later he adds:

Two ounces of *Calvinisme* not yet refin'd,
By the better physicians not thought to be good;
But 'twas with the Seal of a Conventicle sign'd,
And approved by the Simpling Brotherhood.

.
The Pig that for haste, much like a Devout
Entranced Brother, was wont to Come in
With white staring Eyes, not quite roasted out,
Came now in a Black Persecution skin.

Contemporary literature, especially that initiated by religious convictions, like *Abuses Stript and Whipt* and *Histrion-mastix*, did not escape his notice, and even a non-partisan collection of religious prose and verse, *The Crumbs of Comfort*, was held to ridicule.³

¹See Wedgwood, *Poetry and Politics under the Stuarts*, p. 55.

²*Cartwright*, pp. 481-483.

³Full notes on these and other contemporary allusions are given by the editor, G. Blakemore Evans, *Cartwright*, pp. 708-713.

Another Anglican priest, Bishop Corbett, makes mirth of such enthusiastic protestants as dared attack the establishment. Some of his verse satires such as "Iter Boreale" are too protracted to be considered lyrics, but others convey their satiric intentions with concentration and musical deftness.

I appear'd before the Arch-Bishopp,
 And all the high Commission:
 I gaue him noe Grace,
 But told him to his face
 That he favour'd Superstition.
 Boldly I preach, hate a Crosse, hate a Surplice,
 Miters, copes and Rotchets:
 Come heare mee pray nine times a day,
 And fill your heads with Crochets.¹

If priests could write and acknowledge such poems, directed at denominations other than their own, it is not surprising that an anonymous lyricist could be irreverent about any form of faith and baldly assert that love is his religion:

Then in the pride of all our joy
 Let's fix Elysium here .
 The only hell is to be coy
 And only shame to fear.
 Our hearts for conscience shall not break
 Nor fames from honour go.

¹The Distracted Puritane", *Corbett*, p. 59.

All is religion that we speak
 And honour that we do.¹

However much readers are made and meant to smile at poems like "The Chambermaid's Possett" and "The Distracted Puritane", beneath the humour the poets were serious. But there were plenty of other verses written for sheer fun. An unexpected incident, an incongruous observation, sets the poet on to some snippet such as this:

Pusse, I will curse thee; may'st thou dwell
 With some dry Hermit in a cell
 Where Ratt neere peep'd, where mouse neere fedd,
 And flyes go supperlesse to bedd.²

Sometimes the poet takes some known serious poem and uses its form for a cheeky imitation. The conventional *blazon*, or itemising of a loved one's physical characteristics, can turn to this:

My Mistris breath exceeds in smell
 The sweetest breath of Cowe
 And thine in breath doth farr excell
 The Carrion rooting sowe

¹"If thou dost love me", no ascription, *Love and Drollery*, p. 20.

²Thomas Master, or Masters, "On Lute-Strings Catt-Eaten", *B.M. Harl. 6917*. Reprinted in *Rare Poems of the Seventeenth Century*, p. 157.

My Mistris leggs the propps of Love
 Are cast with purest skyn
 Thine's like two Malt sacks loyn'd above
 And vnder buckling in.¹

Sir Aston Cokayne claims he

Can view the Garden of thy cheeks,
 And slight the roses there as leeks.²

Davenant has used one of the sweetest Elizabethan lyrics,
 "Hark, hark the lark"³, for the rhythms, the metre, and even some
 of the rhymes in this:

O Thou that sleep'st like *Pigg* in Straw,
 Thou *Lady* dear, arise;
 Open (To keep the *Sun* in awe)
 Thy pretty pinking eyes.⁴

Another poet, probably Corbett, takes the format of the
 solem *Sic Vita* poems of which the first begins,

Like to the falling of a Starre⁵

¹"Laugh not fond foole", *Seventeenth Century Songs and Lyrics*.
 Reprinted in *Rare Poems of the Seventeenth Century*, p. 157.

²"To Plautia", *Rare Poems of the Seventeenth Century*, p. 24.

³William Shakespeare, *Cymbeline*, Act II, sc. iii.

⁴"O thou that sleep'st like *Pigg* in Straw", (from *News from
 Plymouth*), *Davenant*, p. 215.

⁵First printed in *Poems* by Francis Beaumont, 1640. Also in *Poems*
 by Henry King, 1657. Reprinted in Margaret Crum's edition, *King*,
 p. 148. For a detailed survey of all the *Sic Vita* poems see
 Marianne May's thesis, "Some Themes and Conventions in Caroline
 Lyrics", pp. 11-26 and 212-217.

for his comical delight, "Nonsense":

Like to the thund'ring tone of unspoke speeches,
 Or like a lobster clad in logick breeches,
 Or like the gray freeze of a crimson cat,
 Or like a moon-calf in a slipshoo hat,
 Or like a shadow when the sunne is gone,
 Or like a thought that neere was thought upon,
 Even such is man, who never was bego ten
 Untill his children were both dead and rotten.¹

Part of the humour here depends on sheer word-play, as in the contradiction of "unspoke speeches" or "a thought that neere was thought upon".

Though punning itself was taken quite seriously in many early seventeenth century poems,² a poet like Suckling could show himself a past master in highly amusing *double entendre*. Poems like "A Candle" and "A Peddlar of Small Wares" are on one level completely innocent and on another startlingly frank.

¹Text based on *Witt's Recreations Augmented*, 1641, where it is headed, "A Messe of Nonsense". Reprinted among *Dubia*, in *Corbett*, p. 95. The poem has two more stanzas each as wildly comical and is followed by another poem called "A Non Sequitur" in similar vein.

²Examples abound, among the most obvious being Donne's use of his own name in "A Hymne to God the Father" (*Donne*, 369) or King's daring yet no less tragic image:

'Twixt mee and my Soule's deare wish
 The earth now interposed is.
 (An Exequy... *King*, 69).

Randolph indulges in a different kind of verbal high jinks in his poem, "To Mr J.S. on his Gratefull Servant".¹ In the first stanza he mocks those who use, misuse and make up long words and classical allusions in their commendatory poems:

I cannot fulminate or tonitruate words
 To puzzle intellects, my ninth lasse affords
 No *Lycophronian* buskins, nor can straine
Garagantuan lines to Gigantize thy veine.
 Nor make a jusjurand, that thy great plaies
 Are terr'del fogos, or incognitaes;
 Thy *Pegasus* in his admir'd careere,
 Curvets no Capreols of nonsense here.

In the second stanza he gives his own colloquial² praise for Shirley's "smooth and even strains", concluding with a deceptively simple couplet which affectionately incorporates the very title of Shirley's play:

Let others praise thy Play, Ile love thee for it;
 That he that knowes my friend shall say, he has
 A friend as Grateful as his Servant was.

In a whole host of poems, rhyme, itself the butt of

¹*Randolph*, p. 143.

²"That is, he refers to his "ninth lasse" where contemporaries would have written "poetic muse".

Jonson's mock serious "A Fit of Rime against Rime", becomes the instrument of fun. In one poem, William Browne's "Lydford Journey", there are not only feminine rhymes like "wider" and "cider", which are amusing in context, but in one instance the homonyms "weather" and "whether" are rhymed with the same air of bravado that distinguishes the whole poem:

They have a castle on a hill;
I took it for an old windmill
The vaines blown off by weather;
Than lie therein one night, 'tis guess'd
'Tis better to be ston'd or press'd,
Or hang'd, now choose you whether.¹

One snippet in *Musarum Deliciae* begins gaily:

Since last I wrote, I heare, dear honey
Thou hast committed Matrimony.²

And Suckling opens a mock-serious love poem with the lines:

Wonder not much, thus amaz'd I look,
Since I saw you, I have been Planet-strook.³

Part of the quaintness of the rhymes in the last two examples

¹"Lydford Journey", *The Cavalier Poets*, pp. 48-52.

²*Musarum Deliciae*, p. 7.

³"Upon the first sight of my Lady Seimor", *Suckling*, p. 26. Clayton (Commentary, p. 233) points out that the term "Planet-strook" is used elsewhere by Suckling (e.g. Aglaura, Act IV, Sc. 3) for a comic rhyme.

depends on the combination of short and long words. Randolph plays the same game in "an Epithalamium" with a mildly amusing effect:

Blisse court thee sweetest soule, and fall soe
thicke

That it outvie our pore Arithmatick.¹

And in another epithalamium, this time anonymous, inspired by Dr Corbett's marriage to a girl less than half his age, the last two monosyllabic words in a run-on line are joyfully rhymed with a three-syllabled colloquialism:

Blind Cupid shot not this love-dart;
 Your reason chose, and not your heart:
 You knew her little, and when her
 Apron was but a muckender.²

Caroline lyrics could be full of feeling, full of ideas, full of imagination, but clearly they could also be full of fun.

¹Randolph, p. 156.

²"On Dr Corbet's Marriage", *Wit Restor'd*, 1658. Reprinted in *English Epithalamies*, ed. Robert H. Case, John Lane, London, pp. 100-102, and there dated c. 1625.

CHAPTER FIVE

THOMAS CAREW

I. Identity.

Thomas Carew was born in about 1594¹ and died in 1639. His lyrics were written either shortly before or during Charles I's reign, and appear in many of the extant manuscripts of the time. They were collected and published posthumously in 1640, and were often printed in the song books of the second half of the century.

At court he was a Gentleman of the Privy Chamber and Sewer-in-Ordinary,² titles which can help distinguish him from Thomas Carey, a poet too, according to Quiller-Couch,³ son of the Earl of Monmouth and Groom of the Bedchamber, who lived at almost exactly the same time,⁴ from Thomas Cary of Tower Hill whom Rhodes Dunlap calls "a dogged but uninspired versifier",⁵ and, even from the famous Lucius Carey, Lord Falkland. The difference in spelling which distinguishes the four names now is of little help for seventeenth century material, for spelling, especially of names, was then often arbitrary. In one manuscript which contains several of Thomas Carew's poems, S32, held in the library at St John's College, Cambridge, lyrics of his are ascribed variously to T.C., Th.C., T. Cary, Mr Thomas Cary, Tho. Carey, while another manuscript

¹See Introduction, *Carew*, p. xiii.

²Another name for the courtier appointed to taste the king's food and drink before he did, to ensure he was not poisoned. In this capacity Carew was also, it seems, referred to as "The King's Carver", as in Edward Herbert's *Autobiography*, p. 106, though officially he did not have that title.

³A.T.Quiller-Couch, *Adventures in Criticism*, 1896, University Press, Cambridge, p. 15. Margaret Crum lists two poems by Thomas Carey, "On his Mrs going to Sea" (I, 230), and "A Dialogue between two lovers" (II, 820, 824)

⁴He lived from 1597-1634.

⁵Introduction, *Carew*, p. lxxiii.

in the same library, S23, ascribes one of the same poems to Tho. Carew and one in Bodley attributes "A Rapture", to Mr Carye.¹ Even some of Thomas Carew's editors have become confused over his identity, Arthur Vincent muddling him with a man forty years older, George Carew, Baron of Clayton,² and W.C. Hazlitt putting a portrait of the Thomas Carey who was son of the Earl of Monmouth as frontispiece to his 1870 edition of Carew's poems.³

II. Reputation

With the telling exception of Grierson,⁴ most critics from Carew's time have concentrated attention on his control of form, "elegant" being the favoured term for his wit and careful presentation. Edward, Earl of Clarendon, had this to say: "He was a person of a pleasant and facetious Wit, and made many Poems (especially in the amorous Way) which for the sharpness of the Fancy and Elegancy of the Language, in which that Fancy was spread, were at least equal, if not superior, to any of that time".⁵ Edward Herbert referred to him as "that excellent wit".⁶ John Leigh spoke of "melting Carew, who long maintained the court with many a charming song".⁷ Henry Headley wrote of Carew: "The consummate elegance of this gentleman entitles him to very considerable attention. Sprightly, polished and perspicacious, every part of his works displays the man of sense, gallantry and breeding; indeed many of his productions have a certain

¹*Bod. Ms Ashmole 38, fol. 68^r*. Similar inconsistency appears in "The Heyricke Papers", *Bod. Ms. Eng. Hist. c. 481*, in which Herrick is spelt Heyrick, Heyricke, Hericke and Herrick.

²See Rhodes Dunlap's Introduction, *Carew*, p. xxxvii.

³*Ibid.*, p. xlv.

⁴Below, p. 295.

⁵*The Life of Edward Clarendon*, 1759, Clarendon Printing House, Oxford I, 40-41.

⁶*Autobiography of Edward, Lord Herbert of Cherbury*, pp. 105-106.

⁷"To the Stationer on his Printing Mr Cartwright's Poems", quoted by Rhodes Dunlap, Introduction, *Carew*, p. xlvii. The poem is not printed in G. Blakemore Evans's 1951 edition of *Cartwright*, though Evans refers to it twice, in footnotes.

happy finish, and betray a dexterity both of thought and expression much superior to anything of his contemporaries and, on similar subjects, rarely surpassed by his successors".¹ T. Davies, at much the same time, introducing his edition decided, "The characteristic of Carew's poetry seems to be Elegance."² William Hazlitt dismissed him as "an elegant court trifler".³ Saintsbury acknowledges Carew as "one of the most perfect masters of lyrical form in English poetry [one who]. . . possesses a command of the overlapped heroic couplet, which for sweep and rush of rhythm cannot be surpassed anywhere".⁴ Even Grierson, who is more concerned with the way Carew thought, commenting on the "exquisite elegance" of early Caroline court art, cites Van Dyck's pictures and Carew's poems as examples.⁵

But there were plenty of Elizabethan and Jacobean poems in circulation which had sweetness of sound and delicacy of wit.⁶ It was not simply felicity with language that earned Carew the popularity attested by his contemporary, William Oldys : "His Sonnets were more in request than any [other] poets between

¹*Select Beauties of Ancient English Poetry with Remarks*, 1787, Printed for T. Cadell, London, xil-xl.

²"Life of Thomas Carew", introducing *Poems, Songs and Sonnets : Together with a Masque. By Thomas Carew*, ed. by and printed for Thomas Davies, 1772, London.

³*Lectures on the Literature of the Age of Elizabeth*, 1870, reissued 1909, G. Bell, London, pp. 192-193.

⁴*A History of Elizabethan Literature*, 1896, Macmillan, London, p. 360.

⁵"Introduction", *Metaphysical Lyrics and Poems of the Seventeenth Century*, p. xxxvi.

⁶Sir Walter Raleigh's "To his Mistress", *Silver Poets of the Sixteenth Century*, pp. 289-290, William Browne's "Shall I tell you whom I love", *Elizabethan Lyrics*, p. 469, and anonymous poems such as "See where my love a-maying goes", *ibid.*, p. 452, could serve as examples.

1630 and 1640";¹ and prompted Grierson to acknowledge " a deeper vein of thought and feeling in his temperament than a first reading suggests".²

III. Influence of Donne

Carew, like several of his contemporaries, was influenced significantly by Donne. His open admiration is recorded in his brilliant poem, "An Elegie upon the death of the Deane of Pauls, Dr Iohn Donne" which compares Donne with earlier poets and pronounces him superior in those very characteristics which distinguish Carew: daring choice of material, reliance on reason, and resilient control of form.

The Muses garden with Pedantique weedes
O'rspred, was purg'd by thee; The lazie seeds
Of servile imitation throwne away;
And fresh invention planted. . .
.
. . . whatsoever wrong
By ours was done the Greeke, or Latine tongue,
Thou hast redeem'd, and open'd Us a Mine
Of rich and pregnant phansie, drawne a line
Of masculine expression
. . . . to the awe of thy imperious wit
Our stubborne language bends, made only fit
With her tough-thick-rib'd hoops to gird about
Thy Giant phansie, which had prov'd too stout
For their soft melting Phrases.³

Donne, instead of kneeling to an exalted goddess, ordered his woman to hold her tongue;⁴ instead of revering the sun as source of all

¹Manuscript note, *Ms Bod Malone 129*, reprinted in Rhodes Dunlap's Introduction, *Carew*, p. xlvi.

²Introduction, *Metaphysical Lyrics and Poems of the Seventeenth Century*, p. xxxvi.

³"An Elegie upon the death of the Deane of Pauls, Dr Iohn Donne", *Carew*, pp. 72-73.

⁴"The Canonization", *Donne*, p. 14.

glorious light, treats it as a "busie" and "unruly"¹ intruder; instead of humbly pleading for a hearing from his God, reprimands Him for an over-gentle approach.² Carew's range of subjects is much more restricted than Donne's, but within that narrow range Carew challenges accepted attitudes and crosses the frontiers of gallantry and modesty with assurance. As well as swearing to immortalise his beloved³ he also threatens to reduce her to the rank of "common beauties"⁴ if she does not return his love. In another poem⁵ his mistress is referred to as a tyrant. And the frank sensuality of poems like "A Rapture", "A Second Rapture" and "The Complement" may derive partly from poems like Donne's Elegie XIX, "Going to Bed". The hedonism hinted at in a poem to Henrietta :

*What ever pleaseth lawfull is;*⁶

reaches its fullest development in "A Rapture".⁷ Celia is urged to enjoy love with the poet. He tells her that honour is a giant used to deter fools who don't realise he is no more than empty form, a "stalking", "heavie", but all the same, "weake", guard used by greedy men to keep pleasure to themselves. The description of the promised joyous adventure of intercourse has nothing of the crudity of, say, the last six lines of Donne's "Love's Progress".

¹"The Sunne Rising", *idem*, p. 11.

²"Holy Sonnet XIV", *idem*, p. 328.

³"On his Mistres lookeinge in a glasse", *Carew*, p. 132.

⁴"Ingratefull beauty threatned", *idem*, p. 18.

⁵"An Elegie on the La: Pen sent to my Mistresse out of France", *idem*, pp. 19-20.

⁶"To the Queene", *idem*, p. 90. The italicizing is his.

Every word connotes pleasurable activity - "nimble", "chirping", "sweet extasie", "delicious", "willing", "balmie", "sportfull", "gamesome" - the list could go on and on. This is no exhibition of pyrotechnics for an admiring male audience but a warm invitation to a woman to share "Love's rites", in the Elysian grounds where words like "shame" have no place at all. It is not of course, the invitation that was daring in any age when courtly marriage was still often a matter of convenience,

That coine as well as men may multiplie,¹

but the unambiguous imagery, especially of lines 79-98.

Most of Donne's poems,² including his lyrics, present a closely reasoned argument. So do many of Carew's. As short and musical a lyric as "Boldnesse in Love"³ asks the lover to notice that the marigold does not respond to the "bashfull morne" but opens wide to the "Planet of the day" and suggests that if he made his approach warmer, Celia might also respond,

With open eares, and with unfolded armes.

Carew's longer poems recall some of Donne's elegies such as "The Bracelet" or "His parting from her." "To A.D. unreasonable distrustfull of her owne beauty",⁴ by a series of intricate arguments, pleads with "fayre *Doris*" to break the mirror which shows her as less than perfect, and esteem herself at her true worth, for both their sakes:

You undervalew me, when you bestow
On me, what you nor care for, nor yet know.

If she doesn't, they will both suffer, he a martyr and she a heretic.

¹"On the Inestimable Content..", *Randolph*, p. 28.

²Possible exceptions are the song "Sweetest love I do not goe" and "Breake of Day", and even these have a tenuous logical thread through them.

³*Carew*, p. 42.

⁴*Idem*, pp. 84-86.

A love poem, clearly, need not be emotional. As Dryden noted in a very different context, one can "be cheated into passion, but ... reasoned into truth".¹ In his poem "To the King at his entrance into Saxham, by Master Io. Crofts"², the poet, on the host's behalf, first asks leave to show his reverence for the king, and then extends his hospitality. He acknowledges that he cannot offer the choicest food, and that the king's representatives have advised him to admit as much, but promises to try his utmost to compensate with as glad and careful a welcome as possible. Just as the argument to Celia in "A Rapture" that she must accept her lover's advances, and that in "To A.D...." to Doris that she must realise her own beauty, seem unanswerable, so it seems impossible after such a case is presented that the hospitality of Saxham would not be accepted.

In some poems Carew, like Donne, carries the argument through a single image. Carew's "Upon a Ribband"³ is a graceful trifle without any of the grim undercurrents of Donne's "The Relique",⁴ but the 'silken wreath' is proved to bind his heart just as surely as the 'bracelet of bright haire about the bone' could bind Donne's skeleton fingers. The idea of a ribbon or bracelet given as a favour, binding the lover actually and spiritually is used also by Donne in the "Funerall"⁵ and both poets make allusions to food and drink in unexpected contexts. Edmund Gosse's extraordinary objection to Carew, "He offends us most of being reminded of his dinner as he walks abroad"⁶ caused by these lines:

¹Preface to *Religio Laici*", *The Poems and Fables of John Dryden*, ed. J. Kinsley, 1962, O.U.P., London, p. 273.

²Carew, pp. 30-31.

³"Upon a Ribband", *idem*, p. 29.

⁴Donne, p. 62.

⁵"That subtle wreath of haire, which crowns my arme", *Donne*, p. 58.

⁶Quoted in *Ward*, p. 112.

.... now no more the frost

Candies the grasse, or castes an ycie creame
Vpon the silver Lake, or Chrystall streame:¹

pales in contrast to what he might have thought of Donne's oral imagery:

Comming and going, wee

Perchance might kisse, but not between those meales.²

However, it has a control dispensed with sometimes by Donne, as here:

He is starke mad, who ever sayes,

That he hath beene in love an houre.³

The directness of "starke mad" is carried on later in the poem by Donne's use of plain domestic images such as "ragges of time". Carew in his "Elegie"⁴ uses equally homely imagery, regretting that not even "unkneaded dough-bak'd prose" has been used to praise Donne. Just as surprising is Carew's accurate use of the word "puddle" in "To a Lady that desired I would love her":

Griefe is a puddle, and reflects not cleare

Your beauties rayes,

Joyes are pure streames, your eyes appeare

Sullen in sadder layes,

In chearfull numbers they shine bright with prayse.⁵

¹"The Spring", *Carew*, p. 3.

²"The Relique", *Donne*, p. 63.

³"The Broken Heart", *idem*, p. 48. Crashaw has still more astounding imagery in "The Weeper" : where "Angels with their Bottles come" to collect the tears as wine. (*Crashaw*, p. 80)

⁴*Carew*, pp. 71-74.

⁵"To a Lady that desired I would love her, *idem*, p. 82.

In the same poem the woman's hair is not golden wire as in a traditional Elizabethan image, nor even "scattring bright"¹ as in Donne, but realistically 'disshvell'd'.

Just as familiar imagery and diction are sometimes used by Carew, so are the natural speech rhythms which distinguish all Donne's lyrics.

Know *Celia*, (since thou art so proud,)
'Twas I that gave thee thy renowne²

has the modulations of a determined half-bullying, half-teasing argument. And in the opening lines of the "Elegie"³ Carew asks a question as directly as Donne might have asked it:

Can we not force from widdowed Poetry,
Now thou art dead (Great DONNE) one Elegie
To crowne thy Hearse?

The vigour of the question spilling over into the third line, but interrupted momentarily by the quiet parenthetical admiration of "Great DONNE", recalls Donne's strong openings. Carew has a way of half challenging and half investigating a woman's state of mind:

Now you have freely given me leave to love,
What will you doe?
Shall I your mirth, or passion move
When I begin to woove;
Will you torment, or scorne, or love me too?⁴

Donne, rather more cynically, had spoken out his uncertainties in "Woman's Constancy".⁵

Now thou hast lov'd me one whole day,
To morrow when thou leav'st, what wilt thou say?

¹"Aire and Angels", *Donne*, p. 22.

²"Ingratefull beauty threatned", *Carew*, p. 17.

³*Idem*, p. 71.

⁴"To a Lady that desired I would love her", *Carew*, p. 81.

⁵*Donne*, p. 9.

But neither of these examples quite reaches the balance between feeling and nonchalance Carew achieves in the shrug of a man who wishes his "faire love" were more of this world and so more accepting of him:

Shee hath too much divinity for mee,
You Gods teach her some more humanitie.¹

Donne likes to compress the greater world into the microcosm of his own. For instance he casually reduces the brightness and importance of the sun's rays:

I could eclipse and cloud them with a winke,
But that I would not lose her sight so long.²

Carew makes no such arrogant claim for himself but uses similar imagery to allow his mistress the same power:

If thou but show thy face againe,
When darknesse doth at midnight raigne,
The darknesse flyes, and light is hurl'd
Round about the silent world.³

Donne's arguments, in poem after poem, were based on a negative order or statement.

Oh doe not die, for I shall hate
All women so, when thou art gone.⁴

¹"A divine Mistris", *Carew*, p. 7.

²"The Sunne Rising", *Donne*, p. 11.

³"A beautifull Mistris", *Carew*, p. 7.

⁴"The Feaver", *Donne*, p. 21. Consider also "The Expostulation", "The Bracelet", "The Autumnal".

"The Ramist", wrote Rosemund Tuve, "was quite as interested in knowing what a thing is not as in knowing what a thing is".¹ To this extent Carew is a Ramist as much or more than Donne. Like every scholar of the time, he was trained in the thrust and parry of argument, in the assumption that everything is clearly A or not A. Poems like "The Comparison" and "The Protestation" move forward after a strong negative statement. And all eleven stanzas of "The Complement" dispose of possible explanations of the poet's love, ending with a single strong line which adequately balances all the preceding qualifications and negations.²

The negative arguments so marked in Carew's lyrics were not learnt from Donne alone.³ Nor was the practice of creating a dramatic setting for the lyrics. But again the similarity is marked. "A Valediction:forbidding mourning"⁴ opens with this tense scene:

As virtuous men passe mildly away,
And whisper to their soules, to goe,
Whilst some their sad friends doe say,
The breath goes now, and some say, no.

¹Tuve, 350.

²Vincent (*Carew*, p. 262) points out the similarity of the last line of "The Complement" to the closing couplet in "I love thee not for sacred chastity" attributed to Marlowe:

I love thee not for voice or slender small:
But wilt thou know wherefore? fair sweet, for all.

(Marlowe, *Works*, ed. Bullen, II, 246)

³Rhodes Dunlap (*Carew*, 262) points out that Propertius, II, 111, 9-22 set the pattern for "The Complement". And K.A. McEuen in other contexts cites negative arguments in classical verse: Horace's protestation at his inability to deal with the subjects of his verse, in I, vi, 9-12, Propertius's negative orders to Cynthia, III, xxx, 5-6 and Tibullus writing about the impossibility of finding a cure for love in II, 111, 13-14, (*McEuen*, 106, 128, 130.) The difference in negative arguments between Donne and other Renaissance and classical writers is one of degree, rather than of kind.

⁴Donne, p. 49.

Carew's "Obsequies to the Lady Anne Hay",¹ a very different poem in theme and development, yet has a similarly compressed and graphic opening:

I heard the Virgins sigh, I saw the sleeke
And polisht Courtier, channell his fresh cheeke
With reall teares; the new-betrothed Maid
Smild not that day; the graver Senate layd
Their businesse by: of all the Courtly throng,
Griefe seald the heart, and silence bound the tongue.

More often a scene is short and sharp. Donne's "poore Aspen wretch" terrified by the ghost haunting the faithless one's bed, becomes Carew's "Sunburn† Pilgrim" whose "sweaty face is drencht". In "Secresie Protested",² the whole fanciful yet gruesome scene is extremely close to that in Donne's poem, "The Dampe".³ This is Carew reviving a conventional conceit:

If when I dye, Physicians doubt
What caus'd my death, and there to view
Of all their judgements which was true,
Rip up my heart, Oh then I feare
The world will see thy picture there.

This is Donne:

When I am dead, and Doctors know not why,
And my friends curiositie
Will have me cut up to survay each part,
When they shall finde your Picture in my heart.

¹Carew, p. 67.

²Carew, p. 11.

³Donne, p. 63.

