



THE POETRY OF ANDREW MARVELL

"Thus I, easie Philosopher,
Among the Birds and Trees confer."

"What Rome, Greece, Palestine, ere said
I in this light Mosaick read.
Thrice happy he who, not mistook,
Hath read in Natures mystick Book."

C. TEESDALE-SMITH, B.A.

SYNOPSIS.

I. General introduction to the period.....page.../

- a. The end of the seventeenth century transitional.
- b. Seventeenth century a religious age -- examples.
- c. Change in emotional attitude towards God.
- d. Examples from poetry.
- e. Seventeenth century attitude towards sex.
- f. Its reflection in poetry.
- g. Eighteenth century attitude towards sex: balance of mind one of its possible results.
- h. The couplet as an expression of this balance.
- i. Seventeenth century and eighteenth century attitude towards writing.
- j. Marvell's position.

II. General introduction to Marvell's poetry.....page...9

- a. Marvell's poetry based on poetic assumption: in this he differed from the men who influenced him and from his contemporaries.
- b. The greater and lesser men need a convention.
- c. Marvell's poetry is mainly the expression of a "great common place", which makes him a better poet, although not a different one from, say, Herrick.
- d. Marvell's poetry impersonal because he accepted a great commonplace: this impersonality cause of his complexity urbanity and wit.
- e. Complexity achieved through a limiting in vocabulary.
- f. Vaughan's vocabulary limited, but in a different way. Vaughan's limiting emotional rather than technical.
- g. Unlike Vaughan, Marvell has not what T.S. Eliot calls "an objective correlative."
- h. Hence Marvell's use of symbols not as stable as Vaughan's.
- i. Necessary to see the work as a whole in order to realize this instability or complexity in Marvell's use of symbols.

III. Marvell's method of composition and its results.....page..67

1. General statement.

- a. The spontaneity of lyrical poetry: examples from minor poets of the seventeenth century.
- b. A freak excellence achieved through wide knowledge of music and the seventeenth century's obsession with words.
- c. Marvell freed himself from the major weaknesses of the seventeenth century by accepting a convention of thought and through his method of composition.
- d. Comparison between Marvell's and Pope's methods of composition: examples from Marvell.

SYNOPSIS (2).

- e. Meaning of a passage shown through an analysis of this method of composition.
- f. Such an analysis may be useful in textual amendment.
- g. The object of this method was to write better poems technically and to evolve symbols.
- h. Comparison with Eliot, dealing with the poets' rehandling of their own themes and rehandling of other men's themes.
- i. This rehandling of other men's themes a common practice in the seventeenth century: Vaughan as an illustrator of the practice.
- j. Vaughan's method used by Eliot, although Eliot's use is more complex.
- k. Eliot's use of "To His Coy Mistress."
- l. Examples of such usage in Marvell.

2. Particular analysis.

- a. Verbal echoes from contemporaries.
- b. Also meaningful associative echoes.
- c. Examination of the use made by Marvell and Crashaw of the vocabulary of the Canticles.
- d. The weakness of such a usage illustrated by Marvell's use of the word "fountain".
- e. Marvell overcame this weakness and aimed at interpretation and application.

IV. The Garden.....page..42

1. Background to the conception of the poem.

- a. Marvell draws on three cultures.
- b. The Fall theme in seventeenth century literature.
- c. Flexibility in exegesis.
- d. Popularity of the theme in verse.
- e. The theme of solitude.

2. Background preceding particular analysis of the poem.

- a. First draught.
- b. Marvell's symbols flexible.
- c. Examples showing conventional usage.
- d. Possible influence of Latin and Greek literature.
- e. Marvell's basic "philosophical assumption" one readily held in the seventeenth century.
- f. It is only an assumption.

3. Particular analysis -- examination of the poem verse by verse.

- a. Use of earlier poem.)
 - b. Garland theme.)
- verse 1.

SYNOPSIS (3).

- c. Marvell capitalises on contemporary usage -- verse 3.
- d. Further examples.
- e. Implied criticism of new science (taken up later))
- f. Frustration theme (taken up later)) verse 4.
- g. Significance of the vine -- classical.)
- h. Debt to Theocritus.)
- i. Application of all the strands I have) verse 5.
mentioned to the Canticles.)
- j. Significance of the vine -- contemporary.)
- k. Grass symbolism.)
- l. The significance of green.)
- m. A reference to Ovid.) verse 6.
- n. Poetry as the sublimation of the sexual desire.)
- o. Reference to the Psalms -- verse 7.
- p. Conclusion -- verses 8 and 9.

V. The temper of the poetry and the man himself.....page. 49

His urbanity exemplified in:

- 1. The Bermudas.
 - a. Its source.
 - b. His attitude to the new science
 - c. Its tone.
 - d. Looks forward to the technique of the eighteenth century.
 - e. Its structure.

- 2. The Structure of his poems.
 - a. Ametas and Thestylis.
 - b. Mourning.
 - c. Daphnis and Chloe.
 - d. To His Coy Mistress.
 - e. Little T.C. in a Prospect of Flowers.
 - f. On a Drop of Dew: its structure and the urbanity shown in the handling of a contemporary theme.

- 3. His handling of the Bible.
 - a. The Nymph Complaining for the Death of her Fawn.
 - b. The Dialogue between the Resolved Soul and Created Pleasure.

- 4. His attitude towards sex and death.
 - a. To His Coy Mistress.

- 5. His own possible frustration and its restrained expression.
 - a. Damon the Mower.

"And nowadays we find occasionally good irony, a satire, which lack wit's internal equilibrium, because their voices are essentially protests against some outside sentimentality or stupidity; or we find serious poets who seem afraid of acquiring wit, lest they lose intensity. The quality which Marvell had, this modest and certainly impersonal virtue -- whether we call it wit or reason, or even urbanity -- we have patently failed to define. By whatever name we call it, and however we define that name, it is something precious and needed and apparently extinct; it is what should preserve the reputation of Marvell. C'etait une belle ame, comme on ne fait plus a Londres.

T.S. Eliot in "Selected
Essays".



I. General introduction to the period.

No man stands in isolation, and least of all the poet. Whatever his intellectual milieu may be, he will be influenced by it, either to acceptance or rejection. Poetry is the expression of an attitude, an attitude towards living which demands that one relate oneself to one's God, one's lover and oneself. Such a relation is generally the subject matter of poetry, but whereas the subject matter is fairly stable, attitudes shift and change. The last years of the seventeenth century are a period of such transition.

The seventeenth century was an intensely religious age, more religious than the sixteenth century which in its fierceness of faith shed too much blood to be called a truly spiritual time. Seventeenth century Anglicanism honestly endeavoured to evolve a worship that was worthy of its God -- for not only was our greatest religious verse, that of Donne, Herbert, Milton, Vaughan and Traherne, written then, but also, in the exposition of ecclesiastical doctrine and in the composition of sermons, some of the finest prose in English literature. Many men felt the need of a personal God. While Donne goaded himself to accept God, and Herbert, almost bitterly, sought his God among the thistles and briars of remorse, Traherne rejoiced in the man Christ.

An intense subjectivism pervades religion throughout the century, but at its turn there was a change in the emotional attitude towards God, for religion, which had been based on revelation, was beginning to be interpreted through the laws of

nature. Although Dryden says:

"Revealed Religion first informed thy sight
And Reason saw not till Faith sprung the light.

.....
Canst thou by reason more of Godhead know
Than Plutarch, Seneca or Cicero?"

yet this was ceasing to be a popular opinion for it was held that the laws of right behaviour could be found within each individual if he chose to reason. The sense of man's sinfulness was weakened, and the jealous, fearful God was supplanted by Shaftesbury's benevolent one, while both Addison and Halifax pleaded for more cheerfulness in religion. As Mr. Basil Willey in his "Seventeenth Century Background" shows, Burnet in his "Sacred Theory of the Earth", published in 1681, believed that although the world showed sufficient order for one to maintain that it was the work of God, yet actually it was a ruined and disorderly mass, a chaos occasioned by the fall and implemented by the flood. But Ray in "The Wisdom of God in the Creation", published ten years later exhibited the world as one of pleasant order, and Denham can see that each part of nature is more perfect than art can ever be. The eighteenth century philosophers, unlike their predecessors, who had seen the fall as the explanation of the conflicting good and evil in the world, began to see the world as good, and as, perhaps, even the one originally planned. The poets followed the philosophers. Shaftesbury, whose philosophy greatly influenced the age, believed that natural

surroundings should be indulged in as beneficial to the soul:

"Oh glorious nature!...wise substitute of providence!
Empowered Greatness...Oh mighty genius, soul
animating and inspiring power."

Shaftesbury, believing that we have an innate moral sense, thought the Bible inclined the mind towards atheism, for the innate moral sense recognizes God through the order of the Universe, an order belied by the working of miracles.

In the Restoration period, a period of immorality, the religious verse is still charged with a passionate and fearful love of God:

"The Judge ascends his awful throne
He makes each secret sin be known
And all with shame confess their own.

Thou who for me did feel such pain
Whose precious blood the cross did stain
Let not those agonies be vain."

These lines of Roscommon's are more akin to the religious verse of Donne than to the comfortable and comforting hymns of Addison, hymns written for social occasions, and from no inner necessity. Addison has little awe before his God, for he places the utmost confidence in his benevolence:

"Th' in the Paths of Death I tread,
With gloomy horror overspread
My steadfast heart will fear no ill,
For thou O Lord, art with me still.
Thy friendly crook shall give me aid
And guide me through the dreadful shade."

A directness and intensity similar to that with which seventeenth century writers spoke of God is found in their statements

on women. Of women the seventeenth century has much to say, and its attitude towards sex is perhaps more curious and scientific than that of either the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries. In Sir Thomas Browne, who expressed his dissatisfaction with the human method of procreation, there is little disgust:

"What fruit that was our first parents tasted in Paradise, from the disputes of the learned men seems yet indeterminable. More clear it is that they covered their nakedness or secret parts with Figg leaves which when I read I cannot but call to mind the several considerations which Antiquity had of the Figg tree, in reference unto those parts, particularly how fig leaves are described by some authors to have some resemblance unto the Genitals, and so were aptly formed for such contention of those parts: how also in that famous statua of Praxiteles, concerning Alexander and Bucephalus, the secret parts are veiled with fig leaves; how the tree was sacred unto Priapus, and how the diseases of the secret parts have derived their names from figs."

Sex was something demanding explanation, and hence something to be explored. The "America, the new-found-land" of the seventeenth century became in the eighteenth century an unexplored Antartick.

Not only some of our best religious verse, but also some of our greatest love poetry was written in the late sixteenth and seventeenth century. As man, in religion, needed a personal God, so in love, the lover demanded personality of his mistress. Such a demand is perhaps first expressed by Wyatt:

"They flee frome me that sometime did me seek
With naked foot stalking into my chamber."

and although much love poetry in the sixteenth century is conventional, yet there are such poems as Drayton's:

"Since there's no help, come let us kiss and part."

and Campion's:

"Shall I come, sweet love, to thee,
When the ev'ning beames are set?"

That Shakespeare could write of his love for a man without shame shows perhaps that a new attitude towards sex had been reached. Donne, too, manifests this attitude, and although his expression was markedly original, yet his passion was commonplace enough. In that Campion and Rochester were expressing the same desires as was Donne (but each man in his own way) they are more akin to him than are his obvious imitators, say Carew or Cowley, who on the admission of the latter, accepted Donne's mode of expression without knowing his passion.

While Cowley too complacently felt his inability to love, nowhere does one find in the seventeenth century the disgust felt by the Augustans:

"See how the World its Veterans rewards!
A Youth of Frolicks, an Old Age of Cards;
Fair to no purpose, artful to no end,
Young without lovers, old without a Friend;
A Fop their Passion, but their Prize a sot;
Alive, ridiculous, and dead, forgot."