Other examples of direct borrowings from Donne, or at least similarities in idea and manner, are legion in Carew's poems. Donnes' words in "The Sunne Rising":¹

Thy beames, so reverend, and strong

Why shouldst thou thinke?

I could eclipse and cloud them with a winke,

But that I would not lose her sight so long,

echo in poems of Carew's such as "Loves Courtship"²:

Nor may the sunne behold our blisse,

For sure thy eyes doe dazle his;

If thou feare,

That he'll betray thee with his light,

Let me ecclipse thee from his sight.

Similarly Donne's "Valediction:Forbidding Mourning" is heard in both Carew's "An Excuse of Absence" and "To my Mistresse in Absence". But there are always differences in mood and in technique. The very "Elegie"³ in which he acknowledges Donne:

... a King, that rul'd as hee thought fit

The universall Monarchy of wit;⁴

itself shows how dissimilar Carew was as a lyricist. He could confront the reader with a challenge to accept attitudes, he could argue his way closely through a poem; but whereas Donne had asserted

I sing not, Siren like, to tempt; for I

Am harsh,⁵

Carew apologised for his own "untam'd verse", his "panting numbers" and his "gasping short-winded accents".

¹*Idem*, p. 11.

²Carew, pp. 107-108.

³An "Elegie upon the death of the Deane of Pauls, Dr Iohn Donne", Carew, pp. 71-74.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 74.

⁵"To Mr S.B.", Donne, p. 211.

Carew's respect for what might be called the musical potential of a poem came at a particularly happy time. Whereas madrigal settings so favoured in Donne's period provided a simple and regular framework for the words of a poem, the new monodic style in vogue by Carew's day lent itself flexibly to much more involved poetic matter. In Anne Pomeroy's words, "The monodic style was very suitable for Carew's elegant and courtly sophistication, his complexity of thought, his sudden twists and turns in reasoning, because it disallowed a simple repeated melody and encouraged the writing of a vocal tune which was constantly changing and specially suited to clear presentation of the thoughts and ideas of the verse."¹ Henry Lawes, the composer who set forty-three of Carew's poems,² was particularly sensitive to the full implications of the words. Anne Pomeroy shows that though Lawes used strophic settings for most of his other songs he set at least twenty-six of Carew's lyrics in the thorough-composed manner, so taking into account the linked intricate argument running through the stanzas. As a Caroline poet Carew was able to use strong lines as Donne had taught him, and yet still have a high proportion of his poems 'set with apt tunes'.³

¹ Anne Pomeroy, p. 73. In this thesis pages 50-72 show how closely contemporary settings responded to the closely reasoned sense of Carew's lyrics.

² See the check-list, *Carew*, pp. 290-293.

³ Other composers such as Nicholas Lanier and John Wilson also set Carew's lyrics to music. For details see C.L. Day and E.B. Murrie, *English Song Books, 1651-1702*, and the checklist in Ian Spink's *English Song: Dowland to Purcell*. It has already been mentioned that one of Carew's songs, "See how the bashful morn", is recorded in *BM Add Ms 11608* as set by Charles I himself.

IV. The Influence of Jonson.

Whereas Donne had claimed to be 'harsh', Jonson, who also influenced Carew significantly, saw no need to sacrifice attention to sound, or form or decorum to meaning. "A barbarous Phrase hath often made mee out of love with a good sense; and doubtfull writing hath wrackt me beyond my patience"¹ wrote Jonson.

Carew, unlike most of the poets of his day, wrote no acknowledgement of a debt to Jonson. But in his poem to Davenant he refers incidentally to "great *Johnsons* verse"², and in "To Ben Jonson: Vpon occasion of his Ode of defiance annext to his Play of the new *Inne*"³ he recognises Jonson's standing. While those who decry Jonson's work are "a flock of cackling Geese" Jonson's followers are a "tun'd quire of Swans". Even if *The New Inne* was written when Jonson was past his best, it cannot detract from the excellence of his "terser Poems", nor need Jonson feel any guilt for the classical cast of his work, for the "rich spoyles" are "as Trophies wonne." However "the sotted Age" may behave,

The wiser world doth greater Thee confesse
Then all men else, then Thy selfe only lesse.

This tempered rebuke for Jonson's outburst is written with Carew's full awareness that Jonson's "labour'd works shall live".

A classical cast, deliberate impersonality, restrained emotion, clarity and perfection in form all distinguish the lyrics of Jonson and of his tribe, especially Carew.

¹*Discoveries, Works VIII, 620.*

²"To my worthy Friend, M. D'AVENANT, Vpon his Excellent Play, The Iust Italian", *Carew*, p. 96.

³*Carew*, pp. 64-65.

Like Jonson, Carew used classical attitudes, ideas and allusions constantly in his poetry. Sometimes the influence is basic and recurrent, as with Horace's idea¹ that poetry can make the poet and those he loves immortal:

. . . the Muses give eternitie
When they embalme with verse. . .²

an idea which is developed in different ways in "Eternitie of love protested", "To a Lady that desired I would love her", "Ingratefull beauty threatned" and "On his Mistres lookeinge in a glasse". And he follows the classical elegaic pattern of first rejecting love itself when he is repulsed, and then recanting, just as Ovid did:

Luctantur pectusque leve in contraria tendunt
hac amor, hac odium, sed, puto, vincit amor
odero, si potero, si non, invitus amabo.³

Carew writes:

But if my constant loue shall faile to moue thee,
Then know my reason hates thee, though I love thee.⁴

He assumes women return to love, that rejection is only a stage in the process of love:

Then flye betimes, for only they
Conquer love that run away.⁵

¹"Dignum laude virum Musa vetat mori caelo Musa beat"(IV, VIII, 28, 29). *McEuen*, pp. 105 and 106 cites this with other quotations and comments on the same theme.

²"An Elegie to the La: Pen: Sent to my Mistresse out at France", *Carew*, p. 20.

³*Amores*, III, xi b 1-3, quoted *McEuen*, p. 150.

⁴"To his mistresse retiring in affection", *Carew*, p. 130.

⁵"Conquest by flight", *Carew*, p. 15.

More often he picks up and uses incidentally an idea familiar in Latin or Greek literature. For instance Propertius had recommended tears as one way of winning over a woman¹ and Carew in turn warns women that they should be wary of situations in which a lover's tears could move them to allow what they might later regret:

Ladies, flye from Love's smooth tale,
Oathes steep'd in teares doe oft prevaile;
Griefe is infectious, and the ayre
Enflam'd with sighes, will blast the fayre.²

Almost every lyric of Carew's has figures from classical mythology somewhere in it. Even in a poem like "The Spring" , when he is showing up the unnatural behaviour of his mistress, he tells her,

Amyntas now doth with his *Cloris* sleepe
Vnder a Sycamoure.³

There is no attempt to submerge the allusions. When Jonson's Mosca promises Voltore that Volpone will leave him great wealth, the idea of swimming in gold and happiness is transmuted:

Gentle sir ,
When you doe come to swim, in golden lard,
Up to the armes in honny that your chin
Is borne up stiffe with fatnesse of the floud,
Thinke on your vassall.⁴

¹Felix, qui potuit praesenti flere puellae;
non nihil aspersis gaudet Amor lacrimis:
(I, xii, 15-16, quoted in *McEuen*, p. 128).

²"Conquest by flight", *Carew*, p. 15.

³"The Spring", *Carew*, p. 3.

⁴*Volpone*, Act I, Sc. iii, *Works*, V, 34.

Carew uses the underlying allusion much more directly:

if it be love,
Like *Danae* in that golden showre
I swimme in pleasure.¹

Even where the allusions are woven with perfect smoothness into the fabric of the poem, as with the references in "Aske me no more"² no sea-change occurs. Iove and the Phenix both carry a richness and a complexity of association on which Carew quietly draws. The same image is used in "The Rapture":³

Thou like a sea of milke shalt lye display'd,
Whilst I the smooth, calme Ocean, invade
With such a tempest, as when *Jove* of old,
Fell downe on *Danae* in a storme of gold.⁴

And the intellectual dimension given to this very physical love scene is kept up throughout the whole poem with classical and Renaissance allusions. Contemporary readers would have readily recognised that the "straight" referred to in the line immediately following was "*Cyprian*" because Cyprus was supposed to be the birthplace of Venus, goddess of love, just as they would have known that Laura, Countess de Sade, was the woman to whom Petrarch addressed his lyrics.

The deliberate distance Carew keeps from involvement with the poem or his readers is itself classical, and Jonsonian too. Even in an ardent poem like "The Rapture" which sails clear over all the conventions by describing the love act itself "with such Halcion calmenesse"⁵ the emotion is distilled and the persuasion finally

¹"Mediocritie in love rejected", *Carew*, p. 13.

²"Song", *idem*, pp. 102-103.

³"The Rapture", *Carew*, pp. 49-53.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 51.

⁵*Ibid.*

clinched with an ironic rhetorical question:

. . Then tell me why

This Goblin Honour which the world adores,
Should make men Atheists, and not women Whores.¹

Rhetorical conceits, in fact, close many of Carew's poems:

Then crowne my joyes, or cure my paine;
Give me more love, or more disdain.²

. . thou shalt bee

Damn'd for thy false Apostasie.³

Wise Poets that wrap't truth in Tales,
Knew her themselves, through all her vailes.⁴

Though men by knowledge wiser grow,
Yet here 'tis wisdom not to know.⁵

Who can be happy then, if Nature must
To make one Happy man, make all men just?⁶

since fortunes spight
Forbids me live thy Vertues prize,
I'le dye thy Valours sacrifice.⁷

¹*Ibid.* p. 53.

²"Mediocritie in love rejected", *idem*, p. 13.

³"To my inconstant Mistris", *idem*, p. 16.

⁴"Ingratefull beauty threatned", *idem*, p. 18.

⁵"To one that desired to know my Mistris", *idem*, p. 40.

⁶"An other", *idem*, p. 59.

⁷"For a Picture where a Queen Laments over the Tombe of a slaine Knight", *idem*, p. 81.

Each time Carew is standing back, presenting an opinion or a judgement that does not aim to *throw* the listener into romantic agonies but to recreate with witty concentration, a situation and a mood. Unlike Jonson in, say, "To my Lady Covell", Carew does not allow himself even a passing self-description. Though Rhodes Dunlap suggests that the poem "My mistris commanding me to returne her letters" is probably autobiographical¹, there is nothing within the poem to suggest that the "I" is any other than the universal lover who speaks in Carew's other poems, and Dunlap himself points out that Carew could have known a sonnet on a similar subject by Desportes:

O Beauté sans arrest, mais trop ferme en rigueur,
Tien, repren tes papiers et ton amitié fainte,
Et me rens mon repos, ma franchise et mon coeur.²

Carew's version is more detached, more self-contained. Compare his last couplet with Desportes's closing lines.

If she repent and would make me amends
Bid her but send me hers, and we are friends.³

An eighteenth century critic, Mrs E. Cooper, was noticing this very restraint when she wrote of Carew that he "taught Panegyric to be delicate, Passion to be Courtly and rode the Pegasus of Wit, with the Curb of good Manners."⁴ An incident reported by James Howell shows the store Carew set on perfect manners. "I was invited yesterday to a solemn Supper, by B.J..... there was good company, excellent cheer, choice wines, and jovial welcome: One thing interven'd, which almost spoil'd the relish of

¹Commentary, *Carew*, p. 218.

²Reprinted in *Carew*, p. 219.

³"My mistris commanding me to returne her letters", *idem*, p. 11.

⁴Introduction, *The Muses Library, or A Series of English Poetry, from the Saxons to the Reign of Charles II*, ed. Mrs Elizabeth Cooper, London, 1737, p. xii.

the rest, that B. began to engross all the discourse: to vapour extremely of himself, and, by vilifying others, to magnify his own *Muse*. *T. Ca.* buzz'd me in the ear, that tho' *Ben.* had barrell'd up a great deal of knowledge, yet it seemed he had not read the *Ethiques*, which, among other precepts of Morality, forbid self-commendation, declaring it to be an ill-favour'd solecism in good manners."¹

Whether the occasion was real or imaginary, Jonson did praise, with justification, his own perfect command of language, imagery, syntax and rhythm.² Carew tended rather to decry his own technical control, writing of his "faint lines"³ of his "flagging ryme"⁴ and of his own "want of art".⁵ Yet his workmanship comes close to perfection. Any poem of his could illustrate this. For instance, "A prayer to the Wind"⁶ which was a special favourite in Charles I.'s day⁷ shows clearly that Carew does not use words with a sudden flourish, as did some of the Caroline poets.⁸

¹"Letter XIII", *Epistolae Ho-Eliaanae*, 1890, ed. J. Jacobs, II, 403-404.

²As in "My picture left in Scotland", *Works*, VIII, 149.

³"An Elegie upon the death of the Deane of Pauls, Dr Iohn DONNE", *Carew*, p. 73.

⁴"In Answer of an Elegiacall Letter....," *idem*, p. 77.

⁵"To my Honoured friend, Master *Thomas May*, upon his Comedie, *The Heire*", *idem*, p. 93.

⁶*Carew*, pp. 11-12.

⁷*Crum* lists twelve manuscripts in the Bodleian which contain this poem, and there are other copies in the British Museum (*Sloane 1446*, for instance) and at least one in the library at St John's College, Cambridge (S.23). Also Rhodes Dunlap comments on the many manuscript versions of this poem. (*Carew*, p. 219.)

⁸Edward Herbert toys with almost Anglo-Saxon compounds like "golden-beam-darting" ("Upon Combing her Hair", *Edward Herbert*, p. 7). Habington calls his own genius "sullen" so conveying an impression not only of the tired poet but also of the unresponsive court ("To my honoured friend and kinsman, R.T. Esquire", *Habington*, p. 46.) and Herrick charges an apparently clinical word like "liquefaction" with immense suggestion ("Upon Julia's Clothes", *Herrick*, p. 261).

Instead the words he chooses have a quiet rightness about them. The verbs tend to be light and firm like the wind itself: "Goe", "Beare", "Cast", "light", "suck", "skip". When Carew wants to simulate the varying movement of the wind his verbs suggest longer, more fluctuating actions:

Range about those Ivorie hills¹

 There perfume thy selfe, and bring
 All those sweets upon thy wing:
 As thou return'st, change by thy power,
 Every weed into a flower.

The objects the wind is to transform on its way are similarly clearly named and openly contrasted:

Turne each Thistle to a Vine,
 Make the Bramble Eglantine.

And the words, especially the verbs, "kindle", "destroy", "shine", "extinguish", make a strong plea for the wind to use its "powerfull blast" in the poet's service. Elsewhere Carew uses words that are unexpected, yet exact. In a line like this,

Oathes steep'd in teares doe oft prevaile;²

Carew by his brilliant use of the word "steep'd" warns that premeditated selfishness may lie behind an apparently spontaneous show of emotion. And in "A New-yeares Sacrifice"³ he decries his own inane prayers that Lucinda's beauty might not abate, as "cheape,

¹W.H.Auden could have had this line in mind as he wrote his love lyric, "Wandering lost on the mountains of my choice", *Collected Shorter Poems*, 1930-1944, Faber and Faber, London, p. 285.

²"Conquest by flight", *Carew*, p. 15.

³*Idem*, p. 32.

and vulgar wishes".

Both classical and Petrarchan imagery are pressed into service by Carew. Sometimes as in "To Saxham" he uses in different forms, the very images Jonson borrowed earlier himself.¹ Or, as in "The Comparison" or "The Complement" he uses, but rejects as the essential basis of his love, familiar Petrarchan imagery of teeth as rows of pearls, and the eyes as suns or books. But in "Aske me no more"² the imagery has a mystical pitch rarely sought or reached in other seventeenth century secular verse:

Aske me no more where Love bestowes,
When Iune is past, the fading rose:
For in your beauties orient deepe,
These flowers as in their causes, sleepe.

The woman for whom the song is written is seen as the beginning and the end of love. That strange eastern abstraction, "your beauties orient deepe", contains in itself both the "causes" or first reasons for existence, and the final place of rest for the rose, archetypal symbol of both love and loveliness after its life is over. The movement of time implied by "fading" is countered by the unfathomable connotations of "deepe" and, again, of "causes". Sleep is not a final state, but a time for the flowers to become refreshed for more life. Similarly the "golden Atomes" of the second stanza find their place of rest glinting in the woman's hair. Even the "Phenix", symbol of eternal beauty, "dyes", as the poet would, in her "fragrant bosome" and will rise again revitalised by her, like the flowers of the first stanza and the stars which from her eyes control the universe, in the fourth stanza. Like flower, daylight, bird, star and phoenix, her beauty is constantly

¹See *Carew*, p. 225 where Rhodes Dunlap quotes Vincent's idea that before composing "To Saxham" Carew had somewhat carefully studied "To Penshurst", if not also Martial III, lviii.

²*Idem*, pp. 102-103.

changing, only to be born again.

Rhyme and metre are handled perfectly, with just enough subtle irregularity to sustain interest without jarring the flowing movement of the poem. An occasional near-rhyme, like "haste" and "past"¹ or "alone" and "none"² is used. And there is a delicate tension between underlying metre and natural speech rhythms. A reader, for instance, would stress "Aske" in every stanza of "Aske me no more" against the established iambic pattern of the poem. Like Jonson and unlike Donne, Carew follows familiar, and usually colloquial, patterns of word order. When he does manoeuvre the syntax for special effects the meaning remains clear. The "cruell faire" of "A prayer to the Wind"³ and "On Sight of a Gentlewomans face in the Water"⁴ is just as plainly the woman the poet is addressing as is the "deere sweet" of "The Complement".⁵ And the elision and the inversion of the last couplet of his ode to Jonson:

The wiser world doth greater Thee confesse
Then all men else, then Thy selfe onely lesse⁶

serves only to compress what he has been saying in the whole poem.

Mastery of language, rhyme, metre, imagery and syntax was not achieved lightly. Suckling bears witness to the industry with which Carew worked at his poetry:

His Muse was hard bound, and th'issue of's brain
Was seldom brought forth but with trouble and pain.⁷

¹*Idem*, p. 103.

²"To A.L. Perswasions to Love", *idem*, p. 4.

³*Idem*, p. 11.

⁴*Idem*, p. 102.

⁵*Idem*, p. 101.

⁶"To Ben Iohnson. Upon occasion of his Ode of defiance annext to his Play of the new Inne", *idem*, p. 65.

⁷ See above, p. 8.

Although Suckling considered such assiduity disqualified Carew for selection as laureate,¹ Jonson would have wholeheartedly approved it.²

However no record of diligence can account entirely for the distinction of some of Carew's best poems, a distinction that arises, as with any poet and especially any lyricist, from his particular amalgam of meaning and sound. It is almost as though Eliot had just been reading Carew when he analysed the fundamentals of poetic style: "What I call the auditory imagination is the feeling for syllable and rhythm, penetrating far below the conscious levels of thought....It works through meanings certainly, or not without meanings in the ordinary sense, and fuses the old and obliterate, and the trite, the current, and the new and surprising, the most ancient and the most civilised mentality".³ To some extent the sound effects can be analysed. A reader of "The Complement"⁴ can notice run-on couplets, the gentle interpolation of terms of address like "my dearest", the variation between short sounds as in "crabbed", "quicke" and "arithmeticke" and long sounds as in "grieve", "charmes", "die", the hesitation induced through conditional parentheses like "though none abhorre them", but after all he will only be caught up in the magic of the lines by listening to them:

¹See above p. 8.

²Above pp. 73.-74.

³"Matthew Arnold", *The use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism*, pp. 118-119.

⁴Carew, pp. 99-101.

In these poems Carew is not smooth, in the sense that Waller can be, but like Jonson in "Song: To Celia" or Hymne to Diana" he achieves a more satisfying, if more elusive quality than smoothness - a cadence which depends both on sound and on meaning.¹

V. Amatory Verse

Since most of Carew's lyrics are amatory, many of his love poems have been discussed already. However, passages chosen for other purposes do not necessarily show the range of mood in Carew's lyrics, nor do they indicate adequately the peculiar tension between gallantry and seriousness which characterises Carew's attitude to love. Robin Skelton recognises both the variety of tone and the ambivalence of attitude in his discussion of Carew. "Behind the mockery, the gaiety, the erotic trivialities and the light casual songs, lies the firm belief in honesty, sympathy, steadfastness and affection."²

On the one hand there are poems that exalt in physical lovemaking outside the constraints of marriage. "The Rapture"³ is an openly sensuous invitation to a woman:

. . . embrace and clip
My willing bodie.⁴

¹T.S.Eliot, in "The Music of Poetry", *On Poets and Poetry*, p. 33, insists that "a 'musical' poem is a poem with a musical pattern of sound, and a musical pattern of the secondary meanings of the words that compose it, and. . . these two patterns are indissoluble and one."

²*Cavalier Poets*, p. 17.

³Carew, pp. 49-53.

⁴*Idem*, p. 51.

But it is libertine only in one sense. The speaker pushes aside honour with terms that are derogatory in context like "Gyant" and "Goblin" and insists that words like "husband", wife" and "chaste" have nothing to do with love. However it is noticeable that "lust" is rejected also in the same line. There is nothing casual about the relationship; nowhere is there any suggestion that the lover is not intensely and permanently committed.

"The second Rapture"¹ is another matter. Sexual activity is no religious celebration with its own "rites" and "holy vapours" but unashamedly joyful self-gratification:

Give me a wench about thirteene,
 Already voted to the Queene
 Of lust and lovers.²

Ebsworth who is particularly shocked by the "about thirteen" proposes to read "a wench above thirteen" though he offers no textual support for the change and anyway, as Rhodes Dunlap drily comments, it is difficult to see how that would help much.³ In fact, the deliberation it involves detracts from the spontaneity of the poem. Even the word "lust" has a freshness in the poem where it is opposed to and serves to rejuvenate the "old decayed appetite" which the poet makes no attempt to gloss over. The closing couplet suggests the contentment which Carew associates with fulfilled love:

This is true blisse, and I confesse,
 There is no other happinesse.⁴

¹*Idem*, pp. 103-104.

²*Idem*, p. 103.

³Commentary, *idem*, p. 266.

⁴"The Second Rapture", *idem*, p. 104.

cf. "Perswasions to love", *idem*, p. 5:

And old folkes say there are no paynes
 Like itch of love in aged vaines.

The whole poem is both a recreation of a form sexual love can take and an exercise in a fashionable mode.¹

The same is true² of "The Tinder"³, a rather different poem in which the poet complains that any woman can set him alight and blames women in general for exciting but not satisfying him.

Women since you thus inflame me,
Flint and steele Il'e ever name yee.

Even in such flippant poems, the women are treated seriously as equals. He considers the Petrarchan ideal of a pure and scornful goddess⁴ and decides that he would be more contented with someone more ordinary:

Yet I had beenefarre happier,
Had nature that made me, made her.⁵

¹Compare Randolph's lines, from *The Muses Looking-Glasse*:

Give me a *Venus* hardly yet fifteene,
Fresh, plump and active....

and Robert Heath's, from "Refrigerium":

I'll have a young plump amorous Queen,
Ripe though she be not yet fifteen.

(Commentary, *Carew*, p. 266).

²Rhodes Dunlap, (Commentary, p. 266) gives the Ovidian archetype from *Amores*, II, iv, and cites Renaissance poems of the same genre.

³*Carew*, p. 104.

⁴cf. Where I, alas, dare not approach the cruel
Profound monument that doth enclose my jewel.

"Sonnet", J. Sylvester, from *Du Bartas*, 1633, reprinted in *A Treasury of Unfamiliar Lyrics*, p. 63.

⁵"A divine Mistris", *Carew*, p. 7. The poet does, of course, recant a few lines later:

Yet I confesse I cannot spare
From her iust shape the smallest haire.

Sometimes Carew does praise beauty in women freely:

In *Celia's* face a question did arise
Which were more beautifull, her lips or eyes.¹

But the praise is not for any "cruel faire". In the poem the eyes "send forth those poynted darts" and the lips give "kind words and sweet kisses".

In another lyric not included by Rhodes Dunlap in his edition but attributed to Carew by J.P. Cutts, the poet expresses several wishes including one that his mistress were "less faire" than she is, and concludes that her own self-interest will prompt her to return his hurt heart, so that she can keep her whole one for herself:

thou'lt not deny my hart I know
do but consider thyne
for thyne noe wound at all can show
the wounded hart is myne.²

In a harsher poem, where the woman does not reciprocate completely, Carew's admiration is withheld:

Hee that loves a Rosie cheeke,
Or a corall lip admires,
Or from star-like eyes doth seeke
Fuell to maintaine his fires;

¹Lips and Eyes, *idem*, p. 6.

²"Poor Pensive I O're Chargde with woe", *Seventeenth Century Songs and Lyrics*, p. 271. Cutts justifies his attribution on the grounds that the poem occurs in a large group of poems in the same handwriting, of which all the others are known to be by Carew. The close reasoning, the language, and the smooth yet subtle rhythms of the poem all add internal support to the attribution.

As old *Time* makes these decay,
So his flames must waste away.

But a smooth, and stedfast mind,
Gentle thoughts, and calme desires,
Hearts, with equall love combind,
Kindle never dying fires.
Where these are not, I despise
Lovely cheekes, or lips, or eyes.¹

The "sweet exstasie"² that can result,

if your mine^{of} Pleasure
^

In equall thankfulness
You but unlocke,³

is for women as much or more than for men. This attitude, assumed
always by Carew, becomes an explicit argument in "To A.L. Perswasions
to love":

Did the thing for which I sue
Onely concerne my selfe not you,
Were men so fram'd as they alone
Reap'd all the pleasure, women none,
Then had you reason to be scant;
But 'twere a madnesse not to grant
That which affords (if you consent)
To you the giver, more content
Then me the beggar; Oh then bee
Kind to your selfe if not to mee.⁴

¹"Disdaine returned", *Carew*, p. 18.

²"The Rapture", *idem*, p. 50.

³"To a Lady that desired I would love her", *idem*, p. 82.

⁴*Idem*, p. 4. Aiken explains that this passage resembles Ovid's *Amores*, I, x. 11. 33-37. (*The Influence of the Latin Elegists*, pp. 44-45.)

. If women share pleasure they also share responsibility,
and should recognise the importance of constancy in a partner
and in themselves.

Then wisely chuse one to your friend,
Whose love may, when your beauties end,
Remaine still firme....
Cull out amongst the multitude
Of lovers, that seeke to intrude
Into your favour, one that may
Love for an age, not for a day.¹

If it is the woman who breaks faith, Carew can be merciless:

 thou shalt bee
 Damn'd for thy false Apostasie.²

In a quieter poem he writes of his own distress after being
rejected by a woman he had known intimately:

 . . . he that is cast downe
 From enjoy'd beautie, feeles a woe,
 Onely deposed Kings can know.³

In two poems of the same name, "Good counsel to a young Maid",⁴
he warns young girls that they might be deserted by the "sated
lover". In "Loves Courtship" he reminds women of the realities of
life at court:

 Maids often loose their Maidenhead,
 Ere they set foote in Nuptiall bed.⁵

¹"To A.L. Perswasions to love", *idem*, p. 5.

²"SONG. To my inconstant Mistris", *idem*, p. 16.

³"A deposition from Love", *idem*, p. 17.

⁴*Idem*, pp. 13, 25.

⁵*Idem*, p. 108.

But in one of his sweetest poems he speaks of faithfulness as an integral part of real love:

True love can never change his seat,
Nor did he ever love, that could retreat.¹

Although he was not ever married and the only approximately contemporary comment about Carew's own love life "a great libertine in his life and talke",² does not suggest Carew ever achieved a stable relationship with a woman, a letter he wrote to Suckling (who had advised him against marriage) seems to support his own professed wish for a permanent union with a woman "not more faire than kinde":³

" 'Tis confest that *Love* changed often doth nothing; nay 'tis nothing: for *Love* and *change* are incompatible: but where it is kept fixt to its first object, though it *burn* not, yet it *warms* and *cherisheth*. . . ."4

These seem sober words, not those of a licentious young light-of-love,⁵ but of the debonair yet thoughtful and sensitive poet who wrote, to quote J.E. Ebsworth, "many of the most tender and faultless love songs in English".⁶

¹"Eternitie of love protested," *Carew*, p.23.

²Isaac Walton, "Notes for a life of John Hales", reprinted in Rhodes Dunlap's Introduction, *Carew*, pp. xxxvi, xli.

³"On his Mistres lookeinge in a glasse", *idem*, p. 132.

⁴"An Answer to the Letter", reprinted from Suckling's *Fragmentea Aurea*, 1646, in *Carew*, p. 211.

⁵Herbert Grierson, *Cross Currents in "English Literature of the Seventeenth Century*, p. 163. See also above p.6 including Carew in a generalisation about the early Caroline court poets. His words seem reasonable for, say, Suckling, who called marriage "the dearest way to love" and gave it other unflattering descriptions.

⁶Introduction, *The Poems of Thomas Carew*, ed. Ebsworth, p. xiii.

VI. Occasional Poems

. 1. Commendatory Verses.

Of the ten poems published in Carew's lifetime, eight were printed among commendatory poems prefaced to editions of other poets' work. The splendid elegy to Donne has already been discussed.¹ So has the ode "To Ben Iohnson"² in which Carew acknowledges that Jonson, both in his play, *The New Inn*, and in his outburst in verse at its reception, is past his best:

Thy commique Muse from the exalted line
Tought by thy *Alchymist*, doth since decline
From that her Zenith. . .

In poems to other poets, Carew is similarly serious in his criticism, refraining from empty flattery and drawing attention to whatever seemed important to him. In the poem which introduced May's play, *The Heire*, for instance, he singles out the smooth flow of language and of passion, and also the inoffensiveness of the humour:

. . . where his sportive Muse doth draw a thread
Of mirth, chast Matrons may not blush to reade.³

In his poem to Sandys on his translation of the psalms, Carew professes himself inspired by the nature of Sandys's "sacred layes" to the extent of changing his own allegiance from amatory to

¹Above, p. 295.

²"To Ben Iohnson. Vpon occasion of his Ode of Defiance annext to his Play of the new *Inne*," *Carew*, p. 64-65 See also above, p. 306.

³"To my Honoured friend, Master Thomas May, upon his Comedie, *The Heire*", *Carew*, p. 93.

religious verse:

Then, I no more shall court the verdant Bay,
 But the dry leavellesse Trunke on *Golgotha*;
 And rather strive to gaine from thence one Thorne,
 Then all the flourishing wreathes by Laureats worne.¹
 And in another poem, Henry, Lord Cary, is praised for his mastery
 of both English and contemporary Italian.²

In one of the three poems addressed to Davenant, that which
 precedes *The Just Italian*, Carew not only commends Davenant's
 "strong fancies" and "natural unstrain'd Action" but also the matter
 of the play, on grounds that show he was not as unaware of civil
 unrest as C.V. Wedgwood suggests:³

the sullen Age
 Requires a Satyre. What starre guides the soule
 Of these our froward times, that dare controule,
 Yet dare not learne to judge?⁴

And in the poem that appeared before Davenant's *The Witts*,⁵
 Carew wrote of what he called the "edge" of the play:

I feast my Epicurean appetite
 With rellishes so curious, as dispence
 The utmost pleasure to the ravisht sense.⁶

¹"To my worthy friend Master Geo. Sands, on his translation of the
 "Psalms", *idem*, p. 94.

²"To my much honoured friend, Henry Lord Cary of Lepington, upon
 his translation of Malvezzi", *idem*, p. 95.

³Above, p. 24.

⁴"To my worthy Friend, M. D'Avenant upon his Excellent Play, *The
 Just Italian*", *Carew*, pp. 95-96.

⁵A play which Sir Henry Herbert considered morally objectionable
 and refused to licence until Charles I had interceded, (*Commentary*,
Carew, p. 261).

⁶"To the Reader of Master William Davenant's Play", *idem*, p. 97.

2. Royalist Poems.

Though Carew's role was nothing like that of laureates Jonson and Davenant, he did write two poems to James before he attained high court office, and, later, one each to Charles and Henrietta Maria. In "Vpon the Kings sicknesse",¹ James, that ruddie morning beame of Majestie, is called "mystique", "blest", "beautifull" and, significantly, in the closing couplet which describes the general worry at court, "good":

So full a griefe, so generally worne
Shewes a good King is sick, and good men mourne.

The other poem to James, "To the King at his entrance into Saxham, by Master Io. Crofts"² was written to be recited by John Crofts, brother of Cecilia with whom rumours had falsely linked James in marriage. "Love mixt with loyaltie" is held out to the visiting monarch.

Although it is known that Charles I held Carew to be "one of the most celebrated wits of the court"³, the only poem addressed specifically to him by Carew appears to be "A New-yeares gift. To the King",⁴ probably written on January 1, 1631, and more concerned with wishing Charles peace and progeny, than with adulation. "To the Queene"⁵ comes near deification, Henrietta Maria being praised as goddess of virtuous love. Rhodes Dunlap considers the title found in one manuscript, "The Priest's to the Queene" indicates that the poem was probably written to be sung at some

¹Carew, p. 35-36.

²Idem, pp. 30-31.

³*Athenae Oxoniensis*, ed. Anthony Wood, 1721. Printed for B. Knaplock, D. Midwinter and J. Tonson, London, I, 630.

⁴Idem, pp. 89-90.

⁵Idem, pp. 90-91.

masque or other entertainment,¹ as were the Prologue and Epilogue attached to a "Play presented before the King and Queene, att an Entertanement of them by the Lord Chamberlaine in Whitehall hall."² Though these were clearly written to open and close a performance³ Carew uses them as a vehicle to express his loyalty:

This the contriuer of your sports to night
 Hath well obserued, and soe to fix delight
 In a perpetuall circle hath applyed
 The choysest obiects, that care could provide
 To euery sence. Onely himself hath felt
 The load of this greate honour, and doth melt
 All into humble thancks, and at your feete
 Of both your Maiestyes prostrates the sweete
 Perfume, of gratefull service, which hee swears
 Hee will extend to such a length of yeares
 As fitts not vs to tell, but doth belong
 To a farre abler pen, and nobler tongue.⁴

3. Epithalamia.

Carew wrote four epithalamia. "To my Cousin (C.R.) marrying my Lady (A.)"⁵ is an extravagant little piece, in which Carew imagines as almost too much the "Spring-tyde of delight" in store for Carew Raleigh. Similarly, "An Hymeneall Dialogue"⁶ is as far from Puttenham's description of an epithalamium as a "bedding ballad" as it is possible to get. Both Bride and Groome speak

¹Commentary, *idem*, p. 258.

²*Idem*, pp. 127-128.

³It is not known what this was though it is recorded as being performed in 1633. Rhodes Dunlap suggests some possibilities but concludes that the text of the "Entertanement" except for the fragments by Carew, has probably not been preserved. (Commentary, *Carew*, p. 244).

⁴"The Epilogue", *idem*, p. 128.

⁵*Idem*, p. 47.

⁶*Idem*, p. 66.

of the spiritual warmth they have experienced since marriage:

Groome Tell me (my love) since Hymen ty'de
 The holy knot, hast thou not felt
 A new infused spirit slide
 Into thy brest, whilst thine did melt?¹

The whole lilting lyric, including the chorus, seems so "apt for musical setting" that it is surprising that it is not one of Carew's pieces known to have been set for singing in the seventeenth century.

"On the Mariage of T.K. and C.C. the morning stormie"² is a quite different poem, based on storm and sunshine imagery, tightly constructed, frank in the extreme. In this poem, as in "The Rapture"³ Carew refuses to sublimate sex. But whereas in "The Rapture" words like "wedlock", "husband", "wife", are explicitly debarred, here the priest's "misterious holy touch" can "open a free passage" spiritually as well as physically:

 So shalt thou relish all, enjoy the whole
 Delights of her faire body, and pure soule.⁴

And for all the delicacy of its opening, the same concept of marriage as a licence for sex recurs in "An Hymeneall Song on the Nuptials of the Lady *Ann Wentworth* and the Lord Louelace"⁵:

¹ *Idem*, p. 66..

² *Idem*, pp. 79-80.

³ "The Rapture", *idem*, pp. 49-53.

⁴ "On the Mariage of T.K. and C.C.", *idem*, p. 80. Herbert Berry, in his monograph, *Sir John Suckling's Poems and Letters from Manuscript*, pp. 14-15, gives internal and external evidence to support his contention that the poem is written about the same occasion as Suckling's "A Ballade Upon a Wedding".

⁵ *Carew*, pp. 114-115.

Now to the Temple, and the Priest,
 See her convaid, then to the Feast;
 Then back to bed, though not to rest.

It is noticeable that there are no such promises in the poem written some years earlier to celebrate the "election" of the same woman by another man, Sir John Finch.¹

14. Poems of Sickness and Death.

Besides the poem written to James,² Carew wrote several poems on illnesses. Some are half facetious such as the two poems on the green sickness³ and the delightful snippet, "The tooth-ach cured by a kisse":

Fate's now growne mercifull to men,
 Turning disease to blisse:
 For had not kind Rheume vext me then,
 I might not *Celia* kisse.⁴

The memorial poems are, fittingly, more serious. Carew shared the belief that when an important person died, each poet should register his grief:

Take off his pen, and in sad voice bemone
 This general sorrow, and forget his owne.⁵

¹"Upon my Lord Chiefe Iustice his election of my Lady A.W. for his Mistrisse", *idem*, pp. 83-84.

²Above, p. 327.

³"On Mistris N. to the greene sicknesse", *ibid.*, p. 113 and "To Mrs Katherine Nevill on her greene sicknesse", p. 129. Possibly also "On the Green Sicknesse", p. 193, among "Poems of Uncertain Authorship".

⁴"The tooth-ach cured by a kisse", *idem*, p. 109.

⁵"An Elegie on the La: PEN: sent to my Mistrisse out of France", *idem*, p. 20. "La PEN" seems to have been Lady Peniston. See Commentary, *Carew*, p. 222.

Some, such as the three epitaphs to Lady Mary Villers, are written about people who can hardly be identified today.¹ Some are about people Carew did not know personally, as he admits in "Obsequies to the Lady Anne Hay":

But who shall guide my artlesse Pen, to draw
Those blooming beauties, *which* I never saw?²

Others are a gesture of sympathy to close friends. "Epitaph on the Lady S. Wife of Sir W.S."³ praises the qualities of the wife of a man Carew would have seen daily.

Shee was a cabinet . . .
Whose native colours, and purest lustre, lent
Her eye, cheek, lip, a dazling ornament:
Whose rare and hidden vertues, did expresse
Her inward beauties, and minds fairer dresse.

And the only memorial poem of Carew's known to have been actually used on a lapidary inscription was written on the death of Maria Wentworth,⁴ sister of the Anne Wentworth for whom Carew wrote two occasional poems,

¹Rhodes Dunlap (Commentary, *Carew*, pp. 239-240) points out that the Earl of Anglesey, a patron of Carew's, had a daughter called Maria Villers who died in infancy; but in the first of the epitaphs (p. 53) Carew writes:

The Parents that first gave her birth,
And their sad Friends, lay'd her in earth;

and the Earl of Anglesey died some time before his baby daughter.

²"Obsequies to the Lady Anne Hay", *idem*, p. 67.

³*Carew*, p. 55. Lady S. was Lady Salter, wife of Sir William Salter, who was Carver in Ordinary to the King when Carew was Sewer (Commentary, *ibid.*, p. 241).

⁴"Maria Wentworth, Thomae Comitiss Cleveland, filia praemortua prima Virgineam animam exhalavit, An. Dom. 1632. Aet. suae 18.", *idem*, p. 56.

and granddaughter of the Sir John Crofts for whom he wrote the poem welcoming Charles to Saxham.¹

Perhaps the finest² of Carew's memorial poems is a plea to control the expression of grief. In "To the Countesse of Anglesie upon the immoderatly-by-her-lamented death of her Husband",³ Carew, concerned as always with what is fitting, argues that since no tears can restore her dear lord to life, it is not for the Countess to make a display of grief:

Forbeare your fruitlesse grieffe then, and let those
Whose love was doubted, gaine believe with showes
To their suspected faith; you, whose whole life
In every act crown'd you a constant Wife,
May spare the practise of that vulgar trade,
Which superstitious custome onely made;
Rather a Widow now of wisdom prove
The patterne, as a Wife you were of love.⁴

¹Above, p. 298.

²Excluding the elegy on John Donne, of value as poetry and criticism more than as a funeral gesture.

³*Idem*, pp. 69-70.

⁴*Idem*, p. 69.

He then describes the Earl's "curteous smiles", "comely gestures", modest tongue", and "noble heart" arguing that from the beams of his "bright flame" she should take heart:

Seeke him no more in dust, but call agen
Your scatterd beauties home.¹

Although the particular aim of this poem is to convince the widow that she should collect herself, the underlying message remains similar to that of the two elegies on Buckingham,² praise of a great man's life and a reminder of the frailty of the human body:

Learne from hence (Reader) what small trust
We owe this world, where vertue must
Fraile as our flesh, crumble to dust.³

¹*Idem*, p. 71.

²"On the Duke of Buckingham" and "An other", *idem*, pp. 57, 58-59.

³"Maria Wentworth....", *idem*, p. 56.

VII. Other Poems.

Other verses of Carew's include his metrical translations of the psalms, the two country house poems and that remarkable non-occasional poem, "In answer of an Elegiacall Letter upon the death of the King of Sweden from Aurelian Townsend."

Carew in his "Translation of Certain Psalmes" simply fits the verses of his chosen psalms to a rhymed and metrical pattern. Examples show at once that the "translation" is no improvement. Carew offers stanzas such as these:

But to those saffer tracte Confinde
Which Godes Law giueing finger made,
Neuer withdrawes his Weried mynde
From practize of that holye trade,
By noone dayes sunn, or midnightes shade.¹

And this:

Men shall bless the Land that teares
From the Mothers softe embraces
Sucking Infants, and besmeares
With their braynes, the Rugged faces
Of the Rockes and stony places.²

Here, in contrast, is the economy, strength and rhythm of the Revised Version:

But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his
law does he meditate day and night.³

And against the second sample of Carew:

Happy shall he be, that taketh and dasheth thy
little ones against the stones.⁴

¹"Psalme the first", *idem*, p. 135.

²"Psalme 137", *idem*, p. 150.

³Revised Version Psalm 1, verse 2.

⁴Revised Version, Psalm 137, verse 9.

Even when Carew's version is, if anything, shorter than the original, the very regularity of rhyme and metre flatten the simple urgency of the Revised Version.

Compare:

Thou shalt with ysopp purge me: soe
 Shall I seeme white as Mountain~~e~~ snowe.¹

with this:

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me,
 and I shall be whiter than snow.²

Carew's country house poems have received much more attention from the critics than his metrical psalms, understandably. "To Saxham",³ influenced by Martial III, lviii, and by Jonson's "To Penshurst"⁴ does not have quite the savour of country living that Jonson achieves.⁵ Yet the opening lines suggest a familiarity with the property which Jonson, for all his respect and admiration for Penshurst, does not express. Carew it seems, has experienced "all thy pleasures", the "inward happinesse". And throughout the poem he keeps up a playful good humour, the mood of a friend who expects a welcome, rather than, as with Jonson,

¹Psalm 51, *Carew*, p. 137.

²Revised version, Psalm 51, verse 7.

³*Carew*, pp. 27-29.

⁴See Commentary, *idem*, p. 225 and also G.R. Hibbard, "The Country House Poem of the Seventeenth Century".

⁵As in such lines as these, describing the villagers:

Some bring a capon, some a rurall cake,
 Some nuts, some apples; some that thinke they make
 The better cheeses bring hem; or else send
 By their ripe daughters, whom they would commend
 This way to husbands; and whose baskets beare
 An embleme of themselves, in plum, or peare.

(Works, VIII, 95).

an outsider who gratefully acknowledges hospitality.

The exaggeration is deliberate:

The willing Oxe, of himselfe came
Home to the slaughter, with the Lambe,
And every beast did thither bring
Himselfe, to be an offering.¹

And as if that is not enough, even the elements join in the provision of comfort:

Water, Earth, Ayre, did all conspire,
To pay their tributes to thy fire,
Whose cherishing flames themselves divide
Through every roome....²

And the final lines, whether the reader takes from them the idea that all Crofts owns belongs to his guests, or that no one could bring himself to steal from such a generous man, have surely a teasing twinkle in them:

And as for theeves, thy bountie's such,
They cannot steale, thou giv'st so much.³

Underlying such a poem there is the conviction that the essentials of elegant living will persist for ever. A similar serenity pervades Carew's poem. "In answer of an Elegiacall Letter upon the death of the King of Sweden from Aurelian Townsend, inviting me to write on that subject",⁴ a poem which seems to have

¹"To Saxham", *Carew*, p. 28.

²*Ibid.*, p. 28.

³*Ibid.*, p. 29.

⁴*Carew*, pp. 74-77.

irritated critics like C.V. Wedgwood,¹ especially in such lines as these:

. . . what though the German Drum
 Bellow for freedome and revenge, the noyse
 Concernes not us, nor should divert our joyes;
 Nor ought the thunder of their Carabins
 Drowne the sweet Ayres of our tun'd Violins.

Carew himself described his own limitations with mock humility:

. . . Alas! how may
 My Lyrique feet, that of the smooth soft way
 Of Love, and Beautie, onely know the tread,
 In dancing paces celebrate the dead
 Victorious King, or his Majesticke Hearse
 Profane with th'humble touch of their low verse?

For all that, Carew does run through Gustavus Adolphus's military achievements before handing him over to some "grave chronicler", and then returning to the description of court life on which Miss Wedgwood partly blames Charles I's blindness.² And it does not do to forget either Carew's strong sense of propriety when assessing his own poetic powers,³ "our faint flagging rhyme" nor his controlled persuasiveness in poems not concerned with "Love and Beautie", such as "An Elegie upon the death of the Dean of Pauls, Dr Iohn Donne", the poem to Jonson "Upon occasion of his Ode of defiance annext to his Play of the new Inne",

¹She condemned Carew's verse as "mere arabesques of prettiness", "Poets and Politics in Baroque England", p. 124. See also above, p.10.

²See above, p. 21.

³Above, p. 312.

or the poem "To the Countesse of Anglesie".

Carew had his views of the role of the court poet:

But let us that in myrtle bowers sit
Vnder secure shades, use the benefit
Of peace and plenty, which the blessed hand
Of our good King gives this obdurate Land,
Let us of Revels sing...¹

But rather than reprove Carew for not attempting to turn the tide of history by recognising that "this obdurate Land" would not long let the benefit "of peace and plenty" be restricted to a courtly few, readers must allow him to decide on what, for him, are the "subjects proper to our clyme". Using argument and music, the witty conceits, emotional force, and the range of mood of Donne, and the honesty, detachment and rhythmical control of Jonson, Carew in some of his poetry merged the two lines of seventeenth century verse, fully justifying Blanshard's claim that he is "both a good poet in his own right, and a 'typical' poet of his period."²

It has been suggested that Carew's attempts to show a realistic relationship between a man and a woman may be the basis of all major Restoration drama.³ Be this as it may, certainly contemporaries paid him the compliment of imitation. "Aske me no more" has countless imitations, as many, it seems, as Marlowe's "Come live with me", and the underlying ideas and rhythms are caught up in quite different poems such as Kynaston's

¹"In Answer of an Elegiacall Letter...", *Carew*, p. 75.

²Rufus A. Blanshard, "Thomas Carew and the Cavalier Poets", *Transactions of the Wisconsin Academy of Science, Arts and Letters*, 43, 1951, p. 97.

³B. King, "The strategy of Carew's wit", pp. 50-51. "The attitude of Restoration comedy has its origins with the wit of Carew. Carew's achievement is to have created a social pose of urbane worldliness which opens communication between the sexes....It is a means of mastering reality."

"Do not conceal thy radiant eyes". Pauline Palmer has shown that there are many direct borrowings from Carew in Lovelace's poetry.¹ Herrick's "The Head-ake"² has clear affinities with Carew's "The Tooth-ach cured by a Kisse".³ W.M. Evans considers the structure of *Coelum Britannicum*, played two years earlier, too like that of Milton's *Comus* to be accidental,⁴ and also states that in 1638 the young Milton, on the back of a letter from Lawes, paraphrased Eternitie's song "Be fix'd you rapid Orbes".⁵ And in Marvell's verse, there are constant echoes of Carew,⁶ though usually they are such that both poets could be drawing on the common stock of Renaissance thought. Certainly, however, there is plenty of evidence to support Leavis's opinion that the line of wit runs directly from Jonson (and Donne)

¹"Lovelace: Some unnoticed allusions to Carew", *Notes and Queries*, March 1967, Cambridge, pp. 96-98.

²Herrick, p. 210.

³Carew, pp. 109-110.

⁴Henry Lawes: *Musician and Friend of Poets*, p. 88.

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 151.

⁶e.g. Carew's lines quoted above, ("To Saxham", p. 28):

The willing Oxe, of himselfe came
Home to slaughter, with the Lambe,
And every beast did thither bring
Himselfe, to be an offering.
The scalie herd, ~~more~~ pleasure tooke,
Bath'd in thy dish, then in the brooke.

spring to mind as one reads in "The Garden" (Marvell, p. 52)

The Luscious Clusters of the Vine
Upon my Mouth do crush their Wine;
The Nectaren, and curious Peach,
Into my hands themselves do reach....

or, in "Bermudas" (*Marvell*, p. 18)

He makes the figs our mouths to meet;
And throws the Melons at our feet.

through Carew and Marvell.¹

Whether Carew's lyrics are seen as an important link in literary history, or enjoyed for themselves, his polished amatory and occasional poems, "netts, of passions finest thred"² both investigate human relationships with frankness, sensitivity and a kind of sharp humour, and capture something of the atmosphere of culture and gaiety in which early Caroline courtiers wrote and painted, danced, sang and revelled while they could.

¹*Revaluation*, p. 29.

²"Good counsel to a young Maid", *Carew*, p. 13.

CHAPTER SIX

ROBERT HERRICK

(1) Reputation

In some ways Robert Herrick was a very different early Caroline from that aristocratic courtier Thomas Carew. He was born into a large, wealthy, bourgeois family, apprenticed early to an uncle as a goldsmith, became an older student at Cambridge, was later ordained, and appointed parish priest at Dean Prior in Cornwall, far from the political and economic upheavals of London - and all this shows through, constantly, in his verse.

Yet it is not surprising that critics continue to link him with Carew. Both were Royalist, through and through. Both had a respect for their craft and a sensitivity to sound that earned them approval in their day and has helped them to survive the changes in poetic fashion that have occurred since. Both upset the nineteenth century sense of decency, Carew by his sensuous frankness, and Herrick partly by that and partly by his quaint scraps of humour, based on the functions of the human body, and the more conspicuous because some of them were juxtaposed in the complete editions with Herrick's sensitive appraisals of women and flowers. Both show the influence of Donne and Jonson in different ways, and both, beneath a facade of hedonistic gaiety, comment on the life of their time with quiet seriousness. Most significantly in a study of Caroline lyrics, both write smooth¹ sweet lyrics exquisitely apt for musical accompaniment.

¹"Smooth-pac't", Herrick calls his own poems, in "To Prince Charles upon coming to Exeter", *Herrick*, 254, and Carew wrote of his "smooth soft way", "in Answer of an Elegiacall Letter", *Carew*, p. 74.

Even more than Carew, Herrick has been disparaged by some critics and received the highest tribute from others. Some see him as shallow; to others he appears coarse and amoral. Some praise him for technical skill alone, whereas others place him in the first rank as does a contemporary in what appears to be the earliest recorded assessment of Herrick as a poet. In *The Muses Dirge*, Richard James rated Herrick with Jonson and Drayton as the poets most worthy to mourn the king who should have been praised when alive by,

Some Jonson, Drayton, or some Herick.¹

From the beginning, disparagement of Herrick's verse has been, at least partly, a result of a general low estimation of the lyric form. This can be seen in a stanza of a poem in which a poet who has been talking about Ovid, Martial and Virgil, came to Horace:

And then *Flaccus Horace*
 He was but a sower ass,
 And good for nothing but *Lyricks*
 There's but One to be found
 In all English ground,
 Writes as well; who is hight *Robert Herick*.²

According to Anthony Wood, Herrick's poems "made him much admired in the time when they were published, especially by the generous and boon loyalists among whom he was numbred as a sufferer,"³ but no editions of *Hesperides* appeared after 1648 until 1810.

¹*The Muses Dirge*, 1625, quoted by Martin, Introduction, *Herrick*, p. xvii.

²*Naps upon Parnassus*, 1658, quoted by Floris Delattre, *Robert Herrick: Contribution à l'étude de la poésie lyrique en Angleterre au dix-septième siècle* Alcan, Paris, 1912, p. 110.

³*Athenae Oxoniensis*, 1691, reprinted 1967, Johnson Reprint Corporation, New York, III, 251.

Martin records thirty-five works containing poems by Herrick which appeared during his life-time, but in ⁿmay of these the poems were printed without attribution. In *Recreation for Ingenious Headpeeces* (1650), for instance, there are seventy-five unacknowledged poems¹ from *Hesperides* even though the editors appear to have known Herrick personally. ²Day and Murrie list the appearance of seventeen of Herrick's lyrics in song books, some to more than one tune. Marchette Chute claims that twenty-four copies of one of Herrick's poems exist in manuscript. ³She does not name the poem but it may have been "To the Virgins to make much of time" which E.N. Hooker claims was "easily the most popular poem of the seventeenth century, appearing upwards of thirty times in songs books and miscellanies."⁴

¹*Patrick*, 184.

²Sir John Mennis was the "Sir John Mynts" whom Herrick called "the *True-Wit* of a Million" in a poem addressed to Him (*Herrick*, 194) and the poet-priest James Smith is included among a group of friends named in "His age, dedicated to his peculiar friend, M. John Wickes, under the name of Posthumus" in a stanza not printed by Martin or Patrick but contained in a manuscript in St John's College Library, Cambridge, S23 (James 416).

³*Two Gentle Men*, Secker and Warburg, London 1960, p. 220.

⁴In a letter to the *Times Literary Supplement*, March 2, 1933, p. 147.

However, except possibly in their musical settings, Herrick's lyrics ¹ seem to have been overlooked until early in the nineteenth century. In 1810 the *Quarterly Review* said he had been unjustly neglected, ² and the same year J. Nott edited *Select Poems from the Hesperides*, a collection of two hundred and eighty-four poems, with the comment: "To republish all were unnecessary; many are better withdrawn from the publick eye". ³ After Thomas Maitland in 1825 reprinted the whole of *Hesperides*, Robert Southey called Herrick, "a coarse-minded and beastly writer whose dunghill, when the few flowers that grow therein are transplanted, ought never to have been disturbed." ⁴ And at the end of the century Edward Hale referred to the detachable appendix of epigrams in A.W. Pollard's 1891 edition as "a poetical pigsty". ⁵ Such comments were caused partly by Herrick's occasional indulgence in crude humour such as in this message to his own volume:

Who with thy leaves shall wipe (at need)
The place, where swelling *Piles* do breed:
May every Ill, that bites, or smarts,
Perplexe him in his hinder-parts. ⁶

¹Except for his epigrams which were, as might be expected, noticed in the eighteenth century, *Chute* (p. 273) quotes an opinion from the *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1793: "Several of his epigrams possess much point, with a very judicious merit in such compositions, brevity".

²Quoted G.W.Scott, *Robert Herrick*, 1974, Sidgwick and Jackson, London, p. 158.