Parnell and Gay write in the same strain, perhaps more conventionally than passionately, but there is nothing conventional in Swift's nauseating Dressing Table lines; it seems that the repulsion felt throughout the seventeenth century at the decay of the body after death, was translated into something far more horrible, namely a

disgust at the decay of living flesh. Supplementing this attitude to women is the cult of Chloe, woman abstracted; the relationship sentimentalized in such ballads as Sweet William and Mary is a dispassionate one. An explanation of the Augustans eludes one. It seems that women's place in society was to divert, but ^{that} they had no share in man's more serious activities. In the establishment of the famous clubs which included Arbuthnot, Pope, Swift and Gay, and later in the century, Johnson, Goldsmith, Reynolds, Gibbon and Garrick one can see that society is a male society, although its audience is, to a certain extent, female. This male-ness, not to be confused with masculinity, is one of the factors from which the eighteenth century poets derive their balance, a balance which was a superficial one, based as it was on the repression of passion, rather than on the equation of reason with passion. The fate of Collins, Bowper, Smart, Swift and the peculiarities of Pope, Gray and Johnson may be traced back to this unnatural balance, in which the pointer rests at dead centre, while one pan hits the beam.

But the balance achieved by the Augustans is not wholly to be deprecated, for their accuracy of expression and tension of mind results from their specialization. The couplet having been used by Waller, a stable man in an unstable period, was received by Pope who makes it in its polished perfection a symbol of a way of life; the couplet although limited as a means of expression is an admirable vehicle for the high seriousness of Dryden, Johnson, and Goldsmith and the wit, fancy and satire of Waller, Pope, Young and Crabbe. The logic where every couplet carries an idea, the antithesis whereby

the writer seeks to avoid intolerance or enthusiasm, the whip crack of the satiric temperament and the cameo detail of the couplet all indicate a habit of mind.

It was no more than a habit of mind, however. What strikes one in reading eighteenth century poetry and, say, contemporary letters is the divergence between literature and life. They failed to connect the poetry of their lives with its prose, for no time had such high ideals of balance and reason or lived up to them so imperfectly. Literature although it reflects eighteenth century manners, is yet strangely divorced from life. This was not so in the seventeenth century for then the writing of poetry had not become a full time occupation, but remained an occasional exercise of talent. No seventeenth century poet spoke as Pope did:

"Why did I write? What sin to me unknown
 Dipt me in ink, my parents, or my own?
 As yet a child, nor yet a fool to fame
 I lisp'd in numbers, for the numbers came.
 I left no calling for this idle trade
 No duty broke, no father disobey'd
 The Muse but serv'd to ease some friend not Wife
 To help me thro' this long disease, my life...."

They were not primarily poets, but men with other vocations, and when one finds a seventeenth century poet, Wotton, for example, or Cleveland, serving in an official capacity, it is not because of his literary ability, as in Prior's case, but because he was suited to the task. The writing and publishing of poetry was not of the first importance. Men, and women too, (for we find in Lady Winchelsea, one of the best poetesses in English) wrote

poetry partly because the writing of Latin verses had been a part of their education, and the habit of variation and themal adaptation remained. Few poets have not their Latin verses, and some, for example, Campion and Marvell, wrote their poems in both English and Latin, a practice which refers much seventeenth century poetry to something literary and imitative. The writing of poetry remained an exercise of one's intellect rather than one's profession.

Marvell's position is peculiar for his is the strength of the seventeenth century, and the balance of the eighteenth century -- but whereas the strength is dissipated, the balance is fundamental. Marvell is not a religious poet, but appears so. ~~This~~ attitude is that of Shaftesbury, but in his constant denial of this attitude, is without vulgarity. As, with Browne, there is great flexibility in his interpretation of the Bible, for he wrote travesties on it, as did Addison, but with complacency rather than smugness. In writing of death he is nearer to Pomfret than to Flatman; of sex he is akin to Browne in being curious and scientific, and yet with Donne in his passion. In his use of the couplet he precludes the Augustans.

II. A General Introduction to Marvell's poetry.

The best poetry of the seventeenth century, and indeed all the greatest poetry, is based on positive belief, whereas the poetry of Marvell is based, not on unbelief, but on poetic assumption. By this I mean that Marvell assumed as a basis for his poetry themes already explored, themes which through their constant recurrence in Greek, Latin, French and English poetry had become what one might call "poetical". The religious poetry of Herbert, Vaughan and Traherne, which is of little or no importance in the study of Marvell, cannot be divorced from devout Anglicanism, mysticism and personal revelation, for it owes its very existence to these characteristics. Of the men who more directly influenced Marvell -- Marlowe, Jonson and Donne-- one can say that although their beliefs are less discernible than religious convictions, yet they are nevertheless clear cut. All three have a steady and unshakeable faith in the excellence of the workings of their own minds; but whereas Donne and Marlowe doubt the existence, in any vital way, of God or anyone outside themselves, Jonson has the humanity to respect both his own individuality, and any other man's, as long as he is no fool. Of Marlowe, ^{Donne} one may say that although their convictions are negative, yet they have the status of belief.

None of these men are conventional writers. Marlowe's enthusiasm in man's aspiring mind helped to forge a new dramatic verse; Donne in revolt from the sugared sonnets of the last decade of the century wrote some fifty songs with nearly as many

verse patterns; and Jonson, although a knowledge of the humours had been common property since before Chaucer, is, as a dramatist, strikingly original. It is, however, interesting to note that in the genre from which Marvell and Herrick drew their inspiration, he is classical and conventional, paraphrasing and translating Catullus and others. But the greater and lesser men both need a convention, the first of form, the second of thought. The results of a great poet accepting a convention of form can be judged by reading Shakespeare's sonnets; the result of the lesser men seizing upon a convention of thought, or what Tillyard would call "a great commonplace", can be seen by a study of the minor verse of the seventeenth century.

Marvell is, of course, a better poet than Lovelace, Suckling, Herrick or Waller, but he is not, I think, a different one. He, like them, has no profound belief, or at least no belief that is important to the writing of poetry, but unlike them he is rigid in his acceptance of subject matter suitable for poetry, strictly disciplining himself by one of the world's great commonplaces, a commonplace expressed in:

"But at my back I alwaies hear
Time's winged Charriot hurrying near:
And yonder all before us lye
Desarts of vast Eternity."

and

"Yet he does himself excuse;
Nor indeed without a Cause,
For, according to the Lawes,
Why did Chloe once refuse?"

How important the acceptance of a thought convention is to a lesser poet can be seen by the success achieved by Herrick in "Ye have been fresh and green" and "Fair daffodils we weep to see" and in Waller's "Go, lovely rose", which, being one of the most finely modulated poems in the language, is difficult to account for, except by reference to a convention.

Marvell has frequently been accused of superficiality of thought, but this is an irrelevant stricture. Thought is based on belief moulded by personal experience, and one must look for it, if anywhere, in his prose rather than in his poetry. In poetry of belief, for example, in the poetry of Donne or Herbert, we see, no matter how indistinctly, some sort of equivalent experience, but in Marvell's poetry experience remains unco-ordinated, and is informed, not by incident but by a fine sensuousness. How little there is of Marvell's real self, that is, of the self of which he was most aware, the predominant self, in his lyrical poetry, can be seen by a cursory reading of the satires and a realization of their comparative bulk. Personality is not infrequently demanded of a poet, but with Marvell, as with another seventeenth century writer, Middleton, absence of personality is the keystone of his excellence. This may not be high praise, but I believe it is the fundamental from which Marvell's poetry draws its complexity, urbanity and wit.

Donne has been called a complex poet, and a poet of ideas, but he is less so in both particulars than is Marvell.

Donne in his poetry aimed at expressing a vivid physical experience; frequently the experience admits contradictions, and then a change of mood is legitimate in the poem. There is, however, to the reader, nothing ambiguous about Donne's poetry, although as Legouis has pointed out in his analysis of the Ecstasy, there may be a misunderstanding on the part of the lady. But Marvell's poetry, being poetry of poetic assumption, admits, and indeed demands, a double interpretation, for the meaning is often elusive and fragmentary. Many critics have hunted down Marvell's twenty odd uses of the word "green" in order to explain the couplet:

"Annihilating all that's made
To a green Thought in a green Shade."

It is not altogether a profitless chase for Marvell's vocabulary is limited and the significant words are rich in association; one finds a similar limitation in the poetry of Vaughan to whom the vocabulary descriptive of early morning and sunrise has immense emotional importance.

The comparison with Vaughan is significant. From a selection of Vaughan's poetry, such as Grierson presents in his *Metaphysical Poetry* one receives an impression of restrained intensity. Such impressions only belly out into ideas when we have read the bulk of Vaughan's poetry, for this enables us to read his masterpieces with a more acute sensibility. As long as one has read only a few of Vaughan's poems, the major symbolism which permeates his work remains implicit, and is at best, but vaguely understood. It is only when one has read most of *Silex Scintillans* that the images assume the status of explicit symbols. In "The Morning Watch", Vaughan writes:

"O Joyes! Infinite sweetnes! with what flowres
And shoots of glory, my soul breaks and buds."

This is exciting enough on first reading but becomes infinitely more so when one has other lines ringing in one's head. The fruits of association fill Vaughan's storeroom. "What flowres and shoots of glory" enriches and illumines the line from "The Retreat":

"Bright shoots of everlastingness"

for the "shoots of everlastingness" from being vaguely felt to belong to the vegetable world, assumes in association with the Morning Watch a concreteness, which they had hitherto lacked. Consider the words "my soul breaks and buds" in relation to five other poems:

"O thou that lovest a pure and whiten'd soul
That feeds among the lilies, till the day
Breaks and the shadows flee...."

Dressing.

"Yet it was frost within
And surly winds
Blasted my infant buds."

Regeneration.

"Tis now clear day: I see a Rose
Bud in the bright East, and disclose
The pilgrim Sunne."

The Search.

"The Rose that cannot wither."

Peace.

"Some love a rose
 In hand, some in the skin;
 But cross to those
 I would have mine within."

The key to all Vaughan's poetry may be found in those quiet hours when the stars are fading and the dawn breaks. After his conversion he did not search for some image for the last awaking -- the frequency of appearance of morn, stars, Day-spring and morning star in the early poems testifies against this. The dawning hours had always stirred him and it was natural that he should carry over the imagery from the early to the latter poetry, just as Donne used the same bullying tone to God, as he had to his women friends. Indeed the excellence of Vaughan's later poems may lie in this -- the tranquility and suspense felt at dawn, whereas it found no parallel in the emotion felt for a woman, had an exact equivalent in the passion which the vision of God stirred in him. The lines I have quoted show how complex the emotion was. The colour, white, had some special significance for Vaughan, due perhaps to its usage by the Cambridge Platonists. There is a great deal of white in the Morning Watch -- "shrouds", "clouds", "clouded starre, whose beams though sed to shed their light", "shine", "mistie shroude", -- which reminds us of the "white celestial thought" and "white days". The words "my soul breaks and buds" are enriched if one remembers Dressing, which one is sure to do, echoing as it does the Song of Solomon. The lilies and roses of the Song also have their place in

Vaughan. As I have placed them the association is impressive. Roses and lilies are closely associated, the Rose which buds in the East is the Sun, and with the frequent seventeenth century play on the word we think of Christ. The echo from Regeneration increases the joyousness of the poem, for there, one recollects, the infant buds are blasted.

But whereas Vaughan uses one emotional experience to symbolize another, having what T.S. Eliot calls an "adequate objective correlative", Marvell merely uses sensations, which lack emotional co-ordination, as counters for ideas. The sunrise for Vaughan is always connected with the Resurrection, whereas flowers for Marvell, although they are given the status of symbols, have a shifting and baffling meaning, a meaning suggested rather than realized. Marvell's poetry is best when seen as a whole, not limited to two or three pieces as Eliot wishes, for then the best poems are enriched, not by an accumulation of emotional association, as in Vaughan, but by an increased complexity and ambiguity of idea. The reader's excitement is very largely that of the chase, and one's interest is maintained because one so rarely catches the maiden. Sometimes, however, that irritable striving after fact is satisfied, as when I read:

"Or turn me but, and you shall see
I was but an inverted Tree...."

in the light of:

"When we have run our Passions heat,
Love hither makes his best retreat.
The Gods, that mortal Beauty chase
Still in a Tree did end their race.
Apollo hunted Daphne so,
Only that she might Laurel grow.
And Pan did after Syrinx speed,
Not as a Nymph, but for a Reed."

The fascinating and perplexing word "inverted" adds to its connotation of place a suggestion of sex, and grows in complexity.