³*Ibid.*, p. 159.

⁴*Verse by John Jones, an old servant, and an introductory essay on the lives and works of our uneducated poets*, 1831; quoted *Chute*, p. 273.

⁵Introduction, *Selections from the Poetry of Robert Herrick*, ed. E.E.Hale, 1895, Ginn and Co., Boston, pp. xli-xliii.

⁶"Another", *Herrick*, p. 6.

Or the cause may be the teasing eroticism of lyrics like "A Vision" or "To Dianeme". Whatever it is that unsettles some readers, Herrick himself suggest the show of embarrassment is a matter of circumstances and form, and not necessary a result of reading the text:

To read my Booke the Virgin shie
 May blush, (while *Brutus* standeth by:)
 But when He's gone, read through what's writ,
 And never staine a cheeke for it.¹

During the nineteenth century Herrick was republished frequently. One of his editors, Rev. A.B. Grosart, recognised "a deeper vein of thinking and feeling than is commonly suspected"² and another, F.T. Palgrave, pointed out that "the light mask of classicism and bucolic allegory" could conceal essential depth.³ Of "Corinna Going a Maying" he had this to say: "A lyric more faultless and sweet than this cannot be found in any literature. Keeping with profound instinctive art within the limits of the key chords, Herrick has reached a perfection very rare at any period of literature in the tones of playfulness, natural description, passion and seriousness, which introduce and follow each other, like the motives in a sonata by Weber or Beethoven through his little masterpiece of music without notes."⁴ Elizabeth Barrett Browning called Herrick "the Ariel of poets".⁵

¹"Another", *Herrick*, p. 6.

²Introduction, *The Complete Poems of Robert Herrick*, I, clxxvi.

³*Chrysomela: A Selection from the Lyrical Poems of Robert Herrick*, 1877, London, p. xx.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 196.

⁵In *The Greek Christian Poets and the English Poets*, 1863, quoted *Scott*, p. 160.

Edmund Gosse admired him immensely,¹ as did Algernon Swinburne: "As a creative and imaginative singer, he surpasses all his rivals in quantity of good work; in quality of spontaneous instinct and melodious"inspiration"²... and again," ... the greatest song-writer as surely as Shakespeare is the greatest dramatist ever born of English race."³

Such extravagance has drawn, naturally enough, censure from twentieth century critics, especially those who see literature primarily as a moral guide. F.R. Leavis wrote of "the very triviality of Herrick's art".⁴ Leavis may have been disturbed that two years before Llewelyn Powys had written "After Shakespeare and Milton it is to Herrick we should turn",⁵ that *The Oxford Book of English Verse*, 1900, allotted twenty-one pages to Herrick (seven to Donne), that W.E.Henley in his *English Lyrics from Chaucer to Poe*, 1897, gave twenty-three lyrics by Herrick (the same number as by Shakespeare and far more than for any other poet). But Leavis's⁶ identification of lightness with triviality has been challenged by many critics,

¹See "Robert Herrick", E.W.G.(Edmund Gosse) *The Cornhill Magazine*, 1875, London, Vol. XXXII, pp. 176-191.

²"Flower Poems by Robert Herrick", *Complete Works of A.C. Swinburne*, ed. Gosse and Wise, 1926, Heinemann, London XI, 261.

³*Studies in Prose and Poetry*, p. 45.

⁴"English Poetry in the Seventeenth Century", *Scrutiny*, 1935-6, IV, University Press, Cambridge, p. 254.

⁵*Spectator*, 21 July 1933, p. 164.

⁶Others have shared the view. G.A.E. Parfitt, for instance, writes of Herrick's "restricted prettiness" ("The Poetry of Thomas Carew", p. 66).

the first being Sydney Musgrove: "One cannot be convinced that a man of trivial mould, one who was merely a supreme rhythmist, could have produced so much poetry so near assured perfection as Herrick did."¹ And Helen Gardner clearly considers Herrick important, for in *The New Oxford Book of English Verse* (1972), she included thirteen of Herrick's poems. In the words of Max Patrick, Herrick remains "the delight of true lovers of poetry, and the despair of some critics".²

II. Self-estimation

Herrick himself was concerned by his standing as a poet in his lifetime and after it. His poems were almost all short, to suit his style:

A little streame best fits a little Boat ;
 A little lead best fits a little Float ;
 As my small Pipe best fits my little note.³

But that did not make them insignificant in his eyes. Half-seriously he twice compared himself with Homer,⁴ and he advised a friend:

Stand by the *Magick* of my powerfull Rhymes
 'Gainst all the indignation of the Times.⁵

¹*The Universe of Robert Herrick*, p. 3.

²Introduction, *Patrick*, ix.

³"A Ternarie of Littles, *Herrick*, p. 249.

⁴See "To the generous Reader", and "On himselve", *idem*, pp. 32, 329.

⁵"To his Honour'd friend, Sir Thomas Heale", *idem*, p. 280.

In a poem to Selden he calls himself "The Lyrick Prophet" and asks that others be shown his worth:

Give me the *Daphne*, that the world may know it,
Whom they neglected, thou hast crown'd a Poet"¹;

That he felt "neglected" shows through also in "To his Verses"² :

What will ye (my poor Orphans) do
When I must leave the World (and you)
Who'l give ye then a sheltring shed,
Or credit ye, when I am dead?
Who'l let ye by their fire sit?
Although ye have a stock of wit,
Already coin'd to pay for it.

It is known that Herrick went to London in 1640, possibly with the intention of seeing his poems into print, since, according to the *Stationers' Register* Andrew Crooke applied for a licence to publish them that year.³ Herrick's eventual reason for publication appears in *Hesperides*:

To Print our Poems, the propulsive cause
Is Fame, (the breath of popular applause.)⁴

¹"To the most learned, wise, and Arch-Antiquary, M. John Selden", *idem*, p. 143.

²*Idem*, p. 218.

³*Moorman*, p. 124, reprints the entry:
"29. Ap. 1640. Entred for his Copie under the hands of Master Hanley, and Master Bourne, warden, *The Several Poems*, written by Master Robert Herrick, vj.d."

⁴"Fame makes us forward", *Herrick*, p. 169.

Yet in spite of the entry and the visit to London the poems do not seem to have been printed till 1648. Herrick wrote that he was in no hurry:

Let others to the Printing Presse run fast,
Since after death comes glory, *Ile not haste.*¹

And again,

I make no haste to have my Numbers read,
*Seldome comes Glorie till a man be dead.*²

For all that Herrick shared the confidence of serious poets since Horace³ that his poems would last:

Thou shalt not All die; for while Love's fire shines
Upon his Altar, men shall read thy lines;
And learn'd Musicians shall to honour *Herricks*
Fame, and his Name, both set, and sing his Lyricks.⁴

The same certainty rings through in these lines:

Live by thy Muse thou shalt; when others die
Leaving no Fame to long Posterity:
When Monarchies trans-shifted are, and gone;
Here shall endure thy vast Dominion.⁵

¹"Posting to Printing", *idem*, p.314.

²"Glorie", *idem*, p. 218.

³Horace, *Carm. III*, Ode xxx, p. 279: "I have finished a monument more lasting than bronze".

⁴"Upon himself", *idem*, p. 143.

⁵"On himselve", *idem*, p. 210.

All such claims reach their climax in that splendid poem,

"The Pillar of Fame":

Fames pillar here, at last, we set,
 Out-during *Marble*, *Brasse*, or *Jet*,
 Charm'd and enchanted so,
 As to withstand the blow
 Of overthrow:
 Nor shall the seas,
 Or OUTRAGES
 Of storms orebear
 What we up-rear,
 Tho Kingdoms fal,
 This pillar never shall
 Decline or waste at all;
 But stand for ever by his owne
 Firme and well fixt foundation.¹

¹*Idem*, p. 335.

In each declaration of the worth of his poetry Herrick, by using such terms as "death" "dead" and "die" faces and surmounts the idea of transience. Some of the poems could, in fact, serve as epitaphs for himself, inscriptions "such as a man may commodiously write or engraue vpon a tombe in few verses, pithie, quicke and sententious for the passer by to peruse and iudge upon without any long tariaunce."¹

Other poems of Herrick's which insist on the permanence of his poetry such as "His Poetrie his Pillar" and "The Pillar of Fame" are less likely be thought of as epitaphs ; they not only ignore Plato's requirements that an epitaph should be short,² but, more important, they are primarily concerned with the poetry rather than the poet.

¹"Of the poeme called Epitaph used for memoriall of the dead", *Puttenham*, p. 56.

²"Nor shall the stone..be larger than would be sufficient to receive the praises of the dead included in four heroic lines", *The Dialogues of Plato*, quoted in David Parker's unpublished thesis, "The Literary Epitaph of the Seventeenth Century," 1970, Oxford, p. 28. There is no inconsistency between Plato's "four heroic lines" and Puttenham's "few verses" if 'verse' is taken as meaning a single line as in the French word, "vers". Jonson's comment on Virgil "that he brought forth his verses like a Beare and after form'd them with licking" (*Discoveries, Works VIII*, 638) shows this to be the contemporary usage, since Virgil did not ever write in stanzas.

However they do succeed in the epigrammatic aim of shaping the stanzas in accordance with the sense.¹ The practice was not, of course, confined to epitaphs where it was important because of the restricted space upon a tombstone. Puttenham has two chapters² advising poets how to achieve "ocular representation".³ The figure considered "the most beautiful" is the "Pillar" with "two accessarie parts, a pedestal or base, and a chapter or head, the body is the shaft."⁴

Although almost every critic of Herrick has remarked on the way the physical appearance of "The Pillar of Fame" emphasises its proclamation of the immortal worth of Herrick's poems,⁵ the similarity of "His Poetrie his Pillar"⁶ which is a whole series of little pillars, seems to have received less attention. Every stanza has one 6-beat line, two 4-beat lines and ends with another 6-beat line, each contributing proportionately to the idea that every living thing, including Herrick himself, must perish, his only hope of living on being through poetry:

Pillars let some set up
 (If so they please)
 Here is my hope
 And my *Pyramides*.

¹Parker, pp. 3-5, shows that the physical pattern of some Latin memorial inscriptions was admired, though seldom achieved, in English.

²Chapters X and XI, "Of proportion by situation" and "Of Proportion in figure", Puttenham, 84-112.

³*Ibid.*, p.91.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 97.

⁵See Pauline Aiken, *The Influence of the Latin Elegists on English Lyric Poetry 1600-1650*, 1932, reprinted 1970, Phaeton Press, New York, pp. 54-55, who shows that this poem echoes a combination of Horace and Latin elegists.

⁶Herrick, p. 85.

There are other poems of Herrick's which use their physical appearance to substantiate their meaning. "Upon his departure hence",¹ for instance, with its fifteen 2-syllable lines, looks long and narrow like a coffin. "His wish to privacie"² with eight short lines, is almost square, like the cell he requests.

III. The Influence of Ben Jonson.

Puttenham, some of the emblem poets, and George Herbert³ may have given Herrick the inclination to experiment with "ocular representation" but Herrick's classical⁴ determination that his poetry should last and his resolute attention to perfection of form⁵ remind the reader of Ben Jonson, whom he admired greatly. After Jonson died in 1637, Herrick wrote poems to him. An epitaph⁶ acclaimed him the best of poets. An affectionate ode recalls :

those *Lyrick* Feasts
Made at the *Sun*,
The *Dog*, the triple *Tunne*.⁷

In one epigram Jonson is referred to as "the rare Arch-Poet",⁸ and all plays written after his as "artlesse".⁹ In another Herrick suggests

¹*Idem*, p. 178.

²*Idem*, p. 258.

³With such poems as "Easter Wings" and "The Altar".

⁴Martin (Commentary, *Herrick*, p. 567.) draws a parallel with Horace, *Carm.* III, 30, and Ovid, *Met.* xv, 871 sqq.

⁵Consider "His request to Julia", *Herrick*, p. 21.

⁶"Upon Ben. Johnson", *idem*, p. 289.

⁷"An Ode for him", *idem*, p. 289.

⁸"Upon M. Ben Johnson. Epig.", *idem*, p. 150.

⁹*Ibid.*

that Jonson should have taken not just the laurel wreath but the whole tree, so that no future poet could be crowned laureate.¹ In his gently humorous "Prayer to Ben. Johnson"² he asks help from Saint Ben:

Make the way smooth for me,
When I, thy *Herrick*,
Honouring thee on my knee
Offer my *Lyrick*.

And in "A Bacchanalian Verse",³ Herrick calls for a drink 'Unto my *Johnsons soule*'.

Like Jonson Herrick used ideas from classical verse, mentioned classical poets and deities, often, and occasionally slipped pieces of straight translation into his poems⁴. The frontispiece of the 1648 edition of *Hesperides* contains what Cain points out is a misquotation from Ovid.⁵ In "To live merrily, and to trust ^{to} Good Verses"⁶ Herrick proposes a toast and gives a stanza each to Homer, Virgil, Ovid Catullus and Propertius, as well as paying Ovid the compliment of translation and imitation in the course of the poem.⁷ And the opening of "The Apparition of his Mistresse calling him to Elizium"⁸ closely

¹"Another", *Herrick* p. 150.

²*Idem.*, pp. 212-213

³*Herrick*, p. 227.

⁴Usually willingly acknowledged by italicising. See, for instance, *Herrick*, p. 292 where 6 of the 8 short poems are wholly or partly italicised.

⁵"The Poetry of Robert Herrick" pp. 24,33. Cain cites Ovid as having written, in *Amores*, III, ix, 28, "Defugiunt avidos carmina sola rogos." Martin (Commentary *Herrick* 498) points out that this line also appears on the title page of Drayton's *The Shepherds Garland*, 1593.

⁶*Herrick*, pp. 80-81.

⁷*Patrick*, (p. 115), points out that the last half of the title and lines 5, 10, and 39-40 ^{of the} directly from Ovid.

⁸*Herrick*, pp. 205-207.

resembles a passage from Tibullus 1, 3, 57-66,¹ although this time Tibullus is left out from the list of those the poet hopes to rage, drink and dance with: Homer, Pindar, Anacreon, Virgil, Ovid, Catullus, Martial, Lucan, Horace, Juvenal and Perseus. A few lines later Herrick calls Jonson, who also used the classics heavily, his mistress's shade's "Father" and "chiefe".

To Herrick, as to Jonson, plain style and word choice were of great importance. Inversion, which was perhaps Jonson's only idiosyncrasy of style, and certainly one that can be kept from interfering with clarity, is used also by Herrick:

Here in green Meddowes sits eternall May,²
 No more my *Silvia*, do I mean to pray,³
 Or,
 Jealous *Girles* these sometimes were.⁴

The words used by Herrick, as by Jonson, had to be "pure and neat... plaine and customary".⁵ In "A Country life"⁶ he praises his brother because he is content,

To coole, not cocker Appetite.⁷

The bee that lights on Julia's leg is called "The little Filcher",⁸

¹See *Patrick*, p. 275 for a description of Tibullus's request to Venus to escort him to the Elysian fields.

²"The Apparition of his Mistresse....", *Herrick*, p. 206.

³"To Silvia", *idem.*, p. 204.

⁴"How Marigolds came yellow", *idem.*, p. 187.

⁵"Discoveries", *Works*, VIII, 620.

⁶*Herrick*, pp. 34-38.

⁷*Idem.*, p. 35.

⁸"The captiv'd Bee", *idem.*, p. 71.

and comes to "tipple": Herrick tells us in "Life is the Bodies Light"¹ that in death, "dismall Darknesse then doth smutch the face." In one of his graces for children, hands are held out "Cold as Paddocks though they be"² for a blessing. In other poems he refers to livers and gizzards, peas and cabbages, a hockcart and a *Maukin*³ and even uses terms like "stink", "arse", "fart" and "farting", "pisse" and "pissing" in his epigrams. And yet in context these homely terms require no apology. How else could Herrick have worded this epigram :

Let Poets feed on aire, or what they will;

Let me feed full, till that I fart, says *Jill*.⁴

At least 'feed' and 'fart' are accurate as are other terms which are less the language of the people. For Herrick has a knack of placing an unexpected, a learned, or even an invented word with brilliant deliberation. The most familiar examples are "liquefaction" and "vibration"⁵ in each stanza of "Upon Julia's Clothes":⁶

¹*Idem*, p. 207.

²"Another Grace for a Child", *idem*, p. 364. 'Paddocks' are frogs.

³"The Hockcart", *idem*, 101. A maukin, or malkin, *Patrick* (p. 142) describes as a pole with cloth bound around one end, used as a sort of broom, or as a scarecrow or effigy.

⁴"Upon Jack and Jill", *idem*, p. 186.

⁵S. *Musgrove*, in his article "Herrick's Alchemical Vocabulary," *AUMLA*, No 46, Nov. 1976, explains that an understanding, or at least an awareness, of alchemy is necessary for a full grasp of Herrick's meaning in such contexts. "Floues", "liquefaction", "vibration" and "glittering" all take on new depth and complexity when seen as alchemical as well as general terms; and the very theme of the poem, that Julia's garments delight the poet, becomes a restatement of the theory that alchemical art refines and so improves nature.

⁶*Herrick*, p. 261.

When as in silks my *Julia* goes,
 Then, then (me thinks) how sweetly flowes
 The liquefaction of her clothes.

Next, when I cast mine eyes and see
 That brave Vibration each way free;
 O how that glittering taketh me!

but there are plenty of others. Jonson might well have approved¹ of some, like "doxology", "pullulate" and "excathedrate" but he would not have allowed himself the licence Herrick uses with his favourite prefix "circum" found, for example, in "circumspangle", "circumspatious", "circumvoling" and even "circummortal".² Nor, though Jonson uses established compounds like "New-yeares-gift" and "first-fruits" would he have experimented with compound words, which Herrick does as freely as an Anglo-Saxon poet with combinations like "over-leaven-look", "love-like leaven", "ragd-soust-neats-foot", "still-sweet-singing", "care-charming-spel" and many others.

Though there can be no doubt that Jonson's theory and practice encouraged Herrick in his meticulous use of language, it is probable that his seven years' apprenticeship³ as a goldsmith whose work was intricate and exacting had its influence too. His training also affected his choice of words. A title such as "Parcel-gil't-Poetry" shows it: so does the wish that his love and Julia's may be "pure as Gold for ever".⁴

¹See above p.77. "Words borrowed of Antiquity do lend a kind of Majesty to style...."

²From Musgrove's premise, it could be pointed out that in his laboratory the alchemist would constantly use round vessels and circulating equipment for his experiments.

³Under his uncle, Sir William Herrick, goldsmith to James I, knighted for his services and certainly accustomed to the finest materials and workmanship. It is intriguing to notice that Nicholas Hilliard, who painted miniatures at the court of James I, had also been trained as a goldsmith. (*Chute*, 216.).

⁴"A Ring presented to Julia", *Herrick*, p. 66.

Lady Crew is pictured as "faire Injewel'd May".¹ The reason that Corinna need take no care "For Jewels for your Gowne, or Haire"² is that morning dew will become "Gemms" and "Orient Pearls" for her. The fields in "A Country Life"³ are "enameled with flowers". And the setting for "The Apparition of his Mistresse calling him to Elizium"⁴ glitters even more:

And all the shrubs, with sparkling spangles, shew
Like Morning-Sun-shine tinsilling the dew.
Here in green Meddowes sits eternall May,
Purfling the Margents, while perpetuall Day
So double gilds the Aire, as that no night
Can ever rust th' Enamel of the light.⁵

Sometimes the goldsmith's craft leads Herrick into using a word with a different or additional meaning to the usual one. He repeatedly talks about the 'sincerity' of a woman's legs.⁶ Ruthven points out that Herrick is implying that the legs are pure and unblemished like marble on which *sincer* used to be the hall-mark.⁷ And it may be that the importance of minute detail to a goldsmith initiated his fondness for diminutives most noticeable in "A Ternarie of Littles" but also found in words like "hillock", "shephardling", "fondling", "youngling", "quarrelet" and "pipkinet".

¹"A Nuptiall Song", *idem*, p. 112.

²"Corinna's going a Maying", *idem*, p. 68.

³*Idem*, pp. 34-35.

⁴*Idem*, pp. 205-207.

⁵*Idem*, 205-206.

⁶As in "Upon Julia's Fall", and "Upon Lucia dabled in the deaw", pp. 12, 247.

⁷*The Conceit*, 1969, Methuen, London, p. 40. Ruthven's direction towards the etymological potential of a conceit is useful elsewhere in Herrick. For instance the "candor" of "To his Booke", (p. 6), can be seen to refer to the whiteness of unthumbed pages before Herrick exposed his poems in print, a whiteness comparable with that in "The Candor of Julia's teeth" (p. 251).

It may even be that Herrick's consciousness as a goldsmith how small the most precious things can be, increased his interest in the poetry of little people, the fairy poetry which in the seventeenth century was thought to have not only charm but serious moral worth as well.¹ And here again Herrick's immense debt to Jonson can be seen. Edmund Gosse pointed out that Jonson's masque, *Oberon, the Fairy Prince*, contains the germs of several of Herrick's fairy fantasies.² And an anonymous reviewer of a twentieth century edition of Jonson's poems³ drew attention to the technical likenesses between Jonson's fairy song⁴ from *The Gypsies Metamorphos'd* (not published till 1640, but performed in the twenties in London where Herrick could have seen it) and "The Night-piece, to Julia".⁵

This is Jonson:

The faery beame vppon you,
 The starres to glister on you,
 A Moone of light
 In the Noone of night,
 Till the firedrake hath oregon you.

¹See above p.254.

²*The Jacobean Poets*, 1894, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.

³"Tests of Poetic Magic", Review of Bernard Newdigate's edition of *The Poems of Ben Jonson*, printed in *The Times Literary Supplement*, July 4, 1937, p. 550. The reviewer speaks of Jonson's "limpidity" and "flurries of tenderness".

⁴*Works*, VII, 573-574.

⁵*Herrick*, p. 217.

And this is Herrick:

Her Eyes the Glowe-worme lend thee,
 The Shooting Starres attend thee;
 And the Elves also,
 Whose little eyes glow,
 Like the sparks of fire, befriend thee.

Mood, language, imagery, stanza shape, even metre are all close.

When Leavis asked "Without Jonson behind him what would Herrick.... have been"¹ he was asking an extraordinary question, whose only point seems an affirmation of Herrick's clearly acknowledged following of 'Saint Ben'.

IV. The Influence of John Donne and others.

There have been some critics who considered Herrick much indebted to the poetry of John Donne. H.R. Swardson, for instance, comments: "Herrick often reminds us more of Donne than of Jonson - as in the way he uses religious associations to intensify and elevate the sensual in poems such as "To the Water Nymphs Drinking at the Fountain".²

Other critics see some likenesses to Donne in Herrick's poetry, but hesitate to recognise any certain link. E.M.W. Tillyard gives his view that "Herrick, though he owes nothing directly to Donne, may have drawn strength from the general sense of urgency, of present actuality, that Donne helped to give to the lyric tradition."³ F.W. Moorman, in the course of explaining how much less Herrick follows in Donne's tradition than in Jonson's, allows that he may have learnt

¹ *Revaluation*, p. 36.

² *Poetry and the Fountain of Light*, 1962, Allen and Unwin, London, p. 51.

³ *The Metaphysicals and Milton*, 1956, Chatto and Windus, London, pp. 52-53.

self-revelation from Donne: "The direct influence of Donne upon Herrick may be hard to determine, and in many respects their poetic tastes ran in opposite directions; yet it must, I think, be admitted that the ever-present personal note of the author of the *Hesperides*, the individuality and direct manner of his lyrics, were all qualities which Donne had been the first to introduce..."¹

On the surface Herrick is hardly like Donne at all. Where Donne is intense, argumentative, disdainful of others, his imagery daring, his syntax compressed and contorted, Herrick is relaxed, single-minded and affectionate, his imagery familiar, and his expression simple, at times almost to the point of naïveté. Yet it does seem that both the conception and execution of Donne's work was in Herrick's mind as he wrote some of his poems. At times the similarity is simply one of genre. For instance Donne wrote a number of valedictory poems including "A Valediction Forbidding Mourning", "Song", "Sweetest Love, I do not goe", and "Elegie XII", as did Herrick in "His parting from Mrs Dorothy Keneday" and "The parting Verse, or charge to his supposed Wife when he travelled". Though the poems of each poet differ vastly in tone and intention, both poets compare their feelings at leaving their mistresses with the sensation dying men experience as their souls leave their bodies:

As virtuous men passe mildly away,
And whisper to their soules, to goe²

When I did goe from thee, I felt that smart,
Which Bodies do, when Soules from them depart.³

¹*Robert Herrick: A Biographical and Critical Study*, 1910, reissued 1962, Russell and Russell, New York, p. 228.

²"A Valediction ; forbidding mourning", *Donne*, p. 49.

³"His parting from Mrs Dorothy Keneday", *Herrick*, p. 42.

It is possible that Herrick was simply drawing, independently, upon a current notion which Donne happened to have earlier. But this is not the only example of an opening by Herrick close to one by Donne. Though the mood is quite different and it is the woman addressed, instead of the speaker, who is about to leave, Herrick's lines:

My dearest Love, since thou wilt go,¹

and, Sweetest Loue since wee must part,²

seem to echo the first line of Donne's "Song":

Sweetest love, I do not goe.³

The similarity in language between the two quotations from Donne and the ~~two~~ from Herrick persists in other lyrics. It was Grierson who pointed out that Donne's avoidance of words felt to be poetic is almost without parallel in English poets.⁴ Just as Donne uses words like "unmanur'd", "whining" and "crooked", so does Herrick use words like "sweat" and "stank" and "snarling" and "grinders" (teeth) when it suits, although unlike Donne he also uses terms like "prethee" and "me thought" and "sweet-warbling" freely. Both poets liked monosyllables and used a high proportion of them. Donne begins "A Valediction: of weeping":⁵

¹"A Dialogue betwixt himselfe and Mistresse Eliza: Wheeler, under the name of Amarillis", *idem*, p. 323.

²"The farewell", *idem*, p. 441.

³*Donne*, p. 18.

⁴H.C. Grierson and J.C. Smith, *A Critical History of English Poetry*, 1944, O.U.P., London, p.150.

⁵ *Donne*, p. 38.

Let me powre forth

My teares before thy face, whil'st I stay here,

For thy face coines them, and thy stampe they beare.

"The broken heart"¹ opens,

He is starke mad, who ever sayes,

That he hath beene in love an houre.

In "The Message"² both the first and third stanzas are monosyllabic except for the words used in the feminine rhymes, "fashions" with "passions", and "anguish" with "languish" in the centre of each stanza. In the other poems, where polysyllabic words are used they are often cleverly placed, like "incapacitie", "disproportion" and "annihilate" in "The Will".³

Herrick has many poems, like "To Dianeme", "To Sir Clipsey Crew" and "Anacreontike" with at least the first line monosyllabic and a high proportion of monosyllables elsewhere. But - even more noticeably than Donne, perhaps because syntax is so much simpler, and because so much of his vocabulary is concrete and familiar - he too takes delight in the conspicuous placing of polysyllabic, abstract or even invented words, like "infortunitie", "Protonotarie", or "imparitie". One particularly quaint term, "repullulation", which Herrick uses in "Poetry perpetuates the Poet",⁴ was in fact also used by Donne in one of his sermons.⁵

¹*Idem*, p. 48-49.

²*Idem*, p. 43.

³*Idem*, p. 56-58.

⁴*Idem*, p. 265.

⁵Sermon XXIX, *LXXX Sermons, 1640*, noted by Martin, *Commentary, Herrick*, p. 554.

Both on the surface and in depth Herrick more closely resembles another of his fellow ministers, George Herbert. Puttenham had given poets advice on shaping their poems into geometrical figures such as triangles and lozenges,¹ and both Herbert and Herrick took this seriously.² Herbert uses little concrete details constantly, especially in poems on abstract topics. In one poem he personifies time:

Meeting with Time, Slack thing, said I,
Thy sithe is dull; whet it for shame.
No marvell Sir, he did replie,
If it at length deserve some blame:
But where one man would have me grinde it,
Twentie for one too sharp do finde it.³

Herrick does too, just as dramatically and even more simply:

Time was upon
The wing, to flie away;
And I cal'd on
Him but a while to stay;
But he'd be gone,
For ought that I could say.⁴

And Herrick has other poems like "To keep a true Lent" and "Upon Love" which, in both mood and form, recall lyrics by Herbert.

A rather different kind of imitation can be seen in Herrick's snippet, "Upon the losse of his Finger". Since Herrick's editors

¹*Puttenham*, p. 7.

²See above, p.352.

³"Time", *Herbert*, p. 122.

⁴"Upon Time", *Herrick*, p. 346.

and biographers say nothing of his being a finger short, and Herrick, in spite of his obsession with physical deformities of any kind, like bad breath, or pimples, or lameness, makes no other mention of being, or knowing anyone else, a finger short, it seems that the verse is simply an exercise, a reworking of the two poems Randolph wrote about his own actual loss of a finger.¹ Similarly, since Herrick's editors do not identify the person exhorted to dress brightly and smile again in "Comfort to a Lady upon the Death of her Husband",² it seems likely that Herrick had in mind Carew's much more elaborate and equally persuasive poem, "To the Countesse of Anglesie upon the immoderately-by-her-lamented death of her Husband".³ Carew's possible influence shows elsewhere in verbal echoes. For instance, both the rhyme and the modulation of Carew's lovely couplet:

The darkness^e flyes, and light is hurl'd
Round about the silent world:⁴

can be heard in at least three very different poems by Herrick:

Thy loss brave man! whose Numbers have been hurl'd,
And no less prais'd, then spread throughout the world.⁵

I will be short, and having quickly hurl'd
This line about, live Thou throughout the world.⁶

His Arrowes flie; and all his stones are hurl'd
Against the wicked, in another world.⁷

¹"Upon the losse of his little finger" and "On the losse of his Finger" *Randolph*, pp. 56-57, 135-136.

²*Herrick*, p.105.

³*Carew*, pp. 69-71. See also above, p.332.

⁴"Song: A beautiful Mistris", *idem*, p. 7.

⁵"Upon M. William Lawes, the rare Musitian", *Herrick*, p. 288.

⁶"To M. Leonard Willan his peculiar friend", *idem*, p. 298.

⁷"To God", *idem*, p. 357.

V. Craftmanship.

Robert Herrick was well aware that "out-during" poetry required something of Sidney's "divine fury"¹, Donne's "ingendring force",² or the "frenzie"³ which he fears he cannot equal in Jonson. In a poem inviting gaiety he calls his own verse^a "holy incantation"⁴ and in another poem he says he needs inspiration to be able to write well:

'Tis not ev'ry day, that I
 Fitted am to prophesie:
 No, but when the Spirit fills
 The fantastick Pannicles:
 Full of fier; then I write
 As the Godhead doth indite.⁵

But the "good Spirit"⁶ did not always burn brightly, especially after he went to Dean Prior:

Since to th'Country first I came,
 I have lost my former flame:
 And, methinks, I not inherit,
 As I did, my ravisht spirit.
 If I write a Verse, or two,
 'Tis with very much ado.⁷

¹"A Defence of Poesie", p. 121.

²"To E. of D. with six holy Sonnets", *Donne*, p. 317.

³"A Bacchanalian Verse", *Herrick*, p. 227.

⁴"When he would have his verses read", *idem*, p. 7. Martin (Commentary, p. 499) points out that the underlying idea is from Martial.

⁵"Not every day fit for Verse", *idem*, p. 242.

⁶"The departure of the good Daemon", *idem*, p. 132.

⁷"To Sir Clipsebie Crew", *idem*, p. 182.

If writing did not come readily, constant practice was necessary.

Oft bend the Bow, and thou with ease shalt do,
What others can't with all their strength put to.¹

As a craftsman he declared:

Let's strive to be the best; the Gods, we know it,
Pillars and men, hate an indifferent Poet.²

And in his striving he carefully worked and reworked the drafts of his poems. One of the manuscripts³ in St John's College Library, Cambridge, for instance, contains thirty-two lines which are not printed in the 1648 version of "His age...". And Marchette Chute claims that sixty-seven lines of the wedding song to Sir Clipseby Crew were removed from the manuscript version.⁴ L.C. Martin testifies to Herrick's skill at revision: "That he revised to good purpose seems evident from the general superiority of the readings in *Hesperides* to those found elsewhere. Many of the improvements are made by slight alterations, the substituted word or phrase giving clearer or fuller meaning, subtler emphasis, or better satisfaction for 'the sense of musical delight'. But very often the reformation is more drastic, and whole passages or stanzas are cut away to avoid superfluity or awkwardness."⁵

¹"By use comes easinesse", *idem*, p. 245.

²"Parcell-gil't Poetry", *idem*, p. 309.

³S23 (James 416), fols 77^v-80^r.

⁴*Chute*, 189. Since she does not specify which manuscript version the lines were removed from, I was unable to check this. Because each stanza in the finished poem has 10 lines, 67 seems a strange number of lines to be removed.

⁵Introduction, *Herrick*, xxxii.

Herrick did not leave it to editors to show that he was fastidious about the final appearance of his work. Before a list of *Errata* which appears in front of his 1648 edition of *Hesperides* he instructs the reader:

For these Transgressions which thou here dost see,
 Condemne the Printer, Reader, and not me;
 Who gave him forth good Grain, though he mistook
 The Seed; so sow'd these Tares throughout my Book.¹

At least twice he apologises for flaws for which, unlike printing errors, he may be responsible:

See and not see; and if thou chance t'espie
 Some Aberrations in my Poetry;
 Wink at small faults, the greater ne'rthelesse
 Hide, and with them, their Fathers nakedness.²

In a poem addressed "To his Booke"³ he also admits possible imperfections:

Like to a Bride, come forth my Book, at last,
 With all thy richest jewels over-cast:
 Say, if there be 'mongst many jems here; one
 Deservelesse of the name of *Paragon*:
 Blush not at all for that; since we have set
 Some *Pearls* on *Queens*, that have been counterfet.

¹*Idem*, p. 4.

²"To the generous Reader", *idem*, p. 32.

³*Idem*, p. 76.

Yet Herrick was determined to leave his verse in as finished a state as he could. "His request to Julia"¹ is famous:

Julia, if I chance to die
 Ere I print my Poetry;
 I most humbly thee desire
 To commit it to the fire:
 Better 'twere my Book were dead,
 Then to live not perfected.

It is ^{un}likely that a poet so concerned, for all the air of spontaneity, about the final appearance of his poems, should have been careless about their arrangement, especially since it is known that he, unlike so many poets of the day whose collected poems were first published posthumously, was in London at the time of their publication. Yet H.C. Beeching stated unequivocally, "Apart from the secular and sacred divisions^{and} the title of *Hesperides* there is as little method as possible about the book".² Certainly the poems in *Hesperides* are not arranged chronologically, nor are they grouped according to subject. But it is noticeable that an editor such as L.C. Martin does not dispose of the possibility of a plan in his cautious wording: "The poems in *Hesperides* were put together with no obvious regard for the order in which they were written."³ Other critics like Roger B. Rollin⁴

¹*Idem*, p. 21.

²"The Poetry of Herrick", *National Review* XL, Dec. 1902-Feb. 1903, p. 788.

³Introduction, *Herrick*, p. xxxvii.

⁴*Robert Herrick*, p. 49. Rollin bases his assertion on the unpublished dissertation by Richard J. Ross, *A 'Wilde Civility': Robert Herrick's Poetic Solution of the Paradox of Art and Nature*, Univ. of Michigan, 1960, pp. 180-276. I have read only the abstract of this thesis, *Dissertation Abstracts*, 19, 1958, 204-205.

and John L. Kimney¹ are certain that the poems in *Hesperides* are consciously and artistically organised.

Two arguments give strong support to this theory. The first - not presented by either of them - is that at key places, such as the opening and close of each of the two parts of *Hesperides* there is clear evidence of arrangement. In the very first poem, "The Argument of his Book" Herrick sets out the subject matter of the volume, and he follows this by a poem invoking the help of his muse, four messages "To his booke", a warning "To the soure Reader" and a poem advising "When he would have his verses read." Approximately half way through *Hesperides*,² Herrick deliberately narrows the range he promised earlier, cutting out love poems, funeral poems and seasonal poems:

Ile sing no more, nor will I longer write
Of that sweet Lady, or that gallant Knight;
Ile sing no more of Frosts, Snowes, Dews and Showers;
No more of Groves, Meades, Springs and wreaths of Flowers.³

He follows this by a realistic little poem which firmly illustrates his assertion that he does not intend to continue the glorification of women and again, as at the beginning, he rebukes those who find

¹"Order and Form in Herrick's *Hesperides*", *J.E.G.P.* LXX, 1971, 255-268.

²The poem is numbered 658 of the 1400 poems in Patrick's edition, (pp. 302-303).

³"On himselfe", *Hesperides*, p. 228.

fault with his work:

Who read'st this Book that I have writ,
 And can'st not mend, but carpe at it:
 By all ^{the} muses! thou shalt be,
 Anathema to it, and me.¹

At the end of the secular part of *Hesperides* there are seven poems concluding the volume, the last being "The Pillar of Fame", his statement of confidence in work well done. And this is followed, like the swirl after a signature, by a couplet applying to himself a line of Ovid, to remind the readers that the poems are not to be taken autobiographically:

To his Book's end this last line he'd have plac't,
*Jocond his Muse was; but his Life was chast.*²

Herrick begins *Noble Numbers*, the second and much shorter part of *Hesperides*, by explaining that it is natural that most of the poems are secular:

Look how our foule Dayes do exceed our faire;
 And as our bad, more then our good Works are:
 Ev'n so those Lines, pen'd by my wanton Wit,
 Treble the number of these good I've writ.³

This is followed by "His Prayer for Absolution",⁴ "For those my unbaptized Rhimes" and a plea for forgiveness:

For every sentence, clause and word,
 That's not inlaid with Thee, (my Lord).

¹"To Momus", *idem*, p. 229.

²*Idem*, p. 335. In his Commentary, p. 567, Martin gives the Latin from Ovid, *Trist.* ii, 354:

Vita verecunda est, Musa iocosa mea.

³"His Confession", *idem*, p. 339.

⁴*Idem*, p. 339.

His final couplet in the whole volume is simply Herrick's version of a biblical conclusion:

Of all the good things whatsoe're we do,
God is the ΑΡΧΗ , and the ΤΕΛΟΣ too.¹

The framework, clearly, indicates a plan. A random examination of the text of *Hesperides* will show that the strangest of poems are sometimes juxtaposed.² For instance after the respectful and companionable poem, "A Hymne to Sir Clipsey Crew", there is an insulting little epigram "Upon Roots". Before "The Fairie Temple", exquisitely rich and light, there is a couplet "Upon a Bleare-ey'd woman". Before the ardent and dedicated love poem, "To Anthea, who may command him any thing", comes "The Poets good wishes for the most hopefull and handsome Prince, the Duke of Yorke", a poem only saved from sycophancy by the fanciful extravagance of the ideas in it. But it can be, and has been,³ argued that such juxtaposition is intended by the poet who

Dotes less on Nature, then on Art,⁴

The truism that art conceals^{art} is brilliantly illustrated by Herrick who, like his master, Ben Jonson,⁵ praises as natural "a sweet

¹ *Idem*, p. 403. Martin (Commentary, p. 579) gives the source, Rev. i, 8, xxii, 13.

² *Moorman*, (p. 140) points out that there are precedents for what he calls 'disorder' in Jonson's *Underwoods* where a love song is preceded by an 'Epigram to the Smallpox', and in the *Carmina* of Catullus.

³ From Rollins' text, p. 49, and his 'Notes and References', p. 214, this appears to be the gist of Richard Ross's thesis referred to above, p. 369.

⁴ "Art above Nature, to Julia", *Herrick*, p. 202.

⁵ cf. Jonson's poem, "Still to be neat," as well as various references as in *Works*, III, 170, to "that orderly disorder which is common in nature".

disorder in the dress",¹ who repeatedly admires "A wilde civility"² and who would have his mistress,

Like a civill Wilderness;
That the curious may detect
Order in a sweet neglect.³

Even his Anthea plotted her effects:

Anthea laught, and fearing lest excesse
Might stretch the cords of civil comelinesse:
She with a dainty blush rebuk't her face;
And cal'd each line back to his *rule* and *space*.⁴

There is no reason for believing that Herrick calculated his poetic effects less deliberately than Anthea did her expressions of fun or shame. Certainly he placed the sweetest compliments next to epigrams about physical ugliness, but he gives his reason clearly:

Love's of it selfe, too sweet; the best of all
Is, when loves hony has a dash of gall.⁵

Hesperides is full of contrasts, of statements and counterstatements. Often, perhaps because Herrick has become so much an anthology poet, the sugar is tasted, the lemon ignored. But even a critic like Robert Deming who must have known the whole text can analyse with great detail⁶ the artistic effect Julia creates in poems like

¹"Delight in Disorder", *Herrick*, p. 28.

²"Art above Nature, to Julia", and "Delight in Disorder", *idem*, p. 202, 28.

³"What kind of Mistresse he would have", *idem*, p. 232. The phrase 'civill Wildernesse' is used again in "To Musick, to becalme a sweet-sick-youth", *idem*, p. 99.

⁴"Anthea's Retractation", *idem*, p. 311.

⁵"Another on Love", *Herrick*, p. 327.

⁶*Ceremony and Art: Robert Herrick*, 1974, Mouton, The Hague, pp. 39-40.

"Delight in Disorder", yet say nothing about a quieter but equally deliberate poem on the same topic which includes these lines:

As flowrie vestures doe describe
 The wearers rich immodestie;
 So plaine and simple cloathes doe show
 Where vertue walkes, not those that flow.¹

However both poems can be swept aside by another poem which states as frankly as Donne or Carew could, "Clothes do but cheat and cousen us":²

Away with silks, away with Lawn,
 Ile have no Sceans, or Curtains drawn:
 Give me my Mistresse, as she is,
 Drest in her nak't simplicities:
 For as my Heart, ene so mine Eye,
 Is wone with flesh, not Drapery.

Clothing is only one of the many matters Herrick writes about from different stand-points. A poem like "The Kisse"³ in which a kiss is called "loves sweetest language" is balanced by one like "Kisses Loathsome"⁴ beginning "I abhor the slimie kisse". *Hesperides* is full of references to fragrances; but it is also full of reference to bad smells. In "To his Mistresse"⁵ he asks:

And for your breaths too, let them smell
 Ambrosia-like, or *Nectarell*.

¹"Leprosie in Cloathes", *idem*, p. 311.

²*Idem*, p. 154.

³*Idem*, p. 130.

⁴*Idem*, p. 282.

⁵*Idem*, p. 20.

and in "Upon Julia's unlacing her self"¹ he exults in Julia's "odour" as she "goes perfum'd" and transmits "a scent, that fills both Heaven and Earth". In the "Pomander Bracelet"² he talks of the bracelet "richly redolent" but declares that his Julia "did perfume the Pomander". In contrast there are a host of poems like "Upon a free Maid, with a foule breath",³ "The Quintell",⁴ "Upon Jone and Jane"⁵ in which Jane's "breath do's stink". Most of the poems are honey, but the gall is there, and had its worth too, both for itself and for the total impact of the volume. If the arrangement of poems seems odd, only the curious will be aware of it, while most will notice, as is surely intended, the total effect:

*'Tis still observ'd that Fame ne'r sings
The order but the Sum of things.*⁶

Whether a poem is concerned with good, from God's "plenty-dropping hand"⁷ or the foul, from "The Hagg", who "cockes out her Arse"⁸ the language, the imagery, the rhythms are in keeping. For of all the technical characteristics, smoothness was that with which Herrick was most concerned, not only in the ordering of disparate materials, but also in word choice and word arrangement. Two poems addressed to the Graces show this:

Give me words wherewith to wooe,
Suppling and successefull too:⁹

¹*Idem*, p. 157.

²*Idem*, p. 13.

³*Idem*, p. 210.

⁴*Idem*, p. 306.

⁵*Idem*, p. 229.

⁶"Fame", *idem*, p. 245.

⁷"A Thanksgiving to God, for his House", *idem*, p. 350.

⁸*Idem*, p. 333.

⁹"A Hymne to the Graces", *idem*, p. 204.

Ponder my words, if so that any be
 Known guilty here of incivility:
 Let what is graceless, discompos'd, and rude,
 With sweetness, smoothness, softness, be endu'd.¹

He makes similar requests to Minerva and Apollo:

Goddesse, I begin an Art;
 Come thou in, with thy best part,
 For to make the Texture lye
 Each way smooth and civilly.²

Phoebus! when that I a Verse,
 Or some numbers more rehearse;
 Tune my words, that they may fall,
 Each way smoothly Musicall.³

For all the impression of a happy accident, the sound effects in Herrick's poems are closely manipulated. Alliteration, assonance, punning, regular rhymes, feminine rhymes, line lengths and metrical pace all unobtrusively serve Herrick's end. A slight poem, "The sadnesse of things for Sapho's sicknesse"⁴ shows a deliberate game

¹"A request to the Graces", *idem*, p. 290.

²"A Vow to Minerva", *idem*, p. 195.

³"To Apollo. A short Hymne", *idem*, p. 122.

⁴*Idem*, p. 41.

with sounds:

Lillies will languish; Violets look ill;
 Sickly the Prim-rose: Pale the Daffadill:
 That gallant Tulip will hang down his head,
 Like to a Virgin newly ravished.
 Pansies will weep; and Marygolds will wither;
 And keep a Fast, and Funerall together,
 If *Sapho* droop; Daisies will open never,
 But bid Goodnight, and close their lids for ever.

Another poet might have overdone the alliteration but Herrick, after his bold beginning, is cautious, saving conspicuous alliteration to bind the two ceremonies the flowers perform together, the Fast and the Funerall. The double rhymes "wither" and "together", "never" and "ever" are as light, even frail, as the girl. The tragedy of the poem lies in the inevitability of the actions which the poet suggest grief will cause, though behind his statement lies the awareness that no tulip can stay erect, no marigold glow brightly, for long. The lyric grace has not been spent, as Leavis suggested, on triviality.

Not, however, that Herrick is always serious. He can and does quip with sounds for comic effects. A delightful example occurs in one of the proverbs Herrick was so fond of using:

That was the Proverb. Let my mistresse be
 Lasie to others but be long to me.¹

In another snippet play upon the word "lye" gives a double meaning without damaging the innocence of the surface message:

You say, you love me; that I thus must prove;
 If that you lye, then I will sweare you love.²

¹"Long and lazie", *idem*, p. 141.

²"To a Maid", *idem*, p. 126.

Herrick often indulges in feminine rhymes for subdued humour such as "*Bacchus*" and "thwack us",¹ "*Boreman*" and "poore man",² "Trencher-man" and "never can",³ "Tinkers" and "Drinkers",⁴ "wishes" and "fishes".⁵ At other times he quaintly rhymes a monosyllable with a polysyllable in a way that invites a smile:

Part of which I give to *Larr*,
Part is my peculiar.⁶

Or,

Science puffs up, sayes *Gut*, when either Pease
Make him thus swell, or windy Cabbages.⁷

Or, even more playfully,

Let's live merrily, and thus
Gratifie the *Genius*.⁸

In each of these examples - as so often in Herrick - the rhythm is absolutely regular, with no tension at all between the stresses of normal speech and the underlying iambic metre. In longer poems, such as "His age , dedicated to his peculiar friend, M. John Wickes" or "An Epithalamie to Sir Thomas Southwell and his Ladie", the stanzaic shape is similarly regular. It may be this, even more than the just choice of language (for after all, as in prayers so in any poetry "words ought to have their weight"⁹) that gives the feeling

¹"A Hymne to Bacchus", *idem*, p. 259.

²"Upon Boreman. Epig.", *idem*, p. 315.

³"Upon Trencherman", *idem*, p. 265.

⁴"The Tinkers Song", *idem*, p. 320.

⁵"The May-pole", *idem*, p. 239.

⁶"Larr's portion, and the Poets part", *idem*, p. 152.

⁷"Upon Gut", *idem*, p. 327.

⁸"Best to be merry", *idem*, p. 96.

⁹"Prayers must have Poise", *idem*, p. 342.

of utter simplicity to Herrick's verses. Listen to the slow heavy beat in "The bad season makes the Poet sad":¹

Dull to my selfe, and almost dead to these
My many fresh and fragrant Mistresses:
Lost to all Musick now; since every thing
Puts on the semblance here of sorrowing.

Or again, in "His weaknesse in woes"²:

I cannot suffer; And in this, my part
Of Patience wants. *Grief breaks the stoutest Heart.*

Compare the pace of such lines with the speed and unsuppressed excitement of, say, the second stanza of "A Nuptiall Song, or Epithalamie, on Sir Clipseby Crew and his Lady."³

'Tis she! 'tis she! or else some more Divine
Enlightned substance; mark how from the Shrine
Of holy Saints she paces on,
Treading upon *Vermilion*
And *Amber*; Spice-
ing the Chafte Aire with fumes of Paradise.
Then come on, come on, and yeeld
A savour like unto a blessed field,
When the bedabled Morne
Washes the golden eares of corne.

David Parker, in "The Literary Epitaph in the Seventeenth Century", points out that similar control of pace occurs in Herrick's epitaphs, where he is showing his consciousness that life is short:

¹*Idem*, p. 214.

²*Idem*, p. 169.

³*Idem*, pp. 112-116.

"Herrick normally uses an octosyllabic line, proportionate to the shortness of his epitaphs.... When Herrick does use a longer line it is usually arranged so as to quicken the rate at which a poem may be read, preserving a sense of brevity."¹

Herrick's sure sense of timing makes his lyrics, from the delicate such as "Upon Julia's haire fill'd with Dew" to the raucous "The Hagg", particularly suitable to arranging for music.² In some places the musician actually changed Herrick's wording to suit the mood of his song. For instance the title of "The Curse. A Song"³ is dropped altogether in Robert Ramsay's setting⁴ and Herrick's violent line,

Know, I have pray'd to Furie,

is tamed to the gentle plea:

Know I have pray'd to pity.

But other musicians were truer to the spirit of Herrick's songs. It appears that Herrick could have known some of the most gifted of those who set his words to music, men like Henry and William Lawes, Nicholas Lanier and John Wilson, personally,⁵ and have

¹Parker, p.116.

²Records of musical settings of Herrick's poems are to be found in S. and T. Tannenbaum's *Concise Bibliography of Robert Herrick*, and in Ian Spink's *English Song: Dowland to Purcell*. Also Martin's Critical Notes, *Herrick*, pp. 463-497, give details of various manuscripts containing seventeenth century musical settings of Herrick's poems.

³*Herrick*, p. 49.

⁴"English Songs, 1625-1660", transcribed and edited by Ian Spink, *Musica Britannica*, Vol. 33, p. 26.

⁵For instance, when Herrick went to London, perhaps to see his poems into print, the official report for his nonresidence, undated but believed to have been made in 1640, states that he stayed at Westminster in Little Almonry, where Henry Lawes is known to have lived. See *Chute*, p. 223.

heard them perform. He wrote to Henry Lawes:

Touch but thy Lire (my Harrie) and I heare
 From thee some raptures of the rare *Gotire*.
 Then if thy voice commingle with the String
 I heare in thee rare *Laniere* to sing;
 Or curious *Wilson*.¹

And Herrick referred to William Lawes as "the rare Musitian".²

It is known that "A Christmas Caroll" was arranged by Henry Lawes for four solo voices and chorus, and sung in the presence of King Charles at Whitehall³ and that the pastoral that Herrick wrote to celebrate the birth of Charles I's son, Prince Charles, was set by Nicholas Lanier and may have been sung at the the future king's christening by Laud in June 1630, a service, held some months before Herrick left London for Devon, at which the Gentlemen of the Chapel Royal were all present.⁴

There can be little doubt that Herrick enjoyed music. *Hesperides* is full of poems like "Soft Musick" and "To Musick" as well as poems which show Herrick's admiration of a human voice⁵ or a musical instrument, a "melodious lyre", or "Lutes of Amber".⁶

¹"To M. Henry Lawes, the excellent Composer of his Lyricks", *Herrick*, p. 276.

²"Upon M. William Lawes, the rare Musitian", *idem*, p. 288.

³See *Rollin*, p. 152.

⁴*Chute*, p. 201.

⁵e.g. "Againe", "Upon a Gentlewoman with a sweet Voice", "Upon her Voice", "Upon Sapho, sweetly playing and sweetly singing", *Herrick*, pp. 22-23, 95, 102, 142.

⁶"Upon Julia's Voice", *idem*, p. 22.

In one poem he pleads "To Musique, to becalme his Fever".¹
 another is written "To Musick, to becalme a sweet-sick-youth".²
 In yet another he writes of "soule-melting Lullabies."³ His very
 mention of "melodious words"⁴ and words that are "smoothly Musically"⁵
 indicates both Herrick's fondness for music and his awareness of its
 place in verse.

VI. Themes.

If any trace of doubt about Herrick's comprehensive purpose
 in his poems remains, it must go as soon as a reader turns to the
 first poem within the text, "The Argument of his Book."⁶ "I sing",
 Herrick tells his readers seven times within fourteen lines, of
 natures, of ceremonies, of love, of living history, of fairy realms,
 of hell, and, finally, of heaven.

In his deceptively simple way Herrick has condensed the major
 themes of *Hesperides* into this short light lyric. The idea of
 beginning a collection of verse with a catalogue was not, as
 Martin points out,⁷ new to Herrick, but his personal stamp is

¹*Idem*, p. 95.

²*Idem*, p. 99.

³"To Musick. A Song", *idem*, p. 103.

⁴"Upon Julia's Voice", *idem*, p. 22.

⁵"To Apollo. A short Hymne", *idem*, p. 122.

⁶*Herrick*, p. 5.

⁷Commentary, *idem*, p. 498. Martin cites four lines of a similar
 14-lined catalogue *de subiecto operis sui*, by Thomas Bastard. Leigh
 De Neef in "Herrick's 'Argument' and Thomas Bastard", *Seventeenth
 Century News*, 1971, Vol. XXIX, pp. 9-10, citing the whole of Bastard's
 poem, shows how utterly different the range of subject matter and the
 tone of the two poems is, in spite of what he calls "virtually
 identical....progressive thematic structure."

clearly on the poem. A positive joyful mood is set for the whole of *Hesperides*, a mood only heightened by the contrast afforded by the scattered blunt or vicious epigrams, by the underlying consciousness of sin and waste, and by the occasional moments of dejection.

Unpretentious as always, Herrick begins his "Argument" with a list of familiar objects and set times. Brooks, blossoms, birds and bowers all denote the natural world, instinctive happiness and fecundity, as do the spring and summer months of the second line. The quiet ordinariness of this links easily with the domestic invitation "To his Muse"¹ in the poem immediately following:

Whither *Mad maiden* wilt thou roame?
Farre safer 'twere to stay at home:
Where thou mayst sit, and piping please
The poore and private *Cottages*.

Yet through the particular, the concrete, the known, the hockcart, the bridal-cake, and the rose, Herrick moves to the abstract, the universal, and even the supernatural, times trans-shifting, hell and heaven. What William Empson calls the "'complex-in-simple' formula"² is surely at work here. Much in the 'Argument', as in *Hesperides* itself, is complex and interrelated. The "Blossomes" for instance, of the first line tie in with the "*July-flowers*" in the second. At the festivals of the third line the morning can be "Blooming",³ young people "with *White-thorn* laden",⁴ and wassail singers

¹Herrick, p. 5.