III. Marvell's method of composition and its results.

1.

I am not at all sure how a lyric poem is written, but I think there must be a line or two which without any thought, or any striving after, arrives. In such lines, although they appear to be rich in meaning, and are so too, the sense often eludes us. Yet the words seem a complete expression of the mood, and this is so because the mood is presented fully robed. A.E. Housman has described the process, and one cannot think that the following lines have been battered out:

"I long to talk with some old lover's ghost."

"Not my own fears, nor the prophetic soul
Of the wide world dreaming on things to come."

"I am moved by fancies that are curled
Around these images, and cling:
The notion of some infinitely gentle
Infinitely suffering thing."

In several minor poets of the seventeenth century one also finds lines of great excellence, which are difficult to account for when one refers to the mass of their work:

"Drake, who the world has conquer'd like a scrole;
Who saw'st the Articke, and the Antarticke Pole.
If men were silent, starres would make thee knowne,
Pheebus forgets not his companion."

Beedome.

"Your limbs leave tracks of light still as they go."
Cartwright.

"Love still has something of the Sea
From whence his mother rose."

Sedley.

Such lines are freaks; it is as though the rhythms have beat themselves upon the poet's brain, almost outside his consciousness. A great deal of the seventeenth century's lyrical achievement can, I think, be traced to the wide knowledge of music. Campion's lyrics would not have been written but for their accompaniments. The minor poets had small personal testimony to give, but most of them had an ear for the cadence and rhythm of words. The greater poets, Donne, Herbert, Lord Herbert of Cherbury, Milton, Traherne and Vaughan were also obsessed by words, except perhaps Traherne to whom the object presented was of more importance than the signifying word, but they also had an individual message. The minor men had nothing but words, and their combinations:

"Lovely, enchanting language, sugar cane
Honey of roses."

Many gentlemen of the seventeenth century wrote verses; it is difficult to see why Suckling and Carew should have written except that they had leisure, and the writing of verses was a gentlemanly occupation. Marvell and Herrick belong to the same category, and Herrick's lyrical poetry bulks larger than does Marvell's because he had more leisure time. A minor poet is so perhaps because the man will write only when at ease -- while the great poets must write at all times, under all conditions.

Marvell is distinct from the majority of minor seventeenth century verse writers in that whereas they wrote carelessly and brilliantly, he was never satisfied with sheer brilliance. Seventeenth century poets have two weaknesses -- that of the poets who have little to say, and yet words to say it with, and that of those who have full hearts, but an unequal command of the languages. How flat is Stanley, how disappointing Traherne! Marvell may have realized these deficiencies in contemporary poetry, for on the one hand in the statement of an altogether frivolous philosophy, frivolous not in itself, but in the way it is held:

"Where the Souls of fruits and flow'rs
Stand prepared to heighten yours."

he has something original, if not abiding to tell us, while on the other, in his constant handling of theme and expression he recognized the importance of poetical craftsmanship. After the seventeenth century there were few poets like Marvell; in the eighteenth century their verses were well written, but not significant, while in the nineteenth century the minor poets tell us so inadequately of themselves.

I have already disagreed with Eliot's statement that we must crush the essence from two or three of Marvell's poems; he may have written only two or three completely satisfying poems, but it is only through analysis of all his lyrical poetry, that one can account for its excellence. There is no question in Marvell of a freak achievement, for behind his most successful

poems lies a great deal of applied craftsmanship. We cannot regret his slighter poems because they are the first draughts of the greater ones. This method is akin to common poetical practice.

Milton was said to have composed a great number of lines which were subsequently reduced and Virgil licked his lines into shape, as a bear her cubs. Marvell, with a limited poetic vocabulary wrote and rewrote until he had achieved the effect desired. Methods of revision are interesting in telling us of the poet's way of composition, and although we know nothing of Marvell's revisions yet I believe that his way was quite different from, say, that of Pope. Pope patched and toyed at his lines, submitting them to constant revision. His practice very nearly resulted in the *Dunciad* being unintelligible on the day of its publication. Marvell's method was more of a rehandling than a revision. When he was dissatisfied with a poem he did not scratch at it; rather he would use what had pleased him, in addition to new matter, to create a new poem. Pope could not have done this because his poetry is largely personal and incidental; Marvell's poetry being impersonal and themal was admirably suited to this sort of rehandling, for unlike Vaughan's it is technical, rather than emotional. It is not simply that Marvell was interested in certain subjects and hence wrote on them constantly. Rather it is his resolute endeavour to improve his expression. From the conceited style and unequal execution of "Upon Appleton House" and "Upon the Hill and Grove at Bill-borow" Marvell evolved in "The Garden" and in "Damon the Mower" something

very near to classical purity; "The Picture of Little T.C. in a Prospect of Flowers" and "The Garden" are more successful renderings of the theme of the "Mower's Complaint Against Gardens", while "The Gallery" and "The Coronet" are certainly companion pieces. A few examples will perhaps prove my point:

"As if she, with those precious Tears
Would strow the ground where Stephon lay

.....

Yet some affirm, pretending Art,
Her Eyes have so her Bosome drown'd,
Only to soften near Her Heart
A place to fix another Wound."

Mourning.

"Until my tears, still dropping, wear
My breast, themselves engraving there.
There at my feet shalt thou be laid,
Of purest Alabaster made."

The Nymph.

and

"He makes the Figs our mouths to meet;
And throws the Melons at our feet."

Bermudas.

"What wond'rous Life is this I lead!
Ripe Apples drop about my head;
The Luscious Clusters of the Vine
Upon my Mouth do crush their Wine;
The Nectaren, and curious Peach,
Into my hands themselves do reach;
Stumbling on Melons, as I pass
Insnar'd with Flow'rs, I fall on Grass."

The Garden.

It is interesting to see Marvell taking material from one of his most imperfectly constructed poems, "Eyes and Tears", and weaving it into his most logical and metaphysical poem.

"So the all-seeing Sun each day
 Distills the World with Chymick Ray;
 But finds the Essence only Showers,
 Which straight in pity back the powers."

Eyes and Tears.

"Restless it roules and unsecure,
 Trembling lest it grow impure:
 Till the warm Sun pitty its Pain,
 And to the Skies exhale it back again.
 So the Soul, that Drop, that Ray...."

On a Drop of Dew.

(I have found it hard to understand how the soul could be both a "drop", and "a ray", two very dissimilar things, and have blamed Marvell for a poverty of rimes, but a comparison between the two passages reveals the significance of ray. In the first passage the image is simple -- the rays of the sun draw up the earth's moisture, only to pour it back again, whereas in the second passage the image is two-fold. God, the sun's rays, draws up the soul, the dew, and as the soul of man is of a divine substance it is necessary for drop and ray to be synonymous.) Again:

"And, to preserve their Sight more true,
 Both still their Eyes in their own Dew."

Eyes and Tears.

"How it the purple flow'r does slight,
 Scarce touching where it lyes,
 But gazing back upon the Skies,
 Shines with a mournful Light;
 Like its own Tear..."

On a Drop of Dew.

and

"These Tears which better measure all,
 Like wat'ry lines, and Plummets fall."

Eyes and Tears.

"How wide they dream! The Indian Slaves
That sink for Pearl through Seas profound,
Would find her Tears yet deeper Waves
And not of one the bottom sound."

Mourning.

Further examples will be given, for these are given to prove the practice rather than being significant in themselves.

The practice once proved can aid in textual emendation. Although Margoliouth's emendation of "lew" for dew in "The Coy Mistress" is not, I believe, generally accepted, yet a reference to the other poems may prove that he is wrong. If one examines the following extracts one can see that there is a group of words in fairly close contact and which indeed gain in emotional value through being threaded on the ring of association.

"See how the Orient Dew,
Shed from the Bosom of the Morn
Into the blowing Roses

.....

How it the purple flow'r does slight
Scarce touching where it lyes,
But gazing back upon the Skies
Shines with a mournful Light;
Like its own Tear,
Because so long divided from the Sphear,
Restless it roules and unsecure,
Trembling lest it grow impure:
Till the warm Sun pittty it's Pain,
And to the Skies exhale it back again
So the Soul, that Drop, that Ray
Of the clear Fountain of Eternal Day,
Could it within the humane flow'r be seen....."

"Dorinda: There Birds may rest, but how can I,
That have no wings and cannot fly?

Thyrsis: Do not sigh (fair Nymph) for fire
Hath no wings, yet doth aspire
Till it hit, against the Pole,
Heaven's the Center of the Soul."

"Yet happy they whom Grief doth bless,
 That weep the more, and see the less:
 And, to preserve their Sight more true,
 Both still their Eyes in their own Dew

.....
 The sparkling Glance that shoots Desire,
 Drench'd in these Waves, does lose it fire.

Tell me where I may pass the Fires
 Of the hot day, or hot desires.
 To what cool Cave shall I descend,
 Or to what gelid Fountain bend?
 Alas! I look for Ease in vain,
 When Remedies themselves complain.
 No moisture but my Tears do rest,
 Nor cold but in her Icy Breast.

.....
 On me the Morn her dew distills
 Befor her darling Daffodils
 And, if at Noon my toil me heat,
 The Sun himself licks off my Sweat.

Now therefore, while thy youthful hew
 Sits on thy skin like morning dew (lew)
 And while thy willing Soul transpires
 At every pore with instant Fires,
 Now let us sport us while we may;
 And now, like am'rous birds of prey...."

Neither "lew" nor the original word "glew" can be supported in
 this way:

"Nature so her self does use
 To lay by her wonted state,
 Lest the world should separate;
 Sudden Parting closer glews."

Daphnis and Chloe.

Even if one accepts as proved the fact that Marvell redrafted
 his poems one has not advanced very far. Other men rehandled
 themes, Herrick for example; but in reading Herrick it is
 difficult to decide which one of two poems written on a similar
 theme was composed first. Herrick, with Marvell, may have

attempted an improvement in expression, but unlike him he does not aim at a more subtle and complex use of words. If Marvell's great poems are rehandlings we can ask ourselves, to what extent is their complexity (meaning by complexity a shading in the meaning of words, a shading either derivative or personal) fortuitous? His method far from lessening his complexity is the very cause of it. One can see Marvell's method as an endeavour to write not merely technically better verse but also more complicated verse. Every time he uses a word, it is only as one bell of the carillon, and must be considered as part of the full harmony. Marvell in his use of such words as green, garden, roses, flowers, fountain, manna and dew was striving towards a new meaning for these words:- he was creating symbols consciously, as did Blake, but his was a more controlled creation. In rehandling his own poems Marvell relied largely, although certainly not completely, on the intellectual satisfaction derived from literary association.

In this T.S. Eliot is very like him. In "La Figlia Che Piange" he wrote:-

"Weave, weave the sunlight in your hair.

.....

Her hair over her arms and her arms full of flowers."

and in "Ash Wednesday":

Blown hair is sweet, brown hair over the mouth blown,
Lilac and brown hair;
Distraction, music of the flute, stops and steps of the mind
over the third stair,

Fading, fading; strength beyond hope and despair
 Climbing the third stair.
 Lord, I am not worthy
 Lord, I am not worthy
 but speak the word only."

Eliot's use is similar to Marvell's, when he takes a passage from a purely descriptive poem, "Upon Appleton House" and inserts it in what may be called a philosophical one, "The Garden".

"Thus I, easie Philosopher,
 Among the Birds and Trees confer:
 And little now to make me, wants
 Or of the Fowles, or of the Plants.
 Give me but Wings as they, and I
 Streight floting on the Air shall fly:
 Or turn me but, and you shall see
 I was but an inverted Tree."

Upon Appleton House.

"When we have run our Passions heat
 Love hither makes his best retreat.
 The Gods, that mortal Beauty chase,
 Still in a Tree did end their race.
 Apollo hunted Daphne so,
 Only that She might Laurel grow.
 And Pan did after Syrinx speed,
 Not as a Nymph, but for a Reed.

 Here at the Fountain's sliding foot,
 Or at some Fruit- trees mossy root,
 Casting the Bodies Vest aside,
 My Soul into the boughs does glide:
 There like a Bird it sits, and sings,
 Then whets, and combs its silver Wings;
 And, till prepar'd, for longer flight,
 Waves in its Plumes the various Light."

The Garden.

In both poets there is a personal experience, involving physical surroundings. And these surroundings later became symbols for emotions and ideas. Eliot's "Nunappleton House" was a rose garden:

"Footfalls echo in the memory
Down the passage which we did not take
Towards the door we never opened
Into the rose-garden. My words echo
Thus, in your mind.

But to what purpose
Disturbing the dust on a bowl of rose-leaves
I do not know.

Other echoes
Inhabit the garden. Shall we follow?
Quick, said the bird, find them, find them
Round the corner."

Burnt Norton.

and its roses become quite as perplexing as do the greens of
Marvell's "Nunappleton House".

"Rose of memory
Rose of forgetfulness,
Exhausted and life giving
Worried reposeful
The single Rose
Is now the Garden
Where all loves End."

Ash Wednesday.

Eliot also looks back to Marvell in his rehandling of other men's
themes, for both poets introduce snippets from Greek, Latin and
Palestinian literature.

"By the waters of Leman I sat down and wept....
Sweet Thames, run softly till I end my song,
Sweet Thames, run softly, for I speak not loud or long.
But at my back in a cold blast I hear
The rattle of the bones, and chuckle spread from ear to ear.
A rat crept softly through the vegetation
Dragging its slimy belly on the bank
While I was fishing in the dull canal
On a winter evening round behind the gas house
Musing upon the king my brother's wreck
And on the king my father's death before him."

Eliot's introduction, being more overt and more purely associative,

is perhaps less acute than is Marvell's.

Seventeenth century poetry is imitative, but this imitation is based on some sort of reverence for the Bible and the classics. At its lowest level it can be seen in the paraphrases of the Psalms, and the translation of the classics, and throughout seventeenth century literature one can see these two strong strands being woven into the texture of the verse. Seventeenth century literature is yet more "of a piece" in its adaptation of contemporary themes. Poets borrow from each other; the poetry, as the drama, but of course to a lesser degree, is common. Donne's influence is notorious. But all the borrowing is not uninspired. Joan Bennet in her essay on Vaughan says that although he borrows from Herbert, he transforms his borrowings. I do not think this is so. Vaughan mentions Herbert twice -- in the Preface to *Silex Scintillans* and in the *Mount of Olives Meditations*: "his name is written with a kind of awe. The conversion of the Vaughan who wrote the poems to *Fiola*, *Amoret* and *Etesia*, and the letter to a friend who had lent him a coat to the Vaughan of the devotional poetry is difficult to explain; in comparison Donne's conversion is easily understood. But however the transformation occurred, Herbert's life and poetry appears to have played an important part. The lines, words, and modulations of Herbert's which Vaughan introduces are so palpably borrowed and with so little attempt to disguise them that one might consider them as compliments:

"Dead shepherd now I find thy saw of might
Who ever loved that loved not at first sight."

I am inclined however to look upon Vaughan's plagiarism as something deeper than mere compliment; in fact The Temple wakes in him the same sort of response as does the Bible. Phrases -- and Vaughan was a snatcher up of phrases -- in both generated an emotion which frequently quite exceeded the stimulus (for example, "There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: And the same came to Jesus by night."), an emotion which demanded expression. Whereas the Biblical phrases were usually placed at the beginning or end of the poem, the Herbert lines are echoed within the poems. For example Vaughan concludes his poem "The World" with a quotation from the First Epistle from St. John:

"All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.
And the world passeth away, and the lusts thereof;
but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

In "The World" Vaughan aims at interpreting the words of the New Testament, in the same way as Marvell in "The Garden" interprets the symbolism of The Canticles. There is however a major difference, for whereas Vaughan's poem is an act of adoration, Marvell's is not. Within the poem Vaughan clearly echoes Herbert's:

"Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright,
The bridal of the earth and sky;"

"I saw Eternity the other night,
 Like a great ring of pure and endless light,
 All calm as it was bright;

"This ring the Bridegroom did for none provide,
 But for His bride."

This is something more than borrowing. It is as though (and this supposition is strengthened by the fact that Vaughan's use of Herbert is not a weakening but an enriching of his own poetry) The Temple stood as an equivalent for a new and better way of life. Vaughan must have burned through Herbert's poems at some time with such intensity that they became sufficiently a part of him to be called almost his own. Marvell does not echo in this way, for his echoes are either purely verbal, as are frequently, of course, Vaughan's or are echoes which being rich in implication are reproduced only to be contradicted or misapplied. Marvell uses association not to accumulate emotion as Vaughan and Eliot do, but to provoke enquiry.

The comparison with Eliot is just, although Eliot's quarries are more diverse than Vaughan's. Eliot's assumption, and Vaughan's too perhaps, is that on reading a familiar phrase one has a certain emotion, and that the reader on finding such a phrase embedded in Eliot's poetry recalls that emotion, so complicating the effect of the whole. But Eliot's use of, say, The Tempest in The Waste Land is unlike Vaughan's use of Herbert and the Bible in that it is both intellectual and emotional.

The Waste Land is a modern application of the sea music of The Tempest, in the same way as the Bermudas is a seventeenth century application of Psalm 104. In the Bermudas however, there is something of a travesty. Eliot is fond of "To His Coy Mistress" as an emotional counter:

"But at my back, in a cold blast I hear
The rattle of ^{the} bones, and the chuckle spread from
ear to ear."

The Waste Land.

and

"Would it have been worth while
To have bitten off the matter with a smile
To have squeezed the universe into a ball
To roll it toward some overwhelming question."

Prufrock.

These passages recall the emotions which surround "To His Coy Mistress" and these emotions are pertinent to the general tone of "The Love Song of Prufrock" and to "The Waste Land." Eliot's usage can be paralleled by Marvell's borrowing from the Canticles in "The Nymph Complaining on the Death of Her Fawn". But Marvell's use is more involved, for in recreating a religious emotion, and applying it to a classical story, he is being blasphemous. Such a recreation is perhaps not legitimate, for the emotion is called forth only to be overturned and perplexed. The usage might be damaging to the original, but Marvell never more than suggests, so that when in "A Dialogue between The Resolved Soul, and Created Pleasure" he parodies Ephesians, our religious decorum is not outraged. Eliot uses poetry in this way too, but he more

than suggests. That the "To His Coy Mistress" is no less when we have read the following is indicative of its "toughness".

"But at my back from time to time I hear
The sounds of horns and motors, which shall bring
Sweeney to Mrs. Porter in the spring."

and

"The long light shakes across the lake,
The forces of the morning quake
The dawn is slant across the lawn
Here is no ~~eff~~ or mortal snake
But only sluggish duck and drake.
I have seen the morning shine
I have had the Bread and Wine;
Let the feathered mortals take
That which is their mortal due
Pinching bread and finger too
Easier had than squirming worm;
For I know, and so should you
That soon the enquiring worm shall try
Our well-preserved complacency."

Tennyson looks a little self-conscious, but nothing can really try Marvell's "well-preserved complacency". Marvell's inflections to me are more satisfying, but both poets have this in common -- that they, unlike Vaughan, call forth emotions which are no sooner sprung, than they are budded and engrafted onto something new and strange. But the life blood still mounts in the parent stem, and herein lies their strength.

2.

Marvell corrects one poem, if one can call it correction, by writing another. It is now time to consider his handling of the poems of other men, and its result on his own development. That Marvell rifled other men's storehouses can be seen by

referring to Margoliouth's notes. He is indebted to Waller, Cowley, Milton and Carew. I also find a debt to Cleveland, whom Margoliouth mentions only once, rather than to Browne in:

"The Mind, that Ocean where each kind
Does streight its own resemblance find;"

"Some have affirmed that what on earth we find
The sea can parallel in shape and kind.
Books, arts and Tongues were wanting, but in thee
Neptune hath got a University."

These lines occur in "On the Death of Mr. Ed. King", and as Marvell, when he echoes Milton, echoes Lycidas, he was probably familiar with them. He also owes a debt to Cartwright:

"Hous'd in the Concave of a Christall Bell"

"Near this, a Fountaines liquid Bell
Tinkles within the Concave Shell."

and to Beedome:

"For joy, like grieffe, we know, sometimes appears
Writ on our cheeks with characters of tears."

"What in the World most fair appears
Yea even Laughter, turns to Tears:
And all the Jewels which we prize
Melt in these pendants of the Eyes."

Eyes and Tears.

"Eyes and Tears" is interesting in that it is largely indebted to Crashaw's "The Weeper". Tears in the seventeenth century as a source -- or should I say reservoir -- for poetical inspiration were fecund. Dr. Johnson was perhaps the first to observe this. Donne wrote a poem on tears which has since been accepted as the

very embodiment of the metaphysical style. Crashaw's is a very unequal poem, mainly because of its method of composition, a method which is interesting to compare with Marvell's. The poem, as the additions show, was used as a museum in which the poet would place his various lacrimable specimens with the result that the poem has as much structural unity as a string of pearls, or a stream of tears, which was perhaps the effect desired. Marvell's poem although not nearly so elaborate, has the same structural weakness, and was not shed tear by tear, but was an outburst occasioned by a reading of "The Weeper". The subject appears to arouse sophistication.-- and both poems have a large measure of it. "Eyes and Tears" is obviously an early experimental poem, on which later, as I have, in part, ^{already shown} Marvell very considerably drew.

"The deaw no more will weep
 The primrose's pale cheek to deck
 The deaw no more will sleep
 Nuzzel'd in the lily's neck.
 Much rather it would be thy Tear
 And leave them both to tremble here."

"I have through every Garden been,
 Amongst the Red, the White, the Green,
 And yet, from all the flow'rs I saw,
 No Honey, but these Tears could draw."

Marvell has been influenced, but he is choosing his own method of expression. Again:

"Much lesse mean we to trace
 The fortune of inferior gemmes
 Preferr'd to some proud face
 Or pertched upon fear'd Diadems
 Crown'd Heads are toyes. We goe to meet
 A worthier object, our Lord's Feet."

"So Magdalen, in Tears more wise
 Dissolv'd those captivating Eyes,
 Whose liquid Chaines could flowing meet
 To fetter her Redeemers feet."

Crashaw's lines conclude the poem, whereas Marvell's are in the middle, but it is interesting to notice that when he uses the images again, it is as a conclusion:

"That they, while Thou on both their Spoils dost tread,
 May crown thy Feet, but could not crown thy Head."

Marvell, however, does not consistently use the dramatic close of Crashaw (although it is not truly dramatic because the poem lacks structure). Crashaw, of course, inherited it from Herbert. Herbert's conclusions are a release, a relaxing of tension, a contradiction of all that has been said, a simple working out of something that has become greatly involved:

"But as I rav'd and grew more fierce and wilde
 At every word
 Methought I heard one calling Childe
 And I replied, My Lord."

This is not Marvell's way, for he tightens the tension almost to breaking point; the concluding statement implies, and yet almost contradicts everything that has been written, and the poem instead of becoming simplified is complicated.

So great is Marvell's debt in "Eyes and Tears" to "The Weeper", that one passage is meaningless until reference is made to Crashaw, for Marvell, reducing rather than expanding, is too elliptical.

"The Incense was to Heaven dear
Not as a perfume, but a Tear.

"Does thy song fill the air;
Thy falling teares keep faithfull time.
Does thy sweet-breath'd prayer
Up in clouds of incense climb?
Still at each sigh, that is, each stop
A bead, that is A Tear, does drop."

Finally, we find that Marvell in his contradiction of:

"These weeping Eyes, those seeing Tears"

has drastically modified Crashaw's preposterous:

"Two walking baths, two weeping motions
Portable and compendious oceans."

So far I have shown Marvell writing as T.S. Eliot does not write, namely creating mere verbal echoes which have no real significance. It is time to consider the poetry of Marvell which arouses associative emotion. In doing this let us again examine "The Weeper".

"O cheeks! Bedds of chast loves
By your own showres season ably dash't.
Eyes! nest of milky doves
In your own wells decently washt.
O wit of love! that thus could place
Fountain and Garden in one face."