²*Some Versions of Pastoral*, 1935, reprinted Penguin, 1966, p. 115.

³"Corinna's Going a Maying", *idem*, p. 67.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 69.

praying that dairies be "bankt all with Lillies".¹ At the weddings of the fourth line there are "Graces strewing flowers",² and "youth" and "love", from line ^{six}_h, are constantly associated, as they had been since classical times, with flowers, as can be seen with the virgins in 'Gather ye rosebuds' or those in "To Meddowes",³ who are "with Honysuccles crown'd." "Cleanly wantonnesse", or the wholesome desire of animate nature to reproduce its kind, is latent all through "A Meditation for his Mistresse",⁴ a *carpe diem* seduction poem in which his "Dearest" is in turn called a tulip, a july-flower, a rose and a violet. The "Dewes" of line seven are, elsewhere, constantly associated with flowers,⁵ and the "raines" of line ^{nine}_h remind the reader that the roses nestling in Julia's heart look more fresh than flowers "Quickned of late by Pearly showers."⁶ The symbolic "oyle" of the eighth line becomes the "oyle of roses" of "A Song to the Maskers"⁷ and of the song mentioned above, "To Dewes". Even "Times trans-shifting" are caught up in "Divination by a Daffadill."⁸

¹"The Wassaille", *idem*, p. 179.

²"An Epithalamie to Sir Thomas Southwell and his Ladie", *idem*, p. 54.

³*Idem*, p. 110.

⁴*Idem*, pp. 87-88.

⁵As in "To Dewes. A Song", *idem*, p. 50.

⁶"Upon Roses", *idem*, p. 25.

⁷*Idem*, p. 9.

⁸*Idem*, p. 38.

This kind of interaction between flowers and the various subjects, first of the 'Argument' and then, to a considerable proportion of *Hesperides*, is both ubiquitous and typical. In Herrick's own words:

My Muse in Meads has spent her many houres,
Sitting and sorting severall sorts of flowers,
To make for others garlands.¹

The alliteration of "Muse in Meads" and "sitting and sorting" adds to the formality of the idyllic scene, just as the alliteration of the first line of the 'Argument' does; in turn the formality aligns Herrick with the classical pastoral poets² who see in simple country living an earnest representation of all that is good.

(i) Country settings.

In three poems Herrick, by title as well as by the conventions he uses, explicitly places himself within the pastoral tradition. The first of these, "A Pastorall upon the Birth of Prince Charles"³ has a stylized setting with ewes, wethers, bleating lambs, kids, shepherds, shearers, and a bank of lillies. One shepherd brings the news that the prince is born, and draws parallels between the royal birth and that of Christ. Pan is invited to sing "his Baby-ship" to sleep. Again three shepherds, Montano, Silvio, and Mirtillo, take part in "A Pastorall sung to the King"⁴ which also involves a shepherdess, sheep, cows (kine),

¹"To Mistress Katherine Bradshaw, the lovely, that crowned him with Laurel", *idem*, p. 94.

²Virgil's *Eclogues* provide the most obvious example, but *Aiken* (pp. 48-83) drawing no less than 73 parallels between their country poems, shows that Tibullus exerted a major influence on Herrick.

³*Herrick*, pp. 85-87.

⁴*Idem*, pp. 159-160.

meadows, trees for carving names on, a Greek god (Pan, as in the poem for Prince Charles) and a Roman goddess (Pales). This time two shepherds are attempting to cheer up a third who is distressed because his shepherdess has gone away. Max Patrick suggests that the mistress may represent Henrietta Maria who left England first to enlist help for the king, and later to save her own life.¹ If, as seems reasonable, Patrick's hypothesis is correct, this too is in keeping with the pastoral tradition in which current matters are treated under an easily recognisable guise.²

A third poem, written for Herrick's cousin, "Mrs Eliz. Wheeler under the name of the lost Shephardesse",³ has little of the pastoral about it except that the lost girl is called a shepherdess. It is however, a much more characteristic Herrick poem, written for an unavailable young girl, with its rather quaint personification of Love and his sighs, its plain vocabulary varied with words like "intertalkt", its awareness of the transience of all sources of joy, and its exquisite modulation of lines like these :

Thou foole, said Love, know'st thou not this?

In every thing that's sweet, she is.

Most of all, it has a simple garden setting and shows Herrick's affection for flowers, the carnation, the pansy - no less natural because, as a goldsmith, he sees it also as 'enamel'd' - and the rose-bud. This distinguishes it from the few other poems like "To Phillis to love and live with him"⁴ in which Herrick is clearly

¹*Patrick*, p. 215.

²Above, p.175.

³*Herrick*, pp. 106-107.

⁴*Idem*, pp. 192-193.

experimenting with the pastoral tradition of the courtier visualizing an idyllic country life about which he knows nothing. Just as Marlowe's passionate shepherd envisages his love in slippers "with buckles of the purest gold"¹ so Phillis is to be sent a "Sheep-hook....Be-prankt with Ribbands"². Like the other poems in the same genre³ this poem is making a promise of

What sweets the Country can afford.⁴

So is "A Country life: to his Brother, M.Tho. Herrick"⁵, a poem based to some extent on Jonson's address "To Sir Robert Wroth",⁶ and other country house poems. "The Countries sweet simplicity"⁷ is compared with the city's vice which 'rules the Most, or All at Court'.⁸ Although this poem was written about a brother who left a mercantile life in London about 1610,⁹ long before Herrick went to live in the country, it has in it homely details which have no parallel in other country estate poems, including Herrick's own "A Panegerick to Sir Lewis Pemberton". The food, for instance, is "boyl'd Nettles, Colworts, Beets" and "sowre herbs".¹⁰ Of these there is enough and to spare for little country creatures as well.

¹"The Passionate Shepherd to his Love", *Elizabethan Lyrics*, pp. 134-135.

²"To Phillis", *Herrick*, p. 193.

³See R.S. Forsythe, "The passionate shepherd and English Poetry", *P.M.L.A.*, 1925, XL, 692-742.

⁴"To Phillis...", *Herrick*, p. 192.

⁵*Idem*, pp. 34-38.

⁶Commentary, *idem*, p. 504.

⁷"A Country life...", *idem*, p. 35.

⁸*Ibid.*, p. 37.

⁹See *Patrick*, p. 53.

¹⁰"A Country life...", *Herrick*, p. 37.

Yet can thy humble rooffe maintaine a Quire
 Of singing Crickits by thy fire:
 And the brisk Mouse may feast her selfe with crums,
 Till that the green-ey'd Kitling comes.¹

The whole poem rings with words signifying contentment like "blest", "safe", "securest ease", "prepared", "Rurall Sanctuary", "assurance", "little-well-kept-stock". The "Country life", to the honoured M. End. Porter, Groome of the Bed-Chamber to His Maj.² begins "Sweet Country life" and tells the reader how fortunate unambitious country people are,

Who all the day themselves doe please³

Another poem actually called "His content in the Country"⁴ once more compares a homely country diet with the "Larded fare"⁵ spurned in "A Country life...." or the "choicest viands"⁶ of "A Panegerick to Sir Lewis Pemberton":

Or Pea, or Bean, or Wort, or Beet,
 What ever comes, content makes sweet.⁷

And in "A Hymne, to the Lares",⁸ Herrick talks of "greenest Parsley" and "Garlick chives":

So long as I am able
 To keep a countrey-table,
 Great be my fare, or small cheere,
 I'le eat and drink up all here.

¹*Ibid.* p. 37. cf. "To Larr", p. 132 :
 No more shall I, from henceforth, heare a quire
 Of merry Crickits by my Country fire.

²*Idem*, pp. 229-231

³*Idem*, p. 231.

⁴*Idem*, p. 200.

⁵*Idem*, p. 37.

⁶*Idem*, p. 147.

⁷"His content in the Country", *idem*, p. 200.

⁸*Idem*, p. 234-235.

In "His Age, dedicated to his peculiar friend, M. John Wickes, under the name of Posthumus",¹ he assures his friend that they "are not poore". The recreation of an ideal life is reminiscent of Horace in Ode XVI, "Contentment the Only True Happiness":

'Tis not treasure....that can banish the cares that flit about the panelled ceilings. He lives happily upon a little on whose frugal board gleams the ancestral salt-dish."² In Herrick's poem:

If we can meet, and so conferre,
Both by a shining Salt-seller,
And have our Roofe,
Although not archt, yet weather prooffe,

they can enjoy the simple things of life together;

We'll eate our Beane with that full mirth,
As we were Lords of all the earth.³

Lords of all the earth have their servants and tame animals, and Herrick, in his small way, has too. His maid Prew has three poems written specially for her⁴ and is mentioned in other poems such as "His Grange, or private wealth"⁵ which

¹*Idem*, p. 132-136.

²*Horace*, pp. 148-149. *Lewis and Short* indicate that to the Romans salt itself could represent intellectual acuteness and roof, shelter and security. (*sal*, p. 1617; *tectum*, p. 1845).

³*Idem*, p. 133.

⁴"Upon Prew his Maid", either an epitaph written early, since she outlived her master or, as Musgrove suggests in "Herrick's Alchemical Vocabulary" (p. 260) a poem about a little urn Herrick named after her containing spirits of violets. "To his maid Prew", and "Upon Prudence Baldwin her sicknesse", *idem*, pp. 262, 151, 122.

⁵*Idem*, p. 246.

shows his warm affection for his whole household:

Though Clock,

To tell how night drawes hence, I've none,

A Cock,

I have, to sing how day drawes on.

I have

A maid (my *Prew*) by good luck sent,

To save

That little, Fates me gave or lent.

A Hen

I keep, which creaking day by day,

Tells when

She goes her long white egg to lay.

A goose

I have, which, with a jealous eare,

Lets loose

Her tongue, to tell what danger's neare.

A Lamb

I keep (tame) with my morsells fed,

Whose Dam

An Orphan left him (lately dead.)

A Cat

I keep, that playes about my House,

Grown fat,

With eating many a miching Mouse.

To these
 • A *Tracy*¹ I do keep, whereby
 I please
 The more my rurall privacie;
 Which are
 But toyes, to give my heart some ease:
 Where care
 None is, slight things do lightly please.

As a country vicar Herrick was singing the praises of his unworried rural life; but throughout the whole poem there is an undercurrent of the irony which so often lies beneath Herrick's tranquil surface. We do not simply learn that he has a cock to tell when day (and duties) approaches but also that he does not have a clock (an article of great value to a one-time goldsmith) to tell him when night (and rest) draw near. His maid is his "by luck" and not by right, and her function is to "save" the little he has. Even the goose is constantly listening for danger. Company is not that of "Courts and Cities" but of his spaniel. The article before the name emphasises that the dog, however loved, is not a person but an object (whether, as Musgrove suggests, alchemical, or not). Herrick is grateful for the domestic comforts which make up his "private wealth" yet what, after all, are they,

But toyes, to give my heart some ease.

¹Tracy was Herrick's spaniel. The epitaph "Upon his Spaniell Tracie", *idem*, p. 302, is an affecting but unsentimental tribute.

The obverse of "His Content in the Country" where "slight things do lightly please" can be seen in "Discontents in Devon".¹

More discontents I never had
 Since I was born, then here;
 Where I have been, and still am sad,
 In this dull *Devon-shire*.

Nor is this an isolated reference to "where I loath'd so much." In "To his Houshold gods"² he declares he would rather live "on rudest seas", "with severest Salvages" or ⁱⁿ "worlds of Ice" than in "lothed *Devonshire*". In "To Dean-bourn, a rude River in Devon, by which sometimes he lived"³ he speaks of others there, presumably his parishioners:

A people currish; churlish as the seas;
 And rude (almost) as rudest Salvages.

The dissatisfaction shows up all the more strongly when such a poem is contrasted with "His tears to Thamasis",⁴ his reluctant "fare-ye-well" to the Thames, the "Stately Structures" besides it, and the "soft-smooth Virgins" he remembers there. Again in "His Lachrimae or Mirth, turn'd to mourning"⁵ he writes nostalgically of the times,

Before I went
 To banishment
 Into the loathed West.

¹*Idem*, p. 19.

²*Idem*, p. 111.

³*Idem*, p. 29. The same scorn shows in many of the epigrams such as "Upon Spunge" or "Upon Coone".

⁴*Idem*, pp. 315-316.

⁵*Idem*, p. 144.

Although neither Martin nor Patrick attempt to date it, it seems likely that "Upon himself"¹ was written when Herrick was ousted from his parish and returned, incomeless, to London:

Come, leave this loathed Country-life, and then
 Grow up to be a Roman *Citizen*

 And to the Farm-house nere return at all;
 Though Granges do not love thee, Cities shall.

Similar sentiments are expressed even more explicitly in "His returne to London"² in which he shows no reluctance whatever at having to leave "the dull confines of the drooping West", since his dismissal from his parish means he can return to the city:

London my home is: though by hard fate sent
 Into a long and irksome banishment.

Such comments are further indication of Herrick's nostalgia for such "*Lyrick* feasts"³ as Jonson had once given in London taverns. Whatever Herrick's surface occupation with "brookes, blossoms, birds and bowers" he longed always for the intellectual stimulation of a city, and especially of London:

¹*Idem*, p. 171-172. Martin (Commentary, p. 535) does point out the probable echo of Jonson's "Ode to himselfe", "Come leave the lothed stage", a poem of defiance in answer to a different kind of insult.

²*Idem*, p. 242.

³"An Ode for him", *idem*, p. 289.

O *Place!* O *People!* fram'd to please

All *Nations, Customes, Kindreds, Languages!*¹

But he also confesses to an attraction for the giddier side of urban life centred at court, the side that the sterner Jonson and the classical pastoral poets who lived and wrote from their privileged position at court, so often scorned.² Herrick puts these words into his own mouth in "A Dialogue betwixt himselfe and Mistresse Eliza: Wheeler, under the name of Amarillis":³

Her. What have the Meades to do with thee,
Or with thy youthfull houres?
Live thou at Court, where thou mayst be
The *Queen* of men, not flowers.

Let Country wenches make 'em fine
With Poesies, since 'tis fitter
For thee with richest Jemmes to shine,
And like the Starres to glitter.

(ii) Ceremony.

It is not surprising that courtly life should have appealed to Herrick, as he showed in poems like "A Panegerick to Sir Lewis Pemberton", for he loved ritual, and especially its courtly accompaniments, music, dance, good food and wine, perfume and fine clothes. But in "The Argument of his Book" the ceremonies named belong mostly to the countryside where they govern the major events of each year. Robert Deming sees the poems celebrating

¹"His returne to London", *idem*, p. 242.

²See above pp. 37-38.

³*Herrick*, pp. 323-324.

rural festivals as Herrick's form of retreat from the grim realities of "loathed Devonshire" into what he calls a " 'second world', the imaginative real/unreal world of his art".¹ Herrick's bold listing of "May-poles, Hock-carts, Wassails, Wakes" seems, however, hearty and positive rather than escapist. The May-pole had long associations with fertility rites and with free sexual behaviour. One contemporary wrote "I have heard it credibly reported (and that *viva voce*) by men of great gravitie, and reputation, that of fourtie, three score, or a hundred maids going to the woode over night, there have scaresly the thirde part of them returned home again undefiled. These be the frutes which these cursed pastimes bring foorth."²

Puritan reaction to such behaviour had caused the May Games to be banned in some parts of England,³ a move publicly flouted by James I in his Declaration of Sports, reissued by Charles I, in 1633.⁴ The licence involved in "the harmlesse follie of the time"⁵ is kept within marriage by Herrick. In "May-pole"⁶

¹*Ceremony and Art: Robert Herrick's Poetry*, 1974, Mouton, The Hague, p. 19. Such a statement implies a surprisingly limited understanding not only of Herrick's intentions, but of the nature and purpose of all pastoral verse.

²Phillip Stubbes, *Anatomie of Abuses*, 1585, London, I, 129, ed. F.J.Furnivall, 1882, London, p. 149.

³*Cain*, p. 195.

⁴The revival was short-lived. In 1664 the Long Parliament issued an ordinance demanding the removal of Maypoles "a heathenish vanity abused to superstition and wickedness", Quoted *Cain*, p. 193.

⁵"Corinna's Going A-Maying, *Herrick*, p. 69.

⁶*Herrick*, p. 239. Musgrove ("Herrick's Alchemical Vocabulary", p. 250) sees "multiply" as a technically exact word; but in any case, whether the productivity is wild or under control, it remains within a marriage context.

"my Girles" are advised:

And when that ye wed
To the Bridall Bed,
Then multiply all, like to Fishes.

and in "Corinna" that marvellously fresh, energetic summons to "sweet-Slug-a-bed" to "Get up, get up", "Rise", "Come", it is to a festival likely to end in church vows. Besides the "green-gown...given" (presumably from grass-stains incurred while courting) and the 'Locks pickt' readers learn:

And some have wept, and woo'd, and plighted Troth,
And chose their Priest ere we can cast off sloth.¹

Wrong-doing consists, not in obeying the invitation from nature, but in ignoring it. Life was meant to be enjoyed:

Can such delights be in the street,
And open fields, and we not see't?
Come, we'll abroad; and let's obey
The Proclamation made for May:
And sin no more, as we have done, by staying;
But my *Corinna*, come, let's goe a Maying.²

"The Hockcart, or Harvest home"³ is an even more robust poem celebrating the harvest earned by "tough labours, and rough hands". "Rusticks...with their breeches rent" run and shout, eat and drink "till all be blythe".

Other "yeerly Festivalls",⁴ especially Christmas, are celebrated with similar gaiety in several lyrics. "The Wassaille"⁵

¹*Herrick*, p. 69.

²*Idem*, p. 68.

³*Idem*, pp. 101-102.

⁴"The Dirge of Jephthahs Daughter", *idem*, p. 361.

⁵*Idem*, pp. 178-179.

is a cheery offer of an "easy blessing" for those who welcome the singers in. Some songs such as "^{The}Ceremonies for Candlemasse day"¹ describe rural customs, like laying aside part of the Yule log for the following year to keep the Fiend away. The one called "Ceremony upon Candlemas Eve"² supplies an answer to anyone who would with Edmund Gosse call Herrick "the old pagan"³ or with Bush "neo-pagan":⁴

Down with the Holly, Ivie, all,
Wherewith ye drest the Christmas Hall:
That so the superstitious find
No one least Branch there left behind:
For look how many leaves there be
Neglected there (maids trust to me)
So many *Goblins* you shall see.⁵

Here Herrick is using a native custom believed in by "the superstitious". Similarly in "Another"⁶ he gives advice:

Let the superstitious wife
Near the child's heart lay a knife .

And in "Another to bring in the Witch"⁷ he chants

To house the Hag, you must doe this;
Commix with Meale a little Pisse
Of him bewicht....

¹*Idem*, p. 285.

²*Idem*, p. 304.

³"Robert Herrick", *Cornhill Magazine*, Aug. 1875, XXXII, 180. The term is used repeatedly.

⁴*Bush*, p. 116. Although, *Bush*, pp. 115-119, tries not to oversimplify, and mentions Herrick's native and Christian elements, he labels Herrick's final perception of the human condition unequivocally "pagan".

⁵"Ceremony upon Candlemas Eve", *Herrick*, p. 304.

⁶*Idem*, p. 284.

⁷*Idem*, p. 284.

As often the ritual is purely pagan, as in "A short hymne to Venus"¹ which concludes:

I will promise there shall be
Mirtles offer'd up to Thee.

Such a poem suggests that Robert Deming is being unduly solemn when he insists Herrick's use of classical ceremony is "a means to an end, the end being an awareness of divine order."²

The strongest mixture of Christian, pagan, alchemical and native rituals is used in "The Spell":³

Holy Water come and bring;
Cast in Salt, for seasoning:
Set the Brush for sprinkling:
Sacred Spittle bring ye hither;
Meale and it now mix together;
And a little Oyle to either:
Give the Tapers here their light,
Ring the *Saints-Bell*, to affright
Far from hence the evill Sp'rite.

When Herrick uses the word "wake" as a noun it is seldom possible to tell from the context whether he means the watching, drinking and feasting that followed death, or simply, as seems more likely, an annual village festival, as in "The Country life"⁴:

Thy Wakes, thy Quintels, here thou hast,
Thy May-poles too with Garlands grac't.

¹*Idem*, p. 136.

²"The Classical Ceremony of Robert Herrick", p. 338.

³*Herrick*, p. 258.

⁴*Idem*, p. 230. Milton similarly writes:

The Wood-Nymphs deckt with Daisies trim,
Their merry wakes and pastimes keep.

("Comus", *Milton*, 11, 179, ll.120-121).

Certainly the poem called "The Wake"¹ is merry with "Junketts", "Morris-dancers", "Pagentrie", a "Mimick", *Cudgell-Play*", "Ale" and "Beere"; all that is dying in it is the day itself.

Funeral ceremonies do have their place in *Hesperides* as might be expected of a poet continually aware of the inevitability of death. Sometimes they are directly from the classics, like the satiric "Anacreontike":²

Still I be Bousing;
For I know, in the Tombs
There's no Carousing.

Sometimes they are Catholic as in the references to "Some Relique of a Saint" and

...Requiems sung
For Saints and Soules departed hence.³

At other times they have both classical and Christian associations. The "dew" of the "dew-drink-offerings" in "To his lovely Mistresses"⁴ recalls the "continual dew of Thy blessings"⁵

¹*Idem*, p. 255.

²*Idem*, p. 197. This is derived, according to Martin (Commentary, p. 540.) from Anacreonta, 7, 8, and 40.

cf. Marvell's dry lines from "To his Coy Mistess":
The Grave's a fine and private place,
But none I think do there embrace.
(*Marvell*, p.28)

³"To Groves", *Herrick*, p. 169.

⁴*Idem*, p. 222.

⁵"Prayer for the clergy and people", *The Book of Common Prayer*, 1549, rev. edn. 1928, University Press, Cambridge, p. 126. This prayer is taken from the Sacramentary of Gelasius, A.D.492, and is found in all the old English primers. It was placed at the end of the first version of the Litany published in 1559. (E.Daniel, *The Prayer Book-its History, Language and Content*, 23rd edn. 1913, Wells, Gardner, Darton, London, p. 185).

of *The Book of Common Prayer* and the "drink" recalls the libations of milk and wine the ancients poured out for the dead.

"The Funerall Rites of the Rose", based closely on the Roman burial ceremony,¹ becomes an ironic comment on death and human recognition of it. Ritual may help reconcile those left to the fact of death, and may sanctify the dead; but it does not restore the rose to life.

A host of poems, as earnestly, ask that Herrick's own death be attended with due ceremony. "His charge to Julia at his death", "To Biancha" and, most fully, "To Perilla", set out the proper Roman rites but to Christian ends. The willingness to be "safely buryed",² to "haste away to mine eternal home,"³ is in keeping with the confidence of the closing couplet of "The Argument":

I write of *Hell*; I sing (and ever shall)
Of *Heaven*, and hope to have it after all.⁴

It is part of the natural order of things that a man, like a daffodil, must die; but he may or may not marry. Herrick wrote, with great fervour and gentle humour, poems of celebration of others' marriages, such as "A Nuptiall Song, or Epithalamie, on Sir Clipsey Crew and his Lady" and "An Epithalamie to Sir Thomas Southwell and his Ladie", with all the customary rites performed "for Ceremonies-sake".⁵ Sometimes the origin of customs was classical like the call "*Himen, O Himen*";⁶ sometimes native,

¹See Deming, *Ceremony and Art*, p. 114, who speculates on possible sources of all the details in this poem.

²"Divination by a Daffafill", *Herrick*, p. 38.

³"To Perilla", *idem*, p. 9.

⁴*Idem*, p. 5.

⁵"A Nuptiall Song...", *Herrick*, p. 115.

⁶*Ibid.* p. 113.

as, for instance, in the mention of "lucky-foure-leav'd grasse"¹; sometimes Hebraic like the comparison of a bride with a cornfield blessed by the Lord.² In one poem on a marriage entered in the Dean Prior registry, "The Entertainment: or Porch-verse at the Marriage of Mr Hen. Northly, and the most witty Mrs Lettice Yard,"³ Etruscan ceremonial supplies the setting.⁴ Whatever the kind of ceremony it is to be taken seriously:

God He rejects all Prayers that are sleight,
And want their Poise: words ought to have their weight.⁵

Herrick himself remained single. "The Poet loves a Mistresse but not to marry", he writes. And again:

The only comfort of my life
Is, that I never yet had a wife.⁶

Sometimes there is a touch of sharpness:

Suspicion, Discontent and Strife,
Come in for Dowrie with a Wife.⁷

To those who question the vicar's unmarried state, he has an answer:

¹*Ibid.*,

²*Ibid.*, p. 112. Martin, Commentary, p. 524, quotes Gen. XXVII, 27, "the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed".

³*Herrick*, p. 124.

⁴John Brand, *Observations in Popular Antiquities*, 1841, Charles Knight, London, p. 83. "All the ancient Missals mentioned at the beginning of the nuptial ceremony the placing of the man and woman before the door of the church...This custom is derived from the Ancient Etruscans." Missals had been altered under Edward the Sixth by the Parliamentary Reformation of Marriage, but evidently the custom lingered on. Martin (Commentary, 526) suggests that the 'Porch' was that of the bridegroom's house, which would suggest that this part of the ritual followed the service Herrick performed.

⁵"Prayers must have Poise", *Herrick*, p. 342.

⁶"His Comfort", *idem*, p. 320.

⁷"Single life most secure", *idem*, p. 49.

Some would know
 Why I so
 Long still doe tarry,
 And ask why
 Here that I
 Live, and not marry?
 Thus I those
 Doe oppose;
 What man would be here,
 Slave to Thrall,
 If at all
 He could live free here?¹

The nearest he came to wedlock was to take in his brother's widow as a companion for the years before she died,² as he tells in "No Spouse but a Sister".³ But he knew his own caution would not suit everyone. "To Silvia to wed"⁴ is a straight recommendation of marriage:

Away with doubts, all scruples hence remove:
No man at one time, can be wise, and love.

Edmund Gosse's assertion that Herrick did have a serious liaison with the Tomasin Parsons to whom he wrote a two-lined poem⁵ is based on an undated private note issued by Laud's secretary.⁶ The accusation was not, it seems ever proven and is certainly not substantiated by the poems Gosse uses to support it. In

¹"His Answer to a Question", *idem*, p. 12.

²See *Moorman*, pp. 125-126.

³*Herrick*, p. 13.

⁴*Idem*, p. 8.

⁵"On Tomasin Parsons", *idem*, p. 304.

⁶*Seventeenth Century Studies*, p. 123.

"Mr Hericke his daughter's Dowrye".¹ Herrick talks of extramarital behaviour as

A frost

Or A colde Poyson,

and advises the girl to bring her husband "A Mayden head".

And "The parting Verse, or charge to his supposed Wife when he travelled"² is one long plea for absolute faithfulness, especially spiritual faithfulness. The third poem "The suspition upon his over-much familiarity with a Gentlewoman"³ is a delicate answer to unjustified rumour and nothing else:

And must we part, because some say,
Loud is our love, and loose our play?

But whatever rumours are abroad, they know,

where no sin

Unbolts the doore, no shame comes in.

As for "my young Iulus....⁴ my hopefull Lad" mentioned in "His age...",⁵ he is just as imaginary as "my old leane wife" in the same poem.

(iii) Love.

Like many bachelors Herrick showed great interest, often erotic interest, in "many dainty Mistresses"⁶. Yet he insisted that a poet's lyrics were not to be taken as an indication of his behaviour:

¹Herrick, pp. 407-409.

²Idem, pp. 174-176. The poem belongs within the established tradition of poems to imaginary people. Compare Crawshaw's "Wishes: To his (supposed) Mistresse" or Cowley's "The Mistresse".

³Herrick, pp. 48-49.