Crashaw is here exploiting imagery from the Song of Solomon:

"Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as the honeycomb;
honey and milk are under thy tongue: and the
smell of the garments is like the smell of
Lebanon. A garden enclosed is my sister,
my spouse: a spring shut up, a fountain

sealed. Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits; camphire, with spikenard, spikenard and saffron; calamus and cinnamon, with all the chief spices. A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon. Awake O northwind, and come thou South; blow upon my garden that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits. I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse. I have gathered my myrrh with my spice, I have eaten my honey comb with my honey... His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of waters washed with milk and fitly set. His cheeks are as a bed of spices as sweet flowers: his lips like lillies dropping sweet smelling myrrh."

Crashaw's debt is great; but his is a rape rather than a seduction. He uses the imagery of the Song of Songs, which is a love poem not a mourning dirge, to describe the tears of Mary Magdalen. The plagiarism is casual, and unimportant.

Marvell's imagery is also largely that of the Song of Solomon.

"Thyrsis: Turn thine Eye to yonder Skie,
There the milky way doth lie;
'Tis a sure but rugged way,
That leads to Everylasting day.
Dorinda: There Birds may nest, but how can I,
That have no wings and cannot fly."

and

"But, on the other side, th' art drawn
Like to Aurora in the Dawn;
When on the East she slumb'ring lies,
And stretches out her milky Thighs;
While all the morning Quirre does sing,
And Manna falls, and Roses spring;
And, at thy Feet, the Wooing Doves
Sit perfecting their harmless Loves."

The Gallery.

also

"Now my sweet Faun is vanish'd to
 Whether the Swans and Turtles go:
 In fair Elizium to endure,
 With milk-white lambs, and Ermins pure."

Marvell when he writes "milky" also writes, "Doves" or "birds", because the two words are bound in an association, which is certainly a literary one. The words of the Song are in Marvell's head, and also those of "The Weeper" because we find a cross reference:

"We goe not to seek
 The darlings of Aurora's bed,
 The rose's modest Cheek
 Nor the violets humble head,
 Though the Field's eyes too Weepers be
 Because they want such Teares to see."

Marvell, however, in these three passages has not advanced on Crashaw. Both poets echo the words of the Song, but they do not attempt an interpretation. Later Marvell interprets, but in the early poems the borrowings are purely verbal. I may make my point more clear by analysing Marvell's use of the word "fountain".

One can see that Marvell's poetry, like the Song of Solomon, is about two things -- fountains and gardens. Critics have noticed his obsession with the word "green", which is actually subsidiary to his interest in the garden, but that Marvell uses the word "fountain" repeatedly has not been remarked upon:

"Go, intercept some Fountain in the Vein,
 Whose Virgin Source yet never steeped the Plain."

"Alas, how pleasant are these dayes
 With whom the Infant love yet playes!
 Sorted by pairs, they still are seen
 By Fountains cool, and shadows green."

"'Tis all enforced; the Fountain and the Grot;
 While the sweet Fields do lye forgot."

"To what cool Cave shall I descend,
 Or to what gelid Fountain bend?"

"Here at the Fountains sliding foot
 Or at some Fruit-trees mossy root,
 Casting the Bodies Vest aside,
 My Soul into the boughs does glide."

"So the Soul, that Drop, that Ray
 Of the clear Fountain of Eternal Day,
 Could it within the humane flow'r be seen,
 Remembring still its former height,
 Shuns the sweat leaves and blossoms green."

Fountains are inextricably woven into the texture of the verse, and yet his use of the word is elusive, for it never achieves the status of a symbol, not even a flexible one. The poems in which fountains are spoken of are good ones, but they do not set the mind working in the same way as do the garden poems. Why, one may ask, could not Marvell complicate the meaning of the fountain and its waters as well as that of the garden and its flowers. My only answer is that he lacked T.S. Eliot's "objective correlative". The garden was there, at Nunappleton House for Marvell to walk in. No matter what literary or sophisticated symbol he chose it to represent, the garden was still there in its magnificent reality. On reading The Garden one realizes its complexity, but one also feels that one is reading a poem about an actual garden, but with the fountain one is not so sure: Certainly the line

"Here at the Fountain's sliding foot."

gives one a vivid visual picture, but one must wonder if the effect is quite legitimate when we read;

"Or to suspend my sliding Foot
On the Osier's undermined Root."

There has been a too easy transference, and the accuracy of sliding when applied to water is perhaps purely fortuitous. Marvell's use of the word fountain is literary, and it is because of this, in some strange way, that Marvell could not use it as a symbol. His words have a strange progression. The fountain and the garden of the Song are symbolic, and before Marvell can use them symbolically they must first be appreciated realities. This the fountain is not. There is a delight in the word, without an equivalent delight in the thing signified. It is a weakness which permeates seventeenth century poetry, and is derived in part from Marinism and Gongorism but also from the English Euphuists. Through this weakness some lovely lines have been written, but not great poetry:

"Prayer, the Church's banquet, Angel's age,
God's breath in man returning to his birth,
The soul in paraphrase, heart in pilgrimage,
The Christian plummet sounding heaven and earth;

Engine against th'Almighty, sinner's tower
Reversed thunder, Christ-side-piercing spear,
The six days' world transposing in an hour,
A kind of tune, which all things hear and fear.

Softness and peace, and joy, and love and bliss,
Exalted Manna, gladness of the best,
Heaven in ordinary, man well drest,
The Milky Way, the bird of Paradise,

Church-bells beyond the stars heard, the soul's blood,
The land of spices, something understood."

Marvell overcame the mere sensuous delight in words, and

and endeavoured in his redraughts to interpret and apply the symbolism of the Canticles.

"A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse: a spring shut up, a fountain sealed....Let my beloved come into my garden, and eat his pleasant fruits. I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse. I have gathered my myrrh with my spice."

This surely is the basic theme of "The Garden".

IV. The Garden.

1.

Marvell in the rehandling of his themes and remoulding of his expression shows that his interest lies not in self-revelation, as with Donne, but in the elaboration of ideas. He, with Cowley, bases his poetry largely on literary experience, but unlike Cowley's his poetry is informed by a rich sensuousness. One can see from where Marvell derives his imagery, and the use he makes of literary conventions, but behind this practice one can feel an original and acute mind, expressing its criticism obliquely. Almost everything he touches he twists -- it is hay still, but also a rope. Eyes and Tears is a composite poem, but lacks unity. The Garden is also a composite poem, as composite as Eliot's Burbank with a Baedeker, and, unlike that poem, of great structural excellence, for The Garden is the perfect example of Marvell's powers of compressing wayward and contradictory matter.

Eliot says that Marvell's excellence may be traced to his free working within the Latin culture. Certainly we feel an affinity of mind between him and Horace; but Marvell is nowhere so dependent on the Latin culture as is, say, Herrick, for he refers constantly to the Bible, and to his contemporaries, both poets and prose-writers. The Garden, more perhaps than any of his other poems, shows Marvell as a man of his own age, but with an unusual gift for condensation.

Marvell was constantly subservient to literary tradition. His greatest poem "To His Coy Mistress" implies a willingness to forego personal expression, in favour of that of a great commonplace. His symbolic use of flowers is well within literary tradition. "The Garden" owes its origin to a then pervading fashion of thought. Today poets find little of interest in the story of the Fall, although one major dramatist has refashioned it, but to the seventeenth century it was a subject of great interest. The seventeenth century was perhaps the time of greatest religious activity in English history, for the Anglican Church was seeking an evolution through the constant application of ideals. "The Bible" as Chillingworth says, "The Bible is the only Religion of Protestants and to accept and revere the Bible was the cornerstone of one's faith." Laud writes:

"...the assent which we yield to this main principle of Divinity that the Scripture is the word of God, is grounded upon no compelling or demonstrative ratiocination, but relies upon the strength of faith more than any other principle whatsoever....The danger is when a man will use no other scale but reason, or refer reason before any other scale. For the word of God, and the Book containing it, refuse not to be weighted by reason. But the scale is not large enough to contain, nor the weights to measure out, the true virtue or full force of either."

One's interpretation of the Bible however need not be rigid. Willey has shown how great was the flexibility allowed in exegesis. Seventeenth century Anglicans in reading the story of the Fall, found there a parallel with the New Testament which would have been quite incomprehensible to Old Testament Judaism. Edward Reynolds in a passage which recalls Milton's interpretation of the first Book of Genesis, endeavours to find some real meaning for a Christian in the story:

"Even in Paradise there was a Sacrament -- a tree of life it was, but there was but one. Whereas Adam was to eat of all the fruits of the Garden, he was there but to taste sometimes of life; it was not to be his perpetual and only food. We read of a tree of life in the beginning of the Bible, and a tree of life at the end too; that was in Adam's Paradise on earth, this is St. John's Paradise in Heaven. But that did bear but the first fruits of life the earnest of an afterfullness; this bare life in abundance for it bare twelve manners of fruits, and that every month -- which shows both the completeness and eternity of that glory which we expect. And as the tree of Paradise was but a sacrament of the life in Heaven, so Paradise itself was but a sacrament of Heaven. Certainly Adam was placed among the dark and shady trees of the garden that he might in an Emblem acknowledge that he was as yet but in the shadow of life, the substance wherof he was elsewhere to receive."

The interest in the meaning of the Fall was general, *in almost all seventeenth century poets, whether secular or divine.* It was Milton's inspiration, and in Herbert, ^{and} indeed, we find reference to man's first disobedience. Traherne, and more particularly Vaughan, writing under the influence of the Cambridge Platonists, recognized in the state of man in Eden that of a very young child, and suggest, if they do not make wholly explicit, the Platonic doctrine of Reminiscence. In secular verse the story is introduced but in no very critical or unorthodox manner. Cowley, who influenced Marvell as greatly as any of his contemporaries, writes:

"But rather thus let me remain,
As Man in Paradise did reign;
When perfect love did so agree
With innocence and poverty.

Adam did no jointure give
Himself was jointure to his Eve.
Untouched with avarice or pride
The rib came freely back to his side."

Occasionally Cowley is more critical, but it is Donne's criticism, a criticism of women, not of God:

"Oh Solitude, first state of human-kind!
Which blest remain'd till man did find
Even his own helpers company,
As soon as two(alas) together joyn'd,
The Serpent made up three."

The passage may very well have been the starting point for Marvell's Garden. Marvell is a poet of suggestion rather than statement. His aim-- and one does feel that the result was achieved by conscious effort -- was to criticise, but so indirectly that the reader can never be sure whether or not the criticism has been levelled. In the *Pseudodoxia Epidemica*, which was published in 1646, and surely read by Marvell, or for that matter by any poet who was in search of images, Browne writes:

"The second is that speech of Adam unto God 'The woman thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the Tree and I did eat'. This indeed was an unsatisfactory reply, and therein was involved a very impious error, as implying God the author of sin, and accusing his maker of transgression. As if he had said 'If thou hadst not given me a woman I had not been deceived. Thou promised to make her a help but she hath proved destruction unto me. Had I remained alone I had not sinned; but thou gavest me a consort, and so I became seduced.' This was a bold and open accusation of God, making the fountain of good, the contriver of evil, the forbidder of the crime the abettor of the fact prohibited. Surely his mercy was great that did not revenge the impeachment of his justice. And his goodness to be admired, that it refuted not his argument in the punishment of his execution and only pursued the first transgression without a penalty of this the second."

What peace! What unanimity!
 How innocent from the lewd fashion
 To all our business, all our conversation!

.....
 O Solitude, the soul's best friend,
 That man acquainted with himself dost make,
 And all his Maker's wonders to intend;
 With thee I hear converse at will,
 And would be glad to do so still;
 For it is thou alone that keep'st the soul awake."

Marvell is well within convention when he writes:

"Society is all but rude
 To this delicious Solitude."

for although the lines of Cotton are too robust to compare with:

"What wondrous life is this I lead"

yet the emotion behind the words of the two poets is similar.

Marvell, however, is the more ingenious. The hint of combining the two themes came perhaps from Cowley:

"When God did Man to his own likeness make,
 As much as Clay, though of the purest kind,
 By the great Potters art refin'd;
 Could the Divine Impression take;
 He thought it fit to place him, where
 A kind of Heaven too did appear,
 As far as earth could such a likeness bear:
 That man no happiness might want
 Which Earth to her first Master could afford;
 He did a Garden for him plant
 By the quick hand of his Omnipotent Word.
 As the chief Help and Joy of Human life,
 He gave him the first Gift, first ev'n before a Wife.

.....
 O blessed shades! O gentle cool retreat
 From all the immoderate Heat
 In which the frantick World does Burn and Sweat."

The last three lines are surely echoed in:

"When we have run our passions heat,
Love hither makes his best retreat."

Such is the background to Marvell's Garden. The poet was interested in weaving three strands together -- those of the Fall, Nature and Solitude. In combining these subjects he wrote a sophisticated, complex and witty poem; as well as using other men's lines, complicating and contradicting them, he also drew from his own poetry, and in so doing made more meaningful words already rich to him. In the composition of the Garden Marvell drew on all the cultures which were known to him -- Biblical, classical and contemporary.

2.

So much for the general background of the poem. Let us now apply the tenets already laid down concerning Marvell's method of composition. The first draught of The Garden is to be found in "The Mower against Gardens". It is a complex poem, but not sufficiently so, for the imagery which is more obviously sexual than anywhere else in Marvell -- "luxorious", "seduce", "luscious", "adult'rate", "his green Seraglio has its Eunuchs too", "to procreate without a Sex" -- is too rigid, and not sufficiently worked out to be very satisfying. The subject that Man having seduced his own reason:

"The Pink grew then as double as his Mind"
seduced, and corrupted Nature is the opposite to the theme of The

Garden, where nature, physical desire, seduces Man. The Garden is the more successful poem of the two because here his choice of imagery is more in accordance with literary practice, and with his own. The natural world appears to Marvell as either a woman, the object of sexual desire, or sexual desire itself. In "The Garden" it is desire which seduces man, in "The Mower against Gardens", man who seduces desire, which, being a contradiction in terms, is inapplicable. It is necessary to understand Marvell's use of the natural world, and more particularly of flowers, and to realize how rigidly he worked within a convention, before one can grasp the complexity of much of his poetry, especially The Garden.

Marvell has been acclaimed as a nature poet, but although his visual impressions are accurate:

"How it the purple flow'r does slight,
Scarce touching where it lyes...

....

Restless it roules and unsecure,
Trembling lest it grow impure."

and his tactual sensations keen:

"Then as I careless on the Bed
Of gelid Straw-berryes do tread...."

yet the use he makes of images drawn from nature is conventional. Flowers, especially the rose, become fairly constant symbols for sexual desire. The symbolism is of course not rigid; for example in "The Coronet" his love for a woman suffers a spiritual

transmutation and this flexibility adds to the general ambiguity of Marvell's poetry. The statement that Marvell's acceptance, and subsequent shading of the flower symbol is conventional can only be substantiated by a battery of quotation to illustrate that flowers in the seventeenth century had a literary significance which they had had before, perhaps, in the cult of the daisy, but certainly have not had since.

"The whiles someone did chaunt this lovely lay;
 Ah see, who so faine thing does fain to see,
 In springing flowre the image of thy day;
 Ah see the Virgin Rose, how sweetly she
 Dost first peepe forth with bashful modestie,
 That fairer seemes, the lesse ye see her may;
 Lo see soone after, how more bold and free
 Her bared bosome she doth broad display;
 Loe see soone after, how she fades, and falles away.

So passeth, in the passing of a day,
 Of mortall life the leafe, the bud, the flowre,
 No more doth flourish after first decay,
 That earst was sought to decke both bed and bowre,
 Of many a Ladie, and many a Paramoure:
 Gather therefore the Rose, whilst yet is Prime
 For soone comes age, that will her pride deflowre;
 Gather the Rose of love, whilst yet is time,
 Whilst loving thou mayst loved be with equall crime."

Spenser

"Some the quicke eye commends.
 Some swelling lips and red;
 Pale looks have many friends
 Though sacred sweetnesse bred.
 Medowes have flowres that pleasure move,
 Though roses are the flowres of love."

Campion.

"The summer's flower is to the summer sweet
 Though to itself it only live and die;
 But if that flower with base infection meet,
 The basest weed outbraves his dignity:
 For sweetest things turn sourest by their deeds
 Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds."

Shakespeare.

"But ere your spring be gone, enjoy it. Flowers
 Though faire are oft but of one morning; thinke
 All beauty doth not last untill the autumnne.
 You grow old while I tell you this, and such
 As cannot use the present are not wise."

Jonson.

"If then all that worldings prize
 Be contracted to a rose;
 Sweetly there indeed it lies
 But it biteth in the close."

.....

But I health not physick choose:
 Only though I you oppose,
 Say that fairly I refuse
 For my answer is a Rose."

Herbert.

"Gather ye Rosebuds while ye may,
 Old time is still aflyng:
 And this same flower that smiles today
 Tomorrow will be dying."

Herrick.

"Blown in the morning, thou shalt fade ere noon:
 What boots a life which in such haste forsakes thee?
 Th'art wondrous frolick being to die so soon:
 And passing proud a little colour makes thee."

Fanshawe.

"Goe lovely rose
 Tell her that wastes her time and me,
 That now she knows
 When I resemble her to thee
 How sweet and fair she seems to be."

Waller.

"Or as a budding rose, when first tis blown,
 Smells sweeter far than when it is more spread."

Lord Herbert.

"Ask me no more where Jove bestows
 When June is past the fading rose;
 For in you beauties orient deep
 These flowers, as in their causes sleep."

Carew.

"So love appear'd, when, breaking out his way
 From the dark chaos, he first shed the Day;
 Newly awak'd out of the Bed so shews
 The half seen, half hid, glory of the Rose.
 As you do through your Veyls; and I may swear
 Viewing you so, that Beauty doth Bud there."

Cartwright.

"'Tis now clear day: I see a Rose
 Bud in the bright east, and disclose
 The pilgrim-Sunne."

Vaughan.

All these roses, save Vaughan's, are classical. Most
 of these poets would have known Ausonius:

"So many lovely things, so rare, so young,
 A day beget them, and a day will end.
 O Earth, to give a flower so brief a grace!
 As long as day is long, so long the life of a rose.
 The golden sun at morning sees her born,
 And late at eve returning finds her old.
 Yet wise is she, who hath so soon to die,
 And lives her life in some succeeding rose.
 O Maid, while youth is with the rose and thee
 Pluck thou the rose: life is as swift for thee."

Helen Waddell's translation.

and certainly the revival of interests in the classics from an
 imitative point of view in the sixteenth century must account
 for the popularity of the rose in the seventeenth century.
 But it is not only in Latin literature and seventeenth century
 poetry that Marvell finds a precedent for his use of the rose.
 His poetry is perhaps as near to that of Theocritus, as to any
 one's, and Theocritus constantly handles the theme of the
 intransience of physical beauty:

"Yea, the rose is beautiful, and Time he withers it;
and fair is the violet in spring, and swiftly it
waxes old; white is the lily, it fadeth when it
falleth; and snow is white and melteth after it
has been frozen. And the beauty of youth is
fair, but lives only for a little season."

Andrew Lang's translation.

Theocritus is simpler than Marvell, yet there is something of his complexity in Idyll 20, where the rose represents sexual shame and pride:

"....these taunts she mouthed, and thrice spat in the breast of her gown, and stared at me all over from head to feet; shooting out her lips and glancing with half shut eyes, writhing her beautiful body, and so sneered and laughed me to scorn. And instantly my blood boiled, and I grew red under the sting, as a rose with dew. And she went off and left me...."

Marvell capitalized on his inheritance, and his flower symbolism shows or suggests all facets:

"Thyrsis: The Grass I aim to feast thy Sheep;
The Flow'rs I for thy Temples keep.
Dorinda: Grass withers; and the Flow'rs too fade."

"No white nor red was ever seen
So am'rous as this lovely green."

The rose, with which Little T.C. played, becomes in Daphnis and Chloe, a symbol for sexual desire:

"Gentler times for Love are ment
Who for panting pleasure strain
Gather Roses in the rain,
Wet themselves and spoil their scent."

Marvell's use of flowers is, unlike that of other seventeenth century poets, which is incidental and figurative, consistent

enough to be called symbolic. The correlation between flowers and human love was the basic assumption of his poetical philosophy; it was a philosophy which might readily be held in the seventeenth century. Browne writes:

"But to call ourselves a Microcosm, or little world, I thought it only a pleasant trope of Rhetoric, till my near judgment and second thoughts told me there was a real truth therein. For first we are a rude mass, and in the rank of creatures which only are, and have a dull kind of being, not yet privileged with life, or preferred to senses or reason: next we live the life of plants, the life of animals, the life of men, and at last the life of spirits, running on in one mysterious nature those five kinds of existences which comprehend the creatures, not only of the world but of the Universe."

There is perhaps a parallel between Marvell's possible use of Pseudodoxia and Eliot's certain use of "The Golden Bough". Here at least is a prose statement of Marvell's poetic assumption, for Marvell's personal transition from one plane of being to another is an easy one. He may be an "inverted tree" or a bird. In Nunappleton House, as in the Garden, the poet is seduced by the flowers, and it is through this seduction that he becomes one with nature, and finally Christ himself:

"Bind me ye Woodbines in your 'twines,
 Circle me about ye Jadding Vines,
 And Oh so close your Circles lace,
 That I may never leave this Place:
 But, lest your Fetters prove too weak,
 Ere I your Silken Bondage break,
 Do you, O Brambles, chain me too
 And courteous Briars nail me through."

Marvell's poetry is stuffed with ideas -- this is its

fascination. Here indeed is felt thought, for Marvell, or so it appears to me, is the only one of the so-called metaphysical poets who has any claim to that name. But he is a frivolous metaphys^{ic}ian because he writes not from faith or belief, but from assumption. It is wrong to say that Marvell identified himself with nature, or Christ, wrong to say that he believed flowers to be animated, spiritual. Vaughan believed this; Marvell merely assumed it; and because his ideas are only assumed, he is free to fill a concept with contradictions and by doing so to arrive at a complete idea, if a baffling one. Marvell's ideas, unlike those of Donne, who appropriated ways of thought or scraps of information to illustrate experience, belong to him; indeed no serious philosopher would lay claim to them. In order to appreciate the Garden it is necessary to hold the poet's assumption within one's mind.

3.

Let us examine the poem verse by verse.

"How vainly men themselves amaze
 To win the Palm, the Oke, or Bayes;
 And their incessant Labours see
 Crown'd from single Herb or Tree.
 Whose short and narrow verged Shade
 Does prudently their Toyles upbraid;
 While all Flow'rs and all Trees do close
 To weave the Garlands of repose."

How unobtrusively, how prudently, the poem opens! Nothing very much is promised. He may be about to write nothing beyond a mere

excellent poem, technically, than "Upon the Hill and Grove at Bill-Borrow.

"For all the Civick Garlands due
To him our Branches are but few."

Throughout "The Garden" he refers to the latter poem:

"Nor he the Hills without the Groves,
Nor Height but the Retirement loves."

"Society is all but rude,
To this delicious Solitude."

and

"And on these Okes ingrav'd her Name;
Such Wounds alone these Woods became:
But ere he well the Barks could part
'Twas writ already in their Heart."

"Fond lovers, cruel as their Flame,
Cut in these Trees their Mistress name.
Little, Alas, they know, or heed,
How far these Beauties Hers exceed!
Fair Trees! where s'eer your barks I wound,
No name shall but your own be found."

He is quarrying in his own mine, and how skilful is his choice of stone. I am not quite correct, however, in saying that the first verse promises little. Much of the complexity of Marvell's poetry would be more readily unravelled by his contemporaries than by ourselves, because they would have seen far more readily how he transmutes conventional usage. Garlands in the seventeenth century were associated with love and desire in a way which became submerged in the eighteenth century. Such an association is of course classical.

"I will weave the violet white
 Mid the myrtle weave the light
 Jonquil, and therewith I will
 Weave the laughing daffodil.
 Then the saffron, sweet of smell,
 Weave I will, and weave as well
 Purple iris, and with those
 Interweave the true love rose.
 So, on the brow where clusters fair
 Heliadora's fragrant hair,
 This my coronal will fling
 Every flower of the spring."