⁴Patrick, p. 185, points out that Iulus was the mythical name of Ascanius, son of Aeneas.

⁵Idem, pp. 132-136.

⁶"Upon the losse of his Mistresses", idem, p. 15.

Wantons we are, and though our words be such,
 Our Lives do differ from our Lines by much.¹

Although the final couplet of the secular part of *Hesperides*,

To his Book's end this last line he'd have plac't,
Jocond his Muse was; but his Life was chast.²

is straight from Ovid,³ its deliberate placing surely gives it significance for a reading of Herrick's love lyrics. And it is supported by a much more personal poem, one of several entitled "Upon Himself" :

I co'd never love indeed;
 Never see mine own heart bleed:
 Never crucifie my life;
 Or for Widow, Maid, or Wife....
 But have hitherto liv'd free,
 As the aire that circles me:
 And kept credit with my heart,
 Neither broke i'th whole, or part.⁴

And he wrote "to his Tomb-maker",⁵ the lines:

Chaste I liv'd, without a wife,
 That's the Story of my life.

¹"Poets", *idem*, p. 218.

²*Idem*, p. 335.

³Martin, Commentary, p. 567. cites Ovid, *Trist*, II, 354:
 Vita verecunda est, Musa iocosa mea,

⁴*Herrick*, pp. 182-183.

⁵*Idem*, p. 199.

Herrick can supply a host of reasons to help the reader who does not want to love:

He that will not love, must be
 My Scholar, and learn this of me:
 There be in Love as many feares,
 As the Summers Corne has eares:
 Sighs, and sobs, and sorrowes more
 Then the sand, that makes the shore.¹

But he knows love can give pleasure too, and often openly revels in "*cleanly-Wantonnesse*:"

...the more I look, the more I prove,
 Ther's still more cause, why I the more should love.²

Herrick does not only exult in looking at his women, but in hearing, tasting, smelling and touching them too. Julia, for instance, has a voice "So smooth, so sweet, so silv'ry"³ that it could silence the damned, nipples that remind him of fresh cheese and cream, of cherries and strawberries,⁴ a breath that holds all the spices of the east,⁵ and a leg "as white and hair-less as an egge"⁶.

¹"Not to love", *idem*, p. 102.

²"To Perenna", *idem*, p. 10.

³"Upon Julia's voice", *idem*, p. 22.

⁴"Fresh Cheese and Cream", "Upon the Nipples of Julia's Breast", *idem*, pp. 183, 164. Musgrove considers the transmutation in both poems alchemical ("Herrick's Alchemical Vocabulary", p. 259.)

⁵"On Julia's breath", and "Upon Julia's unlacing her self", *idem*, pp. 69, 157.

⁶"Her Legs", *idem*, p. 139.

Such charms are not to be enjoyed at a distance. The imagery in "The Vine"¹ is as sensuous and as suggestive as anything in Carew or Suckling. And there are a number of eager invitations, such as this, "To Electra":²

Tis Ev'ning, my Sweet,
And dark; let us meet;
Long time w' ave here been a toying:
And never, as yet,
That season co'd get,
Wherein t'ave had an enjoying.

Or this, from "To Anthea":³

Let's kisse afresh, as when we first begun.
And yet, though Love likes well such Scenes as
these,
There is an Act that will more fully please:
Kissing and glancing, soothing, all make way
But to the acting of this private Play.

Not that the offers were ever accepted. He reports, after a dream session with Electra:

I kist thee (panting,) and I call
Night to the Record! that was all.⁴

Several poems describe advances refused. In "The Vision",⁵ for instance, Herrick describes an attempt to kisse the imaginary "happy dawning of her thigh":

¹*Idem*, pp. 16-17.

²*Idem*, p. 195.

³*Idem*, p. 24.

⁴"The Vision to Electra", *idem*, p. 20.

⁵"The Vision", *idem*, p. 51.

But she forbad me, with a wand
 Of Mirtle she had in her hand:
 And chiding me, said, Hence, Remove,
Herrick, thou art too coarse to love.

The scene with Anthea is delicate:

Anthea bade me tye her shooe;
 I did; and kist the Instep too:
 And would have kist unto her knee,
 Had not her Blush rebuked me.¹

Herrick's justification for such verses,

Demure, but yet, full of temptation too²

is based on the old idea that poetry must delight:

*Numbers ne'r tickle or but lightly please,
 Unlesse they have some wanton carriages.*³

Some of Herrick's love poems, like some of his accounts of ceremony, are straight from the classics, as is the couplet "On Love" beginning "Love is a kind of warre".⁴

Others are comments on such superficialities as cosmetics:

No fault in women, to lay on
 The tincture of *Vermillion*:
 And there to give the cheek a die
 Of white, where nature doth deny.⁵

Or, in contrast to that:

You say y'are sweet; how sho'd we know
 Whether that you be sweet or no?
 From *Powders* and *Perfumes* keep free;
 Then we shall smell how sweet you be.⁶

¹"The shooe tying", *idem*, p. 14.

²"A request to the Graces", *idem*, p. 290.

³*Ibid.*

⁴*Herrick*, p. 280. Martin (Commentary, p. 557) cites as the source Ovid, *Ars Am*, II, 233-234.

⁵"No fault in women", *idem*, p. 118.

⁶"On a perfum'd Lady", *idem*, p. 112.

At other times he is much more serious; especially in poems which are not love poems he shows his conviction that women should be faithful and fertile. Like "thy lady" in Jonson's "To Penshurst"¹ who is "fruitfull, chaste withall", Herrick's brother's wife,

by chaste intentions led,
Gives thee each night a Maidenhead.²

"Upon a Lady that dyed in child-bed, and left a daughter behind her"³ indicates that a woman, like a flower, had served her purpose once her "own faire print was set" in her child.

On rare occasions, as when he asks Julia,

Why do'st thou wound, and break my heart?⁴

or in the poem "To Sycamores"⁵ where the experiences of love are called "*Crucifixions*", Herrick does show some awareness of "the fire, and martyrdom of love".⁶ Sometimes he wonders about the endless "new misterie".⁷ More often, as has been seen, he is simply acknowledging the pleasures of love "With some small stock of innocence."⁸ There are many love poems in English more passionate

¹*Words*, VIII, 96.

²"A Country life: to his Brother, M. Tho: Herrick", *Herrick*, p. 35 and again, in "Julia's Churching", p. 286:

*She who keeps chastly to her husband s side
Is not for one, but every night his Bride.*

³*Idem*, p. 126.

⁴"His Covenant or Protestation to Julia", *idem*, p. 328.

⁵*Idem*, p. 158.

⁶"To Groves", *idem*, p. 169.

⁷"A Nuptiall Song...", *idem*, p. 115.

⁸"To Anthea", *idem*, p. 277.

than those Herrick wrote. But there is surely no love poem more delicate than that to Electra beginning "I dare not ask a kisse",¹ nor any more dedicated than that "To Anthea, who may command him anything".²

(iv) Youth and the passage of time.

Such poems as urge the woman to "goe marry:"³ or even to "goe a Maying"⁴ are all part of the persistent contemporary awareness that time is relentless, youth precious, and that no second of "those mites of Time, which yet remain unspent"⁵ should be wasted. Ronsard had pleaded "Cueilles, cueilles, votre jeunesse".⁶ And other Caroline lyricists besides Herrick took up the cry, in poems like "Perswasions to enjoy"⁷ and "To a Lady in a Garden".⁸ Like Carew and Waller, Herrick makes a host of invitations to pleasures of different kinds, each followed by sombre warnings against delay:

That Age is best, which is the first,
When Youth and Blood are warmer;
But being spent, the worse, and worst
Times, still succeed the former.⁹

¹"To Electra", *idem*, p. 231.

²*Idem*, pp. 108-109.

³"To the Virgins, to make much of Time", *idem*, p. 84. Like so many of the poems in this *carpe diem* tradition, this poem has classical and Renaissance antecedents. Martin (Commentary, pp. 517-518) illustrates from Ausonius, Philostratus and Catullus, as collected by Burton.

⁴"Corinna's going a Maying", *Herrick*, p. 68.

⁵"Upon himself", *idem*, p. 171.

⁶"Ode à Cassandre", *Pierre de Ronsard: Poemes*, ed. A. Barbier, 1946, Oxford, p. 43.

⁷Carew, p. 16.

⁸Waller, p. 113.

⁹"To the Virgins...", *Herrick*, p. 84.

Come, let us goe, while we are in our prime;
 And take the harmlesse follie of the time.
 We shall grow old apace, and die
 Before we know our liberty.
 Our life is short; and our dayes run
 As fast away as do's the Sunne.¹

Lets now take our time;
 While w'are in our Prime;
 And old, old Age is a farre off:
 For the evill evill dayes
 Will come on apace;
 Before we can be aware of.²

While Fate permits us, let's be merry;
 Passe all we must the fatall Ferry:
 And this our life too whirles away,
 With the Rotation of the Day.³

You are young, but must be old,
 And, to these, ye must be told,
 Time, ere long, will come and plow
 Loathed Furrowes in your brow.⁴

In such poems there is never a hint of any suggestion that maturity may, in some respects, enhance beauty.⁵ Physically, age is ruinous:

¹"Corinna's going a Maying", *idem*, p. 69.

²"To be merry", *idem*, p. 267.

³"To enjoy the Time", *idem*, p. 172.

⁴"The Changes to Corinna", *idem*, p. 97.

⁵As in poems such as "The Autumnal", Donne, pp. 92-94, or "The Folly of being Comforted", *The Collected Poems of W.B. Yeats*, 1952, Macmillan, London, p. 86.

Wrinkles no more are, or no lesse,
Then beauty turn'd to sowernesse.¹

Poetry can outlive "time that cut'st down all"². So can precious stones, the stock-in-trade of the goldsmith:

. . . that *Rubie*, which you weare,
Sunk from the tip of your soft eare,
Will last to be a precious Stone,
When all your world of Beautie's gone.³

But living things, including himself, cannot last.

For all his reminders to others of the transience and the ravaging effects of time, Herrick appears to accept both the processes of his own aging and the certainty of death calmly and without resentment. In one poem "To a Gentlewoman, objecting to him his grey haire"⁴ he quietly points out that aging is a universal human condition. In another "To his Girles who would have him sportfull",⁵ he explains ^{he} "can't...be gamesome (aged now)". And "His age dedicated to his peculiar friend, M. John Wickes, under the name of Posthumus"⁶ gives a realistic little picture of how he expects he and his friend Weeks, already in their fifties,⁷ will look:

And so we'l sit
By' th' fire, foretelling snow and slit,
And weather by our aches, grown
Now old enough to be our own.⁸

¹"Upon wrinkles", *Herrick*, p. 143.

²"His Poetrie his Pillar", *idem*, p. 85.

³"To Dianeme", *idem*, p. 61.

⁴*Idem*, p. 63.

⁵*Idem*, p. 329.

⁶*Idem*, pp. 132-136.

⁷A ripe age already, for the seventeenth century, although Herrick himself lived to be eighty-three.

⁸*Idem*, p. 135.

Herrick accepted the idea of death with similar equanimity. Like John Donne he had the thought of death constantly in his mind and wrote many poems wholly or partly about it. But there is nothing of the anguish of a poem like "A Hymne to God the Father",¹ or the defiance of, say, Holy Sonnet X, "Death be not proud",² in Herrick's verse. Sometimes there is a hint of despair at the finality of death:

Lost to the world; lost to my selfe; alone
Here now I rest under this Marble stone:
In depth of silence, heard, and seene of none.³

More often death is seen as the sleep before the Resurrection:

Let me sleep this night away,
Till the Dawning of the day:
Then at th'opening of mine eyes,
I, and all the world, shall rise.⁴

In this securer place we'l keep,
As lull'd asleep;
Or for a little time we'le lye,
As Robes laid by;
To be another day re-worne,
Turn'd, but not torn.⁵

Life, death, regeneration, are all part of the divine pattern, taught by the flowers:

¹ *Donne*, p. 369.

² *Idem*, p. 326.

³ "On Himselfe", *Herrick*, p. 298. *Parker*, p. 113, points out that this comes straight from the Greek Anthology.

⁴ "Upon himselfe being buried", *Herrick*, p. 199.

⁵ "His Winding-sheet", *idem*, p. 190.

When a Daffadill I see,
 Hanging down his head 'twards me;
 Guesse I may, what I must be:
 First, I shall decline my head;
 Secondly, I shall be dead;
 Lastly, safely buried.¹

Fair blossoms, his spaniel, a child; a young girl, a matron of many children, his dying brother, William, and the poet himself all have their place, created, living, aging, dying, in accordance with the natural seasonal order:

Die ere long I'm sure, I shall;
 After leaves, the tree must fall.²

(v) Times transhifting.

By the time of the publication of *Hesperides*, the "cleavers stroke"³ had not yet severed the monarch's head from his body, but civil unrest and war had disrupted the natural order throughout England. Although Edmund Gosse described Herrick as "undisturbed by the political crisis",⁴ and even a critic as recent and reputable as Douglas Bush could say that Herrick "in a troubled age is largely content to create a timeless Arcadia",⁵ there is within Herrick's canon abundant evidence that he was prepared to comment on the maelstrom of the 1640's. The very timing of the publication of such a volume as *Hesperides*, four years after the parliamentary ordinance against such festivals as were held at Christmas,⁶ and the year after

¹"Divination by a Daffadill", *idem*, p. 38.

²"After Autumne, Winter", *idem*, p. 321.

³"All things decay and die", *idem*, p. 23.

⁴"Robert Herrick", p. 176.

⁵*Bush*, p. 115.

⁶The 1644 ordinance of the Long Parliament. See *Cain*, p. 200.

Herrick was dismissed from the parish for open loyalty to his imprisoned king, can be seen as a brave act of defiance, worthy of a poet ready to be "Brought at the last to th'utmost bit".¹ Lines like these, addressed "To his Booke", surely suggest awareness of the danger:

*He's greedie of his life, who will not fall,
When as a publick ruine bears down All.*²

Although until 1647 Herrick had been living far from the political and military action he knew well what was happening in England. "A Pastorall sung to the King"³ opens with Montano's words, "Bad are the times" and his shepherd companions chime in with agreement. The whole poem is full of references to the fact that "*Amarillis*" - or Henrietta Maria - had left England.

Even the light veil supplied by the pastoral form was flung aside in other poems. The Queen's absence is openly described in "To the King and Queene, upon their unhappy distances",⁴ and Herrick cries "Woe, woe to them" that caused it. Another warning is sounded in the ominous little poem called "Liberty":⁵

Those illls that mortall men endure,
So long are capable of cure,
As they of freedome may be sure:
But that deni'd; a griefe, though small,
Shakes the whole Roofe, or ruines all.

¹"To God, in time of plundering", *Herrick*, p. 376.

²*Idem*, p. 155.

³*Idem*, p. 159.

⁴*Idem*, p. 26.

⁵*Idem*, p. 153.

"To his Friend, on the untuneable Times"¹ describes the spiritual effect the war was having on Herrick's poetry.

Griefe, (my deare friend) has first my Harp unstrung;
Wither'd my hand, and palsie-struck my tongue.

So does "His change":²

My many cares and much distress,
Has made me like a wilderness:
Or (discompos'd) I'm like a rude,
And all confused multitude:
Out of my comely manners worne;
And as in meanes, in minde all torne.

The bitterest most desolate comments come in "Upon the troublesome times":³

O! Times most bad,
Without the scope
Of hope
Of better to be had!
Where shall I goe,
Or whither run
To shun
This publicke overthrow?

No places are
(This I am sure)
Secure
In this our wasting Warre.

¹*Idem*, p. 84.

²*Idem*, p. 312.

³*Idem*, p. 211.

Yet through all his distress that "Sick is the Land to' th' heart",¹ Herrick stays hopeful that the grim disease will pass with "the flying minute":²

Thus times do shift; each thing his turne do's hold;
*New things succeed, as former things grow old.*³

A poem like "Far well Frost, or welcome the Spring"⁴ shows Herrick at his best, sensitive at the same time to small matters and great, and able to stand back and comment with quiet assurance that eventually a political spring will come to England "And *Charles* here Rule, as he before did Raign":⁵

And look how when a frantick Storme doth tear
 A stubborn Oake, or Holme (long growing there)
 But lul'd to calmnesse, then succeeds a breeze
 That scarcely stirs the nodding leaves of Trees:
 So when this War (which tempest-like doth spoil
 Our salt, our Corn, our Honie, Wine, and Oile)
 Falls to a temper, and doth mildly cast
 His inconsiderate Frenzie off (at last)
 The gentle Dove may, when these turmoils cease,
 Bring in her Bill, once more, *the Branch of Peace.*⁶

¹"The bad season makes the Poet sad", *idem*, p. 214.

²"His Poetrie his Pillar", *idem*, p. 85.

³"Ceremonies for Candlemasse Eve", *idem*, p. 285.

⁴*Idem*, p. 224-225. The opening couplet is straight from Horace, *Carm.* IV, Ode 7, "Spring's Return" (*Horace*, p. 311) as is Herrick's certainty that peace will follow civil war, as surely as spring follows winter.

⁵"The bad season", *idem*, p. 214.

⁶"Far well Frost, or welcome the Spring", *idem*, p. 225.

In earlier years,¹ like many other court lyricists, Herrick had written a number of occasional poems for the royal family and for the establishment. Charles I was offered the choice of any poem from Herrick's "*great Realme of Poetry*",² as his own, Henrietta Maria was invited to rest in "*This Sacred Grove*"³ and the *Hesperides* itself was dedicated "To the Most Illustrious, and Most Hopefull Prince Charles; Prince of *Wales*".⁴ "To the King, To cure the Evill"⁵ is based on the current belief that the royal touch could cure terrible diseases.⁶ The king's military progress was celebrated in poems like "Upon his comming with his Army into the West", and "Upon his taking of Leicester", a "high *Doxologie*" was written "To Prince Charles upon his coming to Exeter"⁷ when the fifteen-year-old prince took up arms in 1645. Two years later, when Charles I, in custody of the army, was delivered ingloriously to Hampton Court the move was made a cause for rejoicing:

Welcome now, and come
To repossess once more your long'd-for home.
A thousand Altars smoake; a thousand thighes
Of Beeves here ready stand for Sacrifice.
Enter and prosper.⁸

¹In the 1620's Herrick was certainly a court lyricist, and he remained one in sympathy after he took up his parish in Devon.

²"To the King", *idem*, p. 107.

³"To the Queene", *idem*, p. 107.

⁴*Idem*, p. 3.

⁵*Idem*, pp. 61-62.

⁶See *Patrick*, p. 90.

⁷*Herrick*, p. 254.

⁸"To the King, Upon his welcome to Hampton-Court", *idem*, p. 300.

Herrick believing,

'Tis not the Walls, or purple, that defends

A Prince from Foes; but 'tis his Fort of Friends.¹

also praised supporters of Charles I liberally. The poem written for the king's favourite, "To the High and Noble Prince, GEORGE, Duke, Marquesse, and Earle of Buckingham"² is sheer adulation, but may have earned Herrick his appointment as one of Buckingham's chaplains on the expedition to the Isle of Rhé, in 1627.

"To Sir John Berkley, Governour of Exeter",³ commended the "brave man" whose "loyall prooffe" was to hold Exeter for Charles from 1641-1643. "To the Lord Hopton, on his fight in Cornwall"⁴, was written to the commander whom Marchette Chute called "the king's most valuable asset in the West"⁵. "To the right gracious Prince, Lodwick, Duke of Richmond and Lenox"⁶ praised the sole survivor of three Royalist brothers.⁷ And Herrick wrote several memorial poems for those who died in Charles I's forces, such as William Lawes, the musician, and Lord Bernard Stuart, both killed during the seige of Chester.⁸

General disapproval of the political turn is expressed in many of Herrick's couplets, such as these:

Preposterous is that Government, (and rude)
When Kings obey the wilder Multitude.⁹

¹"True safety", *idem*, p. 244.

²*Idem*, p. 99.

³*Idem*, pp. 251-252.

⁴*Idem*, p. 310.

⁵*Chute*, p. 237.

⁶*Herrick*, p. 170.

⁷*Patrick* states that Herrick had his facts confused. The poem, it seems, should have been addressed "To the right gracious Prince, James Stuart...". For details see *Patrick*, p. 228.

⁸*Chute*, p. 237.

⁹"Ill Government", *Herrick*, p. 196.

Let Kings Command, and doe the best they may,
The saucie Subjects still will beare the sway.¹

The seeds of *Treason* choake up as they spring,
*He Acts the Crime, that gives it Cherishing.*²

Men are suspicious; prone to discontent:
*Subjects still loath the present Government.*³

Incidental political comments are made in longer poems. "A New-yeares gift sent to Sir Simeon Steward"⁴ opens:

No newes of Navies burnt at Seas:
No noise of late spawn'd *Tittyries*:
No closset plot, or open vent,
That frights men with a Parliament.⁵

Deeply loyal, he could even write, without a trace of disapproval at the punishment, a taunting epigram on a Puritan whose ears had been cropped.

Is *Zelot* pure? he is: ye see he weares
The signe of *Circumcision* in his eares.⁶

Royalist though he was, like Ben Jonson Herrick did not refrain from the occasional thrust at courtly behaviour and extravagance.

"Undreadfull too of courtly thunderclaps",⁷ he had heard,

that too-true-Report,
Vice rules the Most, or All at Court.⁸

¹"The power in the people", *idem*, p. 138.

²"Treason", *idem*, p. 10.

³"Present Government grievous", *idem*, p. 291.

⁴*Idem*, p. 126.

⁵*Patrick*, (p. 173) mentions rumours of the navy being burnt in the 1620's, and again during the civil war, and describes a secret brotherhood known as the "Tytere tues" (from the opening of Virgil's *Eclogues*) to which Herrick may have belonged.

⁶"Upon Zelot", *Herrick*, p. 232.

⁷"The Christian Militant", *idem*, p. 128.

⁸"A Country life", *idem*, p. 37..

And he knew graft was rife in high places, bitterly commenting:

Dead falls the Cause, if once the Hand be mute;
But let that speak, the Client gets the suit.¹

Conversely Sir John Berkley is specifically commended for being "just and itchlesse",² or not susceptible to such corruption.

In several poems Herrick reproves extortion of the poor. "His Winding-sheet"³ shows sympathy with "weeping Widowes long opprest".

No Widowes Tenement was rackt to guild
Or fret thy Seeling,⁴

he wrote in "A Panegerick to Sir Lewis Pemberton". And the implication that other wealthy men did force the poor to pay for their extravagance is repeated in "The poore mans part"⁵:

Tell me rich man, for what intent
Thou load'st with gold thy vestiment?
When as the poore crie out, to us
Belongs all gold superfluous.

Glimpses of other aspects of English life occur frequently in Herrick's poetry. Sometimes he makes brief general observations such as this:

Two things do make society to stand;
The first *Commerce* is, and the next *Command*.⁶

¹"Bribes and Gifts get all", *idem*, p. 123.

²"To Sir John Berkley", *idem*, p. 252.

³*Idem*, pp. 189-190.

⁴*Idem*, p. 149. cf. John Collop's line:

Thou pluck'st no houses down to rear thy own,
("A Character of a Compleat Gentleman",) *Rare Poems of the Seventeenth Century*, p. 29.

⁵*Idem*, p. 394.

⁶"Society", *idem*, p. 275.

Sometimes he depicts "Tarts and Custards, Creams and Cakes",¹ or the "tempting Frumentie"² of harvest festivities, or sings mock-idolatr^ous praises^f whatever gives pleasure, such as his loved sack.³ Sometimes he compares a country life to that of those whose business takes them out of England, and can involve great worry:

Nor are thy daily and devout affaires
 Attended with those desp'rate cares,
 Th' industrious Merchant has; who for to find
 Gold, runneth to the Western Inde,
 And back again, (tortur'd with fears).⁴

Endymion Porter has the comforts of his "sweet Country life" contrasted to the stress undergone by others:

Thou never Plow'st the Oceans foame
 To seek, and bring rough Pepper home:
 Nor to the Eastern Ind dost rove
 To bring fromthence the scorched Clove,
 Nor, with the losse of thy lov'd rest,
 Bring'st home the Ingot from the West.⁵

Poems like "To his worthy Friend, M. Tho. Fa(conbirge)", and "To his kinsman, Sir Th. Soame" touch on the lives of civic dignitaries Herrick knew. Others like "To the King, To cure the Evill" and "To the Fever, not to trouble Julia" remind the reader of the terrors of sickness in that age of plagues. Not that Herrick, "A man prepar'd against all ill^s to come"⁶ was worried about his own health. He could keep "his own strong guard"⁷ against such trials by prayer, earnest or,

¹"The Wake", *idem*, p. 255.

²"The Hock-cart", *idem*, p. 101.

³"The Welcome to Sack", *idem*, pp. 77-79.

⁴"A Country life...", *idem*, p. 36.

⁵"The Country life...", *idem*, p. 229.

⁶"The Christian Militant", *idem*, p. 128.

⁷*Ibid.*

as in this delightful example, impudent:

When the artlesse Doctor sees
No one hope, but of his Fees,
And his skill runs on the lees;
Sweet Spirit comfort me!¹

Herrick's numerous epigrams and quaint gnomie couplets themselves supply a mass of information on the times, and on Herrick's reactions to people around him. "Upon Gorgonius",² for instance, makes it clear that barbers were also dentists. It illustrates, too, Herrick's fascination with physical ugliness of any kind:

Unto *Pastillus* rank *Gorgonius* came,
To have a tooth twitcht out of's native frame.
Drawn was his tooth; but stanke so, that some say,
The Barber stopt his Nose, and ranne away.

Gorgonius's stinking tooth, Blinks's pimples,³ Megg's blocked nose,⁴ Peapes sucking his teeth⁵ or Mudge washing his toothless gums⁶ all pass a shudder on to the reader. Since some of the names used - Scrobble, Mudge, Dundridge and Coone - appear also on the Dean Prior register,⁷ Herrick must surely have assumed that such "people currish"⁸ would not ever read his poems.

(v) Fairy Poetry.

Unlike the epigrams, which have never received the attention they could repay, Herrick's fairy poetry has been examined seriously, mainly by that very useful French critic, Floris Delattre.⁹

¹"His Letanie, to the Holy Spirit", *Herrick*, p. 347.

²*Idem*, p. 323.

³"Upon Blinks", *idem*, p. 273.

⁴"Upon Megg", *idem*, p. 296.

⁵"Upon Adam Peapes", *idem*, p. 273.

⁶"Upon Mudge", *idem*, p. 203.

⁷See *Chute*, p. 207. Martin in his Commentary and Patrick in his footnotes also point this out repeatedly.

⁸"To Dean-bourn", *Herrick*, p. 29.

⁹See *English Fairy Poetry*, and *Robert Herrick et la Poésie Lyrique*, pp. 307-417.

In *English Fairy Poetry* Delattre sees Herrick as taking fairy themes "to the height of elaborateness"¹ shortly before the Puritans denounced fairy poetry as sacrilegious and superstitious.²

Except for one short epitaph,³ the first of any of Herrick's poems to be published was probably the version of part of *Oberon's Feast*⁴ which appeared in a small volume printed in 1634 entitled *A Description of the King and Queene of Fayries, their habit, fare, their abode, pompe, and state. Beeing very delightfull to the sense, and full of mirth.*

Herrick's fairy poetry is of three kinds. There are several long poems which belong to the fairy tradition of Shakespeare, Drayton, Browne, Corbett and Sir Simeon Steward, the tradition that interests Delattre. Then there are the short incantations which use local superstitions to keep harm away. Lastly there are the incidental fairy references which are sometimes slid into the most unexpected places.

"The Court of *Mab*, and of the *Fairie-King*"⁵ which occupies the first and major part of Herrick's fairy poetry, is recreated with the utmost delicacy. "The Beggar to *Mab*, the *Fairie Queen*"⁶ and "*Oberons Feast*"⁷ are both concerned with the fairies' diet, and both use the same material. The Beggar, for instance, talks of "Floure of Fuz-balls", while Oberon is presented with "A Little Fuz-ball-pudding". "*Oberons Palace*"⁸ is a delightfully cheeky bride-song,

Where we'le present our *Oberon* led
Halfe tipsie to the *Fairie Bed*,
Where *Mab* he finds.

¹*English Fairy Poetry*, p. 172.

²*Ibid.*, p. 184.

³"Upon Elizabeth Herrick". See Introduction, *Herrick*, p. xxiv.

⁴Called, as in that volume, "A Description of his Dyet", this piece appears in Appendix B, *idem*, pp. 454-455.

⁵"The Argument", *idem*, p. 5.

⁶*Idem*, pp. 223-223.

⁷*Idem*, pp. 119-120.

⁸*Idem*, pp. 165-168.

Robert Deming sees Herrick's fairy poems as a retreat through art from the real world¹, but there is nothing idyllic or artificial about a partly inebriated bridegroom. Rather Herrick is presenting a glimpse of the real world in miniscule, much as Drayton did in *Nymphidia*.

The second kind of poem comes nearer necromancy with this kind of advice:

Thwart all Wizzards, and with these
Dead all black contingencies.²

It includes superstitious "charmes" to bring in the witch, or to keep her away, and is steeped in native ritual. Yet at the same time it remains within a Christian context:

Bring the holy crust of Bread,
Lay it underneath the head;
'Tis a certain Charm to keep
Hags away, while Children sleep.³

Herrick saw nothing incongruous in the use of the "holy crust" with its associations of the communion bread, in such a chant. The same lore provides the basis for another poem:

If ye feare to be affrighted
When ye are (by chance) benighted:
In your Pocket for a trust,
Carrie nothing but a Crust:
For that holy piece of Bread,
Charmes the danger, and the dread.⁴

¹*Ceremony and Art*, p. 19. This interpretation is of course, consistent with Deming's attitude to Herrick's country verse mentioned above (pp. 394-395) and equally unacceptable.

²"To Biancha, to blesse him", *Herrick*, p. 286.

³"Charmes", *idem*, p. 284.

⁴"Another", *idem*, p. 323.

In "To the Genius of his house"¹ he gives clerical advice with impunity:

Next, like a Bishop consecrate my ground,
That luckie Fairies here may dance their Round.

And the lively poem, "The Hag",² has "the Devill and shee" riding through the storm together.

Finally Herrick's mock serious fairy imagery can be noticed, especially in his poems to women. His mistresses, for example, are called "my pretty *Witchcrafts*"³.

In "The meddow verse",⁴ Mistris Bridget Lowman is called "Lady of this Fairie land". And the most magical of all Herrick's poems is "The Night-piece, to Julia": examined earlier for its resemblance to Jonson's song, "The faery beame vppon you"⁵.

(vi) Hell and Heaven.

Useful as it is, as an indication of Herrick's themes "The Argument of his Book"⁶ can only be taken loosely. This is especially true of the final couplet:

I write of *Hell*; I sing (and ever shall)
Of *Heaven*, and hope to have it after all.

Neither hell nor heaven receives much explicit attention in *Hesperides*. The one has three couplets and a four lined poem given to it, the other two couplets and two short poems - all in *Noble Numbers*.

¹*Idem*, p. 245.

²*Idem*, p. 225.

³"To his Mistresses", *idem*, p. 10.

⁴*Idem*, p. 140.

⁵*Idem*, p. 217. See also above, pp. 359-360.

⁶*Idem*, p. 5.

A little like Carew who at one stage announced,

Then, I no more shall court the verdant Bay,
But the dry leavelesse Trunke on *Golgotha*,¹

Herrick in "His farwell vnto Poetrie"² stated he would no longer write of "Flame, and Rapture":

I, my desires screw from thee, and directe
Them and my Thoughts to that sublim'd respecte
And Conscience vnto Preist-hood.

Later in the same poem he is more emphatic:

Knowe yet (rare soule) when my diuiner Muse
Shall want a Hand-mayde, (as she ofte will vse)
Bee readye.

Taken narrowly, Herrick's "diuiner Muse" can be said to have produced "His Noble Numbers: or his Pious Pieces". But if Herrick is thought of along Delattre's lines as 'pure Christian',³ both hell and heaven appear as underlying themes of a great many of Herrick's lyrics. Hell can be seen not only as the "future-biting penurie"⁴ but also as the "evill evill dayes" which, Herrick so often warns, "will come on apace"⁵ and even as the "untuneable Times"⁶ in which he writes with difficulty. Jephthah's daughter's virgins moan "'Tis we are dead, though not i' th' grave."⁷ Even a poem as bursting with joy and vitality as "Corinna's going a-Maying"⁸ has

¹"To my worthy friend Master Geo. Sands...", *Carew*, p. 94.

²*Herrick*, pp. 410-412.

³"Honnête chrétien", *Robert Herrick*, p. 500. cf. with Gosse or even Bush, as quoted above, p. 397.

⁴"To his ever-loving God", *Herrick*, p. 352.

⁵"To be merry", *idem*, p. 267.

⁶"To his Friend, on the untuneable Times", *idem*, p. 84.

⁷"The Dirge of Jephthahs Daughter: sung by the Virgins", *idem*, p. 361.

⁸*Idem*, p. 67-69.

within it the mention of shame, weeping, profanation, decay, sin, and endless night.

Heaven is also treated both conventionally and imaginatively. A sincere, protestant clergyman, for all his talk of censers and incense,¹ Herrick described heaven as a place of mercy in poems like "To Heaven" and "The Summe and the Satisfaction", the resting place he hoped for, "after all".²

I do believe, the good, and I,
Shall live with Him eternally:
I do believe, I shall inherit
Heaven, by Christs mercies, not my merit.³

"On Heaven"⁴ presents this inheritance pictorially:

O happy place!
Where all have Grace,
And Garlands shar'd
For their reward;
Where each chaste Soule
In long white stole,
And Palmes in hand,
Do ravisht stand;
So in a ring,
The praises sing
Of Three in One,
That fill the Throne;
While Harps, and Violls then
To Voices, say, *Amen*.

But there is another kind of heaven, "Gods eternall sphere"⁵ in Herrick's poetry, not the realm where the Christian may hope to be after death, but part of mortal existence. Herrick's way of

¹As in "To God", *idem*, p. 368.

²"The Argument", *idem*, p. 5.

³"His Creed", *idem*, p. 359.

⁴*Idem*, p. 369.

⁵"Sin", *idem*, p. 367.

identifying people with plants, his mistress with a tulip¹
or himself with a vine,² continues into an identification of
heaven with the natural world,

a present God-like Power,
Imprinted in each Herbe and Flower.³

Not only are Herrick's poems referred to as "This Sacred Grove,"⁴
but in the poem, "To Groves",⁵ trees become symbols for love and
faith:

each tree here

Some Relique of a Saint doth weare.

Ancient rituals⁶ become gaily sanctified in "Corinna's going
a-Maying",⁷

see how

Devotion gives each House a Bough,
Or Branch: Each Porch, each doore, ere this,
An Arke a Tabernacle is
Made up of white-thorn neatly enterwove.

The setting for active enjoyment of all "the harmlesse follie of
the time" involved in the Mayday celebration of fecundity, has
become itself part of heaven on earth. Nor does this only happen
in a poem like "Corinna" rooted in ancient and native fertility rites.
In "An Epithalamie to Sir Thomas Southwell and his Ladie",⁸

¹"A Meditation for his Mistresse", *idem*, p. 87.

²"The Vine", *idem*, p. 16.

³"The Country life", *idem*, p. 230.

⁴"To the Queene", *idem*, p. 107.

⁵*Idem*, p. 169.

⁶*Patrick*, p. 100, traces the custom of carrying branches and palm fronds to *Lev. xxiii*, 40-42, "Ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees...and ye shall rejoice before the Lord."

⁷*Herrick*, p. 67-69.

⁸*Idem*, p. 53-57.

Herrick prays:

On your minutes, hours, dayes, months, years,
Drop the fat blessing of the sphears.
That good, which Heav'n can give
To make you bravely live;
Fall, like a spangling dew,
By day, and night on you.

Such a plea indicates that behind a couplet as serious as that which closes "The Argument", stands Herrick's immense capacity for appreciation of the good in life. The reverent close of the light and fanciful survey of themes in "The Argument" seems almost accidental; but it is repeated more significantly in Herrick's placing of *Noble Numbers* within but at the end of *Hesperides*. It is this sureness of touch that led Robert B. Hinman to write of Herrick, "He gives discipline and control the look and feel of childlike freedom."¹

Both Carew and Herrick were consummate artists; but while careful thought and sensitivity distinguish Carew, Herrick is the poet of "fantastick Pannicles",² and more apparently carefree because so determined not to waste the flying minute:³

*Whose life with care is overcast,
That man's not said to live but last.*⁴

Unlike Carew, "notre fantasque Robin"⁵ is not listed by Leavis among the poets in the main line of wit; but in his love of friends, family, his appreciation of living things, his delightful sense of

¹"The Apotheosis of Faust: Poetry and New Philosophy in the Seventeenth Century", *Metaphysical Poetry*, pp. 149-179.

²Not every day fit for Verse! *Herrick*, p. 242.

³"His Poetry his Pillar, *idem*, p. 85.

⁴"A Paranaeticall, or Advisive Verse to his friend, M. John Wicks", *idem*, p. 233.

⁵*Delattre*, p. 500.

fun, his bold comments on the world around him, and his insistence on the worth of human joy,¹ he is a poet able to repay long attention. That he continued to sing while men were dying in civil war does not mean that he did not hear the fire, but that he was determined his voice would soar above it until equilibrium was restored. Robert Herrick is a poet who fulfilled "His desire".²

Give me a man that is not dull,
 When all the world with rifts is full:
 But unamaz'd dares clearely sing,
 When as the roof's a tottering:
 And, though it falls, continues still
 Tickling the *Citterne* with his quill.

¹Delattre calls him, so rightly, "avant tout le poète de la joie humaine", *ibid.*, p. 506.

²*Herrick*, p. 318.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION

By birth, accident or deserts, the secular poets of Charles I's reign were privileged men, soundly educated in Latin, in Greek, in rhetoric and philosophy, and in systems of argument and debate. They were from, or attached to, families of wealth and social standing, and to the court where culture of all kinds was valued and fostered. They saw and enjoyed fine living and showed this in their verse; but they had also learnt both from classical literature and from the increasing political bitterness that was to shake the nation into civil war, that the trappings of courtly life were of limited importance and duration.

The glories of our blood and state,
Are shadows, not substantial things.¹

Shirley's poem is widely known, yet the rest of his work, like that of many of his contemporaries is almost unknown. Occasionally some scholar makes an incidental comment showing a high estimation of early Caroline verse. Douglas Bush, for instance, talks of "the soaring fire which in this age was distributed with such pentecostal generosity."² But in comparison with, say, Herbert or Donne, Herrick and

¹"The glories of our blood and state", *The Dramatic Works and Poems of James Shirley*, VI, 397.

²*Bush*, p. 126.

Carew, and even Jonson, have received less attention than is their due.¹ Jonson is widely known as a dramatist, Herrick as an anthology poet, and Carew hardly at all; and yet each of them wrote a fine collection of poems which increases in significance when considered in relation to his other work, and to the whole poetic tradition of the time.

A considerable proportion of the poems of the day, including all those by Carew and Herrick, could be called lyrical, for they were relatively short and were of a kind that might be set to music. But this does not mean that there was any restriction on subject matter. Wesley Trimpf quotes Scaliger who in turn is using Horace, direct or indirect mentor of every Caroline poet:

. . . it seems to me that it is right to put into lyric meters whatever can be included in a short poem: praises, loves, quarrels, insults, revelries, reproofs, vows, ragings to and against self-indulgence, desires, complaints, explanations of places and times, new advice, counsel for and against undertaking an occupation, invitations, refusals, execrations, and whatever else. This poem, moreover, loves a freedom of mind. . .²

The description could have been made up out of the table of contents of any collection of Caroline lyrics. Herrick praised and loved Julia, Carew dismissed Celia for her pride and scorn, Suckling insulted

¹A glance at the *New Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature* will support this. Donne receives fourteen and a half columns of entries, nearly all on his poems. Only a scattering of the criticism on Jonson is directed at his poetry, Herrick gets just over two columns altogether and Carew less than one.

²*Ben Jonson's Poems: A Study of the Plain Style*, p. 192.

"A Deformed Mistresse". Herrick invited Anthea to command him anything, welcomed sack in one poem, in another refused to indulge in it. Cartwright invited a woman to "dally" with him. The illustrations could go on and on.

Although the titles of the poems may indicate a similarity with those in an Elizabethan miscellany such as *England's Helicon*, the lyrics in themselves differ in immediacy and complexity and sometimes, too, in the personal and ironic implications of their messages.

The typical Elizabethan poem contains no jot of personal emotion... it is baffling and beautiful: baffling because it is beautiful and nothing else. Thought is not permitted to distort it nor feeling to betray it into incoherencies.¹

So wrote Agnes Latham introducing her edition of Raleigh. How far from this Herrick had moved in his high-spirited yet tightly constructed lyric, "His Fare-well to Sack".² The abandoned dedication contained in the opening lines,

. . . so deare
To me, as blood to life and spirit: Neare,
Nay, ^{thou} more neare then kindred, friend, man, wife,
Male to the female, soule to body. . . .

is completely renounced in the close, though the male-female imagery

¹*Poems of Sir Walter Raleigh*, 1965, O.U.P., London, p. 13.

²*Herrick*, pp. 45-46.

is retained:

Let others drink thee freely; and desire
Thee and their lips espous'd; while I admire,
And love thee; but not taste thee.

The Elizabethan melody and lightness is there but to it is added a sense of the poet's personality, and a sharp irony. Herrick's beloved "sack" represents all long-standing forms of pleasure, considered idolatrous by some Puritans.¹ The wit lies in the unexpected, yet in context quite natural, parallel between sack and "the female." Part of the irony of the poem derives from its placement, straight after "The Howre-glasse"², a *carpe diem* poem in which we learn,

That Lovers tears in life-time shed,
Do restless run when they are dead,

and before an epigram, "Upon Glasco" which is one of Herrick's many reminders that the human body decays with time. ~~His~~ "fare-well to Sack" is not one of Herrick's most important poems but it has a charm and concentration which make it, like so many Caroline lyrics, worth careful reading.

The difference between such a poem and the typical Elizabethan poem Agnes Latham described, derives both from the social and political climate of the time and, inextricably, from the influence of Donne and Jonson.

¹Martin, (Critical Notes, p. 466) shows that in one manuscript (*BM. Add Ms 33998*) Herrick rejects,

thy glaring fires, least in y^eir sight,
y^e sin
Of Idolatry steale vpon me....

²Herrick, p. 44.

Whatever C.V. Wedgwood might say,¹ Carew in his significant poem "In Answer of an Elegiacall Letter upon the death of the King of Sweden from Aurelia Townsend"² is not only aware of "secure shades" and "peace and plenty" in England but also of the threat of "darke sullen precepts" that hang over "this obdurate Land". He is declaring his staunch support of the "sweet Ayres of our tun'd Violins at Charles I's court. Herrick, though his life as a country vicar was utterly different from Carew's (and, probably, from his own in the 1620's), is also affirming his acceptance of the satisfactions he knows:

'Tis not the food, but the content
That makes the Tables merriment.
Where Trouble serves the board, we eat
The Platters there, as soone as meat.
A little Pipkin with a bit
Of Mutton, or of Veale on it,
Set on my Table, (Trouble-free)
More then a Feast contenteth me.³

Carew was both suggesting the subjects "proper to our clyme" and, at the same time sounding a warning note about Gustavus's "too-briefe storie"; and Herrick, twice in his short poem, spoke out against "Trouble". But the solemnity, though it recurs, is not stressed, for

¹See above, p. 337.

²Carew, pp. 74-77.

³"Content, not cates", *Herrick*, p. 124.

both Carew and Herrick are concerned with the positive and want to present their own values, "piece by piece".

Although many early Caroline lyrics, especially those of Carew and Herrick, were set to music, there is no record of either "An Answer of an Elegiacall Letter..." or "Content, not cates" being given tunes. Yet both have in them verbal music, tripping in Herrick's stanza, swelling in Carew's longer argument. Whereas Thomas Watson had produced in the 1590's what he entitled *The First Sett of Italian Madrigalls Englished, not to the originall dittie, but after the Affection of the Noate*, and two decades later Thomas Campion told readers "I have chiefly aymed to couple my Words and Notes lovingly together",¹ by Charles I's day the emphasis had shifted completely. Most early Caroline lyrics were not set to music at all. Those that were, were faithfully served by some composers such as the poets' favourite, Henry Lawes, who wrote music primarily to bring out what the poet himself had put into a poem. John Donne's lines, already discussed,²

Some man, his art and voice to show,
Doth Set and sing my paine,³

indicate nothing of Herrick's satisfaction with "M. Henry Lawes, the excellent Composer of his Lyricks"⁴ or Milton's with his "Harry" for his "tuneful and well-measur'd Song."⁵ The lyric had pulled away from

¹See above, p. 82.

²Above, p. 81.

³"The triple Foole", *Donne*, p. 16.

⁴*Herrick*, p. 276.

⁵"To Mr H. Lawes, on his Aires", *Milton* II, 152.

dependence on music and become important in its own right, retaining meanwhile what Saintsbury called the "ineffable cadence" of the seventeenth century.

Donne, in poems like "The Autumnal", had shown that strong feeling and tight reasoning could be used together, that a personal approach could give vigour and urgency to a poem, that conventions could be controlled by the poet any way he chose, and that anything and everything, from an "unthrift's purse" to a woman's wrinkles, are the stuff of poetry.

All this became part of Caroline verse. Appropriately it is most marked in Carew's splendid poem "An Elegie upon the death of the Deane of Pauls, Dr John Donne", but in varying degrees it can be seen in other Caroline poems such as Herrick's "Fare-well to Sack" considered above, or equally, his "Welcome to Sack".

To a considerable extent the influence of Ben Jonson on his contemporaries, and especially on Carew and Herrick, overlapped with that of Donne. Both aimed at strength and honesty and were impatient with "servile imitation." But Jonson, mindful always of Horace and other classical poets, added care to his requirements. Here he is, in his tribute to Shakespeare:

For though the *Poets* matter, Nature be,
His Art doth giue the fashion. And, that he,
Who casts to write a liuing line, must sweat,
(Such as thine are) and strike the second heat
Vpon the *Muses* anuile....²

¹Introduction to Katherine Philips, *Minor Poets of the Caroline Period*, I, 488.

²"To the memory of my beloued, The AUTHOR Mr William Shakespeare", *Works*, VIII, 392. Jonson did not always praise Shakespeare's art so highly; see *Discoveries*, *Works* VIII, 583-584.

Both Carew and Herrick did "sweat" over their poetry, overcoming the tendency to showmanship Helen Gardner recognised in some of their contemporaries:

At times the writing has the smell of the coterie, the writer performing with a self-conscious eye on his clever readers.¹

Carew sometimes repeats his own and other poets' ideas and phrases. For instance in his elegy on Donne he describes how Donne "committed holy Rapes upon our will," admires his "masculine expression," his "words and sense" and his "rich and pregnant phansie." And in "An Answer of an Elegiacall Letter...", a poem which has nothing to do with Donne, he writes of "foule rapes," of "the Masculine stile," of "soule, and sense" and of "rich fancie." However, taken individually each poem of his² is a sensitive exploration of a mood or attitude, tight, witty and melodious. His plea to a woman who can only gain by accepting him could be read as a direct approach to any critic.

Each petty beautie can disdaine, and I
 Spight of your hate
 Without your leave can see, and dye;
 Disperce a nobler Fate,
 'Tis easie to destroy, you may create.³

Herrick is a different matter. To start with he did, unlike Carew, address many poems to his own reader. Yet even the longest and

¹*The Metaphysical Poets*, p. 17.

²Excluding the translations of the psalms.

³"To a Lady that desired I would love her", *Carew*, p. 81.

most complete lyrics, such as "A Panegerick to Sir Lewis Pemberton" give the impression of utter simplicity, even ingenuity. Only after careful reading of any poem with due regard to its historical setting and to the context of the whole of *Hesperides*, does Herrick's seemingly accidental but in fact deliberate and concentrated meaning emerge. In the words of Sydney Musgrove, "No apparent fact in Herrick can be trusted to be only a fact."¹

It is part of Herrick's charm that he can be, and always has been, enjoyed for his surface meaning alone. A poem like "Gather ye Rosebuds", that favourite of the anthologists, illustrates as well as Herrick's longer poems (such as the two addressed to his friend, Weeks), that Herrick is "avant tout le poète suprême de la joie humaine."² Yet it, as surely as Herrick's other serious poems, has the "tough reasonableness beneath the slight lyric grace" which Eliot admired in Caroline verse.³ Conscious both of the whole *carpe diem* philosophy of classical literature and of the threat to established institutions mounting in early Caroline England, the aging Royalist country vicar tells young girls to marry and enjoy their youth while they can. The message becomes far from frivolous when read together with that in "His Age":⁴

We'le eate our Bean with that full mirth,
As we were Lords of all the earth,

or that in "A Paranaeticall, or Advisive Verse, to his friend, M. John Wicks"⁵ who is advised to "feast, frolick, sing and play."

¹"Herrick's Alchemical Vocabulary", p. 260.

²Quoted above, p. 430, from Delattre, *Robert Herrick*, p. 506.

³"Andrew Marvell", *Selected Essays*, p. 293.

⁴*Herrick*, pp. 132-136.

⁵*Idem*, p. 233.

Equally "Another Grace for a Child"¹, a simple, easily memorised verse (once the child knows that paddocks are frogs), offers a homely family picture of a child standing at the table with his hands outstretched, and at the same time, contains within it the certainty that God is the dispenser of all good things in life, tangible and intangible. The poem, affecting in its simplicity, acquires new depths when considered together with "The Argument of his Book", "His Prayer for Absolution", "God's Mercy" and other quietly Christian poems, written in an age of political and social unrest but universal Christian conviction. As I.A. Richards demonstrates, "That a work reflects, summarizes and is penetrated by its age is not a reason for assessing it at low value."² Herrick's classical, native and Renaissance systems of belief, within a seventeenth century English Christian context, have much to do with the range, the unity and the depth of purpose of *Hesperides*, and a similar case could be argued for the work of other poets, such as Thomas Randolph or Sidney Godolphin.

In his introduction to his edition of Waller, G. Thorn Drury offered this suggestion: "It may well be doubted if the insertion of one or two of his poems in anthologies does not do more harm than good to a man's general reputation, by a tendency to divert attention from anything else he has written."³ It may indeed be that the very

¹Herrick, p. 364.

²*Principles of Literary Criticism*, 2nd edn, 1926, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, p. 222.

³Introduction, *Waller*, pp. lxxii-lxxiii.

excellence of certain brief seventeenth century poems, Carew's "Aske me no more", Strode's "When whispering streames", William Browne's "Epitaph upon the Countess Dowager of Pembroke", Davenant's "The Lark now leaves his watry nest", Henry King's "A Contemplation upon Flowers", Lovelace's "To Althea, from Prison" - the list could be a long one - is responsible for the neglect of many other equally fine poems, poems that might be even finer within their appropriate context. That Eliot was unwilling to accept Herrick as a major poet¹ is not of itself of importance for, after a few rare giants have been recognised, few readers would agree as to who are major and who minor, and there are those who would assign all the early Caroline poets, including even Jonson, to a minor role. But if a poet is to be assessed according to Eliot's criterion as having or not having "a unity of underlying pattern" and "a continuous conscious *purpose*" then it is imperative that his work be read as a whole. Carew's "The Rapture", for instance, may shock those who read it out of context, but becomes a serious celebration of extra-marital sexual union when seen as a love poem in an age when marriages of convenience were usual among the aristocracy.

Other poets too, are worth far more attention than they have been given. King has been authoritatively edited, but most of his verse, apart from "The Exequy", has been by-passed by the critics although R.C. Bald's assertion that "King's talent is a thin one"² is wide open to challenge. Edward Herbert's thoughtful, sparse verse has been equally neglected. The most recent editions of Randolph and Lovelace

¹"What is Minor Poetry", *On Poets and Poetry*, pp. 46-47.

²*Seventeenth Century English Poetry*, p. 25.

are far less detailed and appear less accurate than, for instance, the editions by Martin and Patrick of Herrick, and perhaps as a result of this there is little published critical comment on the poetry in them, although both wrote verse loved in their day, and potentially delightful now, especially with the topical and literary commentaries critics could provide.

Lyrics were a natural and shared part of life, especially courtly life. Carew's dialogue, "Jealousie", was used by Thomas Killigrew in his play *Cicilia and Clorinda, or Love in Arms*.¹ The same girl, Cecilia Croft, also had "Oh that I were all Scul"² written for her, just as Lady Mary Wroth and the Duchess of Bedford had poems written by various poets for them. When Buckingham was murdered, or when Ben Jonson, in an ode, rebuked his audiences, poets immediately recorded their views in verse.

Because of this, for the literary historian, as for the literary critic, the seventeenth century offers a rich, hardly touched store. C.V. Wedgwood, taking a few poems in isolation and using them to support her own, simplified, portrayal of "Poetry and Politics under the Stuarts" has left Randolph, one of the most popular poets of his day, out altogether. Ballads and popular folksongs of the seventeenth century, collected in several editions by Hyder E. Rollins, have received scant attention, and epigrams, so favoured

¹See Commentary, *Carew*, p. 244.

²Sir Robert Ayton, "Poems Wrongly Printed as Suckling's", *Suckling*, p. 99.

in their own time, have been extraordinarily neglected since, although they reveal much that was happening in the daily life of the people, as the few by Herrick considered earlier clearly indicate.

For the editor, an enormous supply of unpublished seventeenth century verse lies wherever it has been deposited, waiting to be made accessible to those who cannot get to it, and, even if they could, would have difficulty in reading much of it.

To the late twentieth century reader, accustomed to the range and concentration of T.S. Eliot, the word music of Dylan Thomas, the stark honesty of Sylvia Plath, Caroline verse can seem surprisingly modern. The aims of the imagists, declared in the opening years of this century, seem to have been latent in the mind of a poet like Traherne when he wrote "Poverty" or Herrick when he confessed his "Discontents in Devon". Caroline verse comments on the social order remind us of the verse of Auden or McNeice or Betjeman, or even of a local poet like Fairburn or Curnow. Randolph's "Character of a Perfect Woman" might not please feminists, but its subdued ironic humour, absence of end-stopping and frequency of lines beginning with the lower case, have an astonishingly recent appearance for a poem written three and a half centuries ago.

Such attractions may make early Caroline verse, the high point of Renaissance lyricism in my view, a fresh and delightful area for academic study. Yet they are in no way its main justification for attention. Saintsbury, nostalgically writing of "the period before Puritanism and Republicanism combined had changed England from merriment to sadness",¹ knew that Caroline poets had something special to offer.

¹*Elizabethan Literature*, p. 393.

Herrick's delight in a piggin or a pipkin has become Miss Gee's frustrated cry "Make me a good girl please,"¹ so grim because the reader knows she has no chance of being anything else. Herrick, like most other Caroline lyricists, for all their show of carefree ease and simplicity, took life and art seriously and positively. The surface glitters but the mine of pleasure lies underneath. Whatever was happening in the world about them the court lyricists were determined to "sing" and "piping please" and we deny ourselves both instruction and great pleasure if we do not listen to them.

¹W.H. Auden, "Let me tell you a little story", *Collected Shorter Poems, 1930-1944*, 1950, Faber and Faber, London, p. 241.

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	18220	25303	
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<i>Harley</i>	3364	6057	6931
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