Meleager -- translated by R.A. Furness.

and

"Fill the bright cups with wine that conquers care;
 From the wide phials unguents liberal shed!
 Who shall moist parsley for each head,
 Or myrtle wreaths prepare."

Horace -- translated by J. Marshall.

and again from the Appendix Vergiliana:

"Its very hot.
 Cicadas out in the trees are shrilling, ear-splitting
 The very lizard is hiding for coolness under his hedge.
 If you have sense you'll lie still and drench
 yourself from your wine cup
 Or maybe you prefer the look of your wine in crystal.
 Heigh-ho, but its good to lie here under the vines
 And reap the scarlet lips of a pretty girl.
 You be damned, you there with your Puritan eyebrows!
 What will cold ashes give you for the sweetness of garlands.
 Or is it your mind to hang a rose wreath upon your tombstone.
 Set down the wine and the dice, and perish who thinks of
 tomorrow.
 Here's Death twitching my ear. 'Live', says he, 'for I'm
 coming!'"

Helen Waddell's Translation.

The translation is modern, but both the sensuousness and the
 attitude are to be found in Damon the Mower and To His Coy Mistress.

In any other poet I would consider "garlands of repose" a charming phrase, but in Marvell I feel it to be rich in erotic association.

In "Eyes and Tears" Marvell, writing under the influence of Crashaw, says:

"I have through every Garden been,
Amongst the Red, the White, the Green...."

In "The Garden" while redrafting his own lines, he capitalizes on contemporary usage; for example, Suckling's:

"Of thee, kind boy, I ask no red and white
To make up my desires."

and Chamberlayne's:

"Trembling fear
Plucks roses from her cheeks, which soon appear
Full-blown again with anger -- red and white
Did in this conflict of this passion fight
For the pre-eminence."

and writes the lines which have been seen as the very core of his poetry.

"No red, nor white was ever seen
As am'rous as this lovely green."

What so charms us in the fourth verse is its ease in expression. Although Marvell frequently deals with artificial and conventional subjects, yet his expression is so spontaneous as to seem almost inevitable. The verse might have sprung from the poet's brain, like Athena from the head of Jove, fully formed, so subtle is its modulation and balance.

"And Pan did after Syrinx speed,
Not as a Nymph, but for a Reed."

Marvell's debt here is considerable to both Stanley and Cowley. It is almost sacrilegious to compare "The Garden" with Cowley's "Ode Upon Dr. Harvey", but such a comparison is pertinent:

"Coy nature, (which remain'd, though aged grown,
A beauteous virgin still, enjoy'd by none,
Nor seen unveil'd by any one.)
When Harvey's violent passion she did see
Began to tremble and to flee,
Took sanctuary like Daphne in a tree;
There Daphne's lover stop't, and thought it much
The very leaves of her to touch.
But Harvey our Apollo, stopt not so,
Into the bark and root he after her did goe.
No smallest fibres of a plant
For which the eyebeams Point does sharpness want
His passage after her withstood."

How bald is Cowley's application of the lovely myth, and how very delicate Marvell's. Here, as in the Bermudas, Marvell is perhaps rejecting with oblique decisiveness, but infinite charm, the enthusiasms of the new science and rational philosophy. The poem is ~~although~~ too deeply depersonalized to more than hint at some sort of frustration, as do also The Coronet, Damon the Mower, and The Definition of Love, yet because there is a hint, Stanley's Apollo and Daphne, a translation from Marino, is interesting:

"When Phoebus saw a rugged bark beguile
His love, and his embraces intercept
The leaves instructed by his griefs to smile
Taking fresh growth and verdure as he wept.
'How can' saith he 'my woes expect release,
When tears the subject of my tears increase.
His chang'd yet scorn-retaining Fair he kissed:
From the loved trunk plucking a little bough

And though the conquest which he sought he missed
 With that triumphant spoil adorns his brow.
 Thus this disdainful maid his aim deceives
 Where he expected fruit he gathers leaves."

The poem was published in 1647 and I feel sure Marvell had read it. Here is the garland theme, and also the last line seems to be reflected in

"I gather flowers, my fruits are only flowers."

a reflection which may indicate that the sense of frustration which permeates Marvell's poetry is literary rather than personal.

The next three stanzas are, as Empson shows, the most complex.

"What wond'rous Life is this I lead!
 Ripe Apples drop about my head;
 The Luscious clusters of the Vine
 Upon my Mouth do crush their Wine;
 The Nectaren, and Curious Peach,
 Into my hands themselves do reach;
 Stumbling on Melons, as I pass,
 Insnar'd with Flow'rs, I fall on Grass."

Here we have almost everything Marvell has to give us. He is working within a classical convention with which the seventeenth century was familiar largely through Catullus. Herrick echoes him:

"I dream'd the mortal part of mine
 Was Metamorphoz'd to a Vine;
 Which crawling one and everyway,
 Entrall'd my dainty Lucia.
 Me thought, her long small legs and thighs
 I with my Tendrils did surprise;
 Her Belly, Buttocks and her Waste
 By my soft Nerv'lits were embraced:

About her head I writhing hung
 And with rich clusters (hid among
 The leaves) her temples I behung:
 So that my Lucia seem'd to me
 Young Bacchus ravish'd by his tree.
 My curles about her neck did craule
 And armes and hands did they enthrall:
 So that she could not freely stir,
 (Allparts there made are prisoner)
 But when I crept with leaves to hide
 Those parts, which maids keep unespy'd,
 Such fleeting pleasures there I took
 That with the fancy I awook;
 And found (Ah me!) this flesh of mine
 More like a Stock, than like a Vine."

Herrick takes an idea and writes a poem on it, exploiting all the possibilities of the theme, whereas Marvell in his introduction of the Vine into his composite poem merely suggests them. Herrick, unlike Marvell is personal, although his themes are conventional, and one often feels that his naivete is self-conscious and cultivated. Marvell never weakens his themes in this way.

The verse also owes something to Theocritus:

"He went his way, leftward bent towards Pyxa. So I and Eucritus and the fair Amyntichus, turned aside into the house of Phrasidamus, and lay down with delight in beds of sweet tamarisk and fresh cuttings from the vines strewn on the ground. Many poplars and elm-trees were waving over our heads, and not far off the running of the sacred water from the cave of the nymphs warbled to us; in the shimmering branches the sun-burnt grasshoppers were busy with their talk, and from afar the little owl cried softly, out of the tangled thorns of the blackberry; the larks were singing and the hedge birds and the turtle dove moaned; the bees flee round and round the fountains, murmuring softly; the scent of late summer and the fall of the year was everywhere; the pears fell from the trees at our feet, and apples in number rolled down at our sides, and the young plum trees were bent to the earth with the weight of their fruit." Pater's translation.

Using the pictures of Theocritus, Marvell applied the symbolism of the Song of Solomon, for the poem is Palestinian, if the Song can be accepted as such, rather than Roman or Greek.

".....they made me the keeper of the vineyard: but mine vineyard have I not kept....I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the vallies. As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters. As the apple tree among the trees of my wood, so is my beloved among the Sons. I sat down in his shadow with great delight and his fruit was sweet to my taste."

The Shulamite sees her body as a vineyard, and again her lover as an apple tree, and his "gentle love deeds" as the fruit. The poem changes tone here for in the previous verses he has been relating a direct experience, namely his feeling for the trees at Bill-borrow, while in this verse, though there may also be a direct physical experience, there is certainly the expression of a literary one.

".....Comfort me with apples for I am sick of love.... The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the turtle is heard in our land; the figtree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell.....

A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse: a spring shut up, a fountain sealed. Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates with pleasant fruits
.....A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon. Awake O north wind and come thou south; blow upon my garden that the spices thereof may blow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits. I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse; I have gathered my myrrh with my spices; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey.....

.....and thy breasts are like clusters of grapes....
.....Let us get up early to the vineyards; let us see if the vine flourish, whether the tender grape appear, and the pomegranate bud forth; there will I give thee my loves."

In the Song the garden is seen as a woman, and the enjoyment of its fruits her fulfilment. This is the theme of the Garden, although ostensibly Marvell is writing of man's communion with nature. The seventeenth century believed that although the Song of Songs appeared as a love song, yet actually it was an allegory on Christ's love for his Church. Marvell is writing blasphemy. "Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits", is the Church's invitation to its Christ, and yet strangely enough it is with "my beloved" that Marvell has chosen to identify himself.

One must remember however that Marvell was a man of the seventeenth century, the century of Anglican evolution. To this Anglicanism the vine had become something more than a rather doubtful allegorical symbol. Lancelot Andrewes writes:

"And in the elements you may observe there is a fullness of the seasons of the natural year; of the corn-flour or harvest in the one, bread; of the vine press or vintage in the other, wine; and in the Heavenly of the 'wheat-corn' wherto he compareth Himself -- bread, even the Living Bread that came down from Heaven; the true manna wherof we may gather each his gomer. And again of Him, the true vine as he calls Himself -- the blood of the grapes of that Vine."

Marvell in "The Drop of Dew" used the manna as equivalent to the Divine substance, and I feel that here, especially when one remembers the suggestion of the Paraclete in:

"Casting the Bodies Vest aside,
My Soul into the boughs does glide;"

the influence of the New Testament is present.

I have endeavoured to show that flowers in Marvell represent sexual desire:

"A tender Shepherdess, whose Hair
Hangs loosely playing, the Air,
Transplanting Flow'rs from the green Hill,
To crown her Head, and Bosome fill."

The Gallery.

with
"When for the Thorns/which I long, too long,
With many a piercing wound,
My Saviour's head have crown'd,
I seek with Garlands to redress that Wrong:
Through every Garden, every Mead,
I gather flow'rs (my fruits are only flow'rs)
Dismantling all the fragrant Towers
That once adorn'd my Shepherdesses head."

The Coronet.

In the light of such symbolism what does the final couplet mean?

"Stumbling on Melons, as I pass
Insar'd with Flow'rs, I fall on Grass.

In Damon the Mower and The Mower's Song, grass becomes a symbol of frustrated passion, quite as clearly as flowers are symbols of desire:

"Sharp like, his Sythe his Sorrow was,
And wither'd like his Hopes the Grass."

"And with my Sythe cut down the Grass,
Yet still my Grief is where it was:
But, when the Iron blunter grows,
Sighing I whet my Sythe and Woes."

"And there among the Grass fell down,
By his own Sythe, the Mower mown."

I take the couplet then to mean that although he is tempted by the possible joys of fruition, yet he finds nothing but frustration. The next verse is then more intelligible. The mind, because the body has been cheated by the less satisfying feelings of "falling on Grass" withdraws into itself, and seeks in imagination some sublimation of the love of the body. It is wrong to deny the erotic implication of the final couplet:

"Annihilating all that's made
To a green Thought in a green Shade."

One can trace the evolution of the couplet in The Mower's Song:

"My Mind was once the true survey
Of all these Meadows fresh and gay;
And in the greenness of the Grass
Did see its Hopes as in a Glass;
When Juliana came, and She
What I do to the Grass, does to my Thoughts and Me."

This is a simple statement. The grass is fresh and green, and shows promise, a promise which however we know will not be fulfilled, and in doing so is like his love.

"And thus, ye Meadows, which have been
Companions of my thoughts more green."

His "thoughts more green" are the love thoughts which centre on Juliana. Marvell's use of green is elsewhere sexual, for example, in little T.C.

"In the green Grass she loves to lie,
And there with her Fair Aspect tames
The Wilder flow'rs, and gives them names:
But only with the Roses plays:

and also in Young Love:

"Common Beauties stay fifteen;
Such as yours should swifter move;
Whose fair Blossoms are too green
Yet for Lust, but not for Love."

which recalls Campion's lines:

"Kiss then my harvest queene
Full garners heaping,
Kisses ripest when th'are greene
Want only reaping."

Marvell certainly knew Campion, for his Puritanism was not of the kind to despise music, and the contradiction, "Kisses ripest when th'are greene" would have pleased the master of contradiction. If one felt the need of a precedent for his usage one might find it here, and even more conclusively in The Song.

"Behold, thou art fair, my beloved, yea pleasant:
also our bed is green."

But in The Garden one finds Marvell's most complex use of green. It is necessary here to make a back reference.

"The Gods, that Mortal Beauty chase,
Still in a Tree did end their race.
Apollo hunted Daphne so,
Only that She might Laurel grow.
And Pan did after Syrinx speed,
Not as a nymph, but for a Reed."

In Ovid the Laurel and the Reed became equivalent to the arts of Apollo and Pan. Poetry and music are seen as sublimated sexual desire. Marvell incorporates something of this into the poem when he writes

"Meanwhile the Mind, from pleasure less,
 Withdraws into its happiness:
 The Mind, that Ocean where each kind
 Does streight its own resemblance find;
 Yet it creates, transcending these,
 Far other Worlds, and other Seas;"

The lines refer clearly to the creative imagination. The poem is not a serious one however, for according to Marvell's habits, he contradicts himself. In the very first verse he deprecates any form of sublimation:

"How vainly men themselves amaze
 To win the Palm, the Oke, or Bayes;
 And their uncessant Labours see
 Crown'd from some single Herb or Tree."
 Whose short and narrow verged Shade
 Does prudently their Toyles upbraid,
 While all Flow'rs and all Trees do close
 To weave the Garlands of repose."

In the Coronet we have seen the garland to be the symbol for a religious sublimation; here it is an artistic one. In his translation of the Metamorphoses, Golding writes:

"Her crown became the top, and thus of that she erst had been
 Remained nothing in the world but beauty fresh and green."

"Annihilating all that's made
 To a green Thought in a Green shade."

The eroticism implicit in green has become strangely transmuted. It is because of this transmutation that

"Casting the Bodies Vest aside,
 My Soul into the Boughs does glide."

The soul glides into the boughs because even the gods, "Still in

a Tree did end their race", and it is a fruit tree because this
 the
 connects it with/sexual symbols of the fifth verse.

"What wond'rous Life is this I lead!
 Ripe Apples drop about my head."

The mind's divorce from the trammels of the body is a favourite
 theme of Marvell, and one on which he is most urbane. There, in
 The Garden, the theme finds its culmination.

"Here at the Fountains sliding foot,
 Or at some Fruit-trees mossy root,
 Casting the Bodies Vest aside,
 My soul into the Boughs does glide:
 There like a Bird it sits, and sings,
 Then whets, and combs its silver Wings;
 And, till prepar'd for longer flight,
 Waves in its Plumes the various Light."

Seventeenth century readers were no doubt intimately acquainted
 with the Psalmist, and Marvell would have enjoyed his
 identification with "the upright in heart".

"How say ye, to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain.
 For lo, the wicked bend the bow, they make ready their
 arrow upon the string, that they may privily shoot at the
 upright in heart. If the fountain be destroyed what can
 the righteous do." Psalm 11.

"Such was that happy Garden-state,
 While Man there walk'd without a Mate;
 After a Place, so pure, so sweet,
 What other help could yet be meet!
 But 'twas beyond a Mortal's share
 To wander solitary there!
 Two Paradises 'twere is one
 To live in Paradise alone."

At last he states the superficial theme. How audacious it is,
 not because it slights women -- all seventeenth century poets

did this -- but because in implication Marvell is levelling criticism at God! Not only is he unwilling to accept God's helpmate, but he even suggests that Paradise, which from all accounts was as good as God could make it, and hence perfect, would, had he, Marvell, had his way, been an even more desirable place. How delicious is this complacency with which he slides into the harmless statement of the last verse.

"How well the skilful Gardner drew
Of flow'rs and herbes this Dial new;
Where from above the Milder Sun
Does through a fragrant Zodiack run;
And, as it works, th' industrious Bee
Computes its time as well as we.
How could such sweet and wholesome Hours
Be reckon'd but with herbs and flow'rs!"

It is as though the damaging lines had never been written. We see that Marvell has criticized God, and we are glad that he is going to make amends for it:

"How well the skilful Gardner drew...."

God's craftsmanship may not have been quite perfect, but at least he is skilful -- but as we read on we realize that it is not of God he is speaking but of the gardener attached to Nunappleton House. How mild are his remarks on the activity of the bee and the wholesomeness of the time; how complacent he is in his patronage of the bee, as though its task is not a more important and better one than the writing of scandalous, nay blasphemous, verses. But the poet with the too sensuous lips smiles --

"Computes his time as well as we." --- "At the same time."

V. Temper of the Poetry and the Man Himself.

Marvell's poetry has lasted and will last because of something in Marvell's character which is not purely literary, in fact not literary at all, for it is his urbanity which makes him so delightful. It is no doubt difficult to reconcile the Marvell of the lyrics with the writer of the satires, but one must remember that the lyrics Marvell wrote to please himself -- he apparently did not consider publication, or even circulation, in his lifetime -- while when he wrote the satires he was not his own master. In my analysis of the Garden I have endeavoured to show Marvell as a man of the seventeenth century, drawing, in the expression of himself, on three cultures. The ability to co-ordinate two such divergent cultures as the Palestinian and the Roman indicates an unusual poise and sanity of mind. The Garden certainly expresses an urbanity of mind, but the poem is too complex for one's dominant impression to be one of personality. The Bermudas is the classic of courtesy. I have found nothing like it in English literature -- except in Chaucer, and although Chaucer's aims were more ambitious, I doubt whether his mind was more cosmopolitan, or his temper more complacent than Marvell's.

As in "The Garden", so in the "Bermudas" he draws on Biblical and contemporary sources.

"By them shall the fowls of the heaven have their habitation, which sing among the branches. He watereth the hills from his chambers: the earth is satisfied with the fruits of thy works. He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth....The trees of the Lord are full of sap; the cedars of Lebanon, which he hath planted; where

the birds make their nests:.....O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches. So is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts. There go the ships; there is that leviathan, whom thou hast made to play therein. These wait all upon thee; that thou mayest give them their meat in due season."

Psalm 104.

"What should we do but sing his Praise
That led us through the watry Maze,
Unto an Isle so long unknown,
And yet far kinder than our own?
Where he the huge Sea-Monsters wracks,
That lift the Deep upon their Backs.
He lands us on a grassy Stage;
Safe from the Storms, and Prelat's rage.
He gave us this eternal Spring,
Which here enamells every thing;
And sends the Fowl's to us in care,
On daily visits through the Air.
He hangs in shades the Orange bright,
Like golden Lamps in a green Night.
And does in the Pomgranates close,
Jewels more rich than Ormus show's.
He makes the Figs our mouths to meet;
And throws the Melons at our feet.
But Apples plants of such a price,
No Tree could ever bear them twice.
With Cedars, chosen by his hand,
From Lebanon, he stores the Land."

Had Marvell not known Psalm 104 and Waller's "Battle of the Summer Isle" I doubt whether the Bermudas would have been written, for it is his constant practice to compose themal variations on words already before him. In The Garden Marvell criticises, although criticism is too strong a word, the contemporary interest in The Fall; in the Bermudas he states his feelings on the new natural theology, which was then emerging to become very important in the eighteenth century. Boyle's passage was published in 1663, but no doubt his sentiments were widely expressed.

"The stars serve for candles to give man light, and the celestial orbs are his candlesticks. He breathes the air, the fire warms him, and serves not only in his kitchen, but to master most other bodies in his furnaces. The clouds water his land, the earth supports him or his buildings, the sea and the winds convey him and his floating houses to the remotest part of the world and enable him to possess everywhere almost all that nature or art have provided for him anywhere. The earth produces an innumerable number of beasts to feed, clothe and carry him; of flowers and jewels to delight and adorn him; of fruit to sustain and refresh him; of stones and timber to lodge him; of simples to cure him; and in sum the whole sublunary world is but his magazine. And it seems the grand business of restless nature, so to constitute and manage his productions, as to furnish him, with necessities, accommodations, and pleasures."

Such unfounded optimism in the sublimity of man is quite alien to Marvell's temperament, but he has in its place the civility, which permeates the Bermudas. Marvell is one of the most civilized of poets; his scepticism and detachment from self which enabled him to assume a poetical belief are given best expression here, in "To His Coy Mistress" and in "The Dialogue between The Resolved Soul and Created Pleasure." He is indeed with Chaucer in his ability to view himself and everyone else with equanimity. The Bermudas is the most hearteasing of poems, because of the great kindness with which Marvell views that ridiculously complacent band:

"From a small Boat, that row'd along,
The listning Winds receiv'd this Song."

The Bermudas includes the reader in the writer's culture; and laughter at the fantastic supposition that the winds are listening to the "holy and a chearful note" has some sort of ethical significance, whereas one is no nearer to one's own humanity in reading Pope. Marvell must have written the poem smiling, because

he knew that his readers would, like the pilgrims, become laughable in their kind but complacent superiority.

The above comparison is important for it is Marvell as well as Waller who looks forward to Pope. Here we have the antithesis, so common to the Augustans:

"He lands us on a grassy Stage;
Safe from the Storms, and Prelat's rage."

The lines are not very different from:

"Beneath a shoal of silver fishes glides,
And plays about the gilden barges sides;
The ladies, angling in the crystal lake,
Feast on the waters with the prey they take;
At once victorious with their lines and eyes,
They make the fishes, and the men, their prize."
Waller, "On St. James' Park."

and

"Here Britain's statesmen oft the fall foredoom
Of foreign Tyrants and of Nymphs at home.
Here thou great Anna! whom three realms obey
Dost sometimes counsel take -- and sometimes tea."

But the attitude is different for Pope's couplets are superior and the sting is intended. The joy of the Bermudas is that the pilgrims do not know what they are saying. They do not realize their naivete in wondering how an undiscovered isle could be left undiscovered.

"Unto an Isle so long unknown
And yet far kinder than our own."

or in the self-satisfied:

"He casts (of which we rather boast)
The Gospels Pearl upon our Coast."

Marvell in this couplet reveals great craftsmanship. He achieves a Popean effect, without its malice; he makes poetic capital out of each word, for he is with Pope in his ability to utilize to the full prosaic words such as "rather" and "perhaps". Also the contrast he achieves in the juxtaposition of gospel and pearl is good, in that "pearl" has the same poetic quality as have oranges, pomegranates and melons, while also having a somewhat sententious meaning. The rime words have all the fatality of a Popean couplet.

"And makes the hollow Seas, that roar,
Proclaime the Ambegris on shoar..."

He is ingenious here, for he is punning on a word which has not two meanings. What he says is that the seas wash upon the shore, the ambergris, but proclaim cannot be used in this way -- yet we accept it whole-heartedly because "the roar" has prepared us for the proclamation.

Marvell mocks everything, except perhaps the application of poetical craftsmanship. He is unable, unlike Boyle, to see man as a little less than the angels; he recognizes his frailty in:

"And sends the Fowl's to us in care,
On daily Visits through the Air."

How splendid a word is "visits" for "fowl" especially when we remember that although to man "in care", the earth produces an innumerable number of beasts to feed, clothe and carry him.

Marvell constantly reveals his personaltiy in the structure of the poem, for the almost theatrical tension, with which the poems are written is characteristic of his mind. Marvell

indicates in the structure of his poems not only a sense of form, but also a considerable reserve of strength. The Bermudas does not appear a remarkably well constructed poem, but it is so in this, that the conclusion

"And all the way, to guide their Chime,
With falling Oars they kept the time."

is quite as inconsequential as the band of pilgrims themselves. The structure is dovetailed with the matter, almost is the matter, and this I account good writing.

2.

A similar inconsequence of structure to that of the Bermudas is found in Ametas and Thestylis making Hay ropes. There is a good deal of sophisticated dialogue which is broken through by the concluding lines.

"Then let's both lay by our Rope,
And go kiss within the Hay."

The lover has introduced an image, but on finding his mistress more apt than he in exploiting it, Ametas is very willing to drop it. His use is suggestive of Marvell's own poetic practice for Marvell will use an image only so long as it aids in the seduction of His Mistress the Muse. Mourning is a better poem than Eyes and Tears only in its more controlled structure, and in Daphnis and Chloe Marvell makes something very near to a great poem out of second rate matter merely through regulation and restraint. The perfect examples of structural excellence are,

of course, To His Coy Mistress and the Picture of Little T.C. in a Prospect of Flowers. V. Sackville West has shown how well the latter poem is constructed, and a comparison with a poem of Etherege's makes this more clear:

"Sweetest bud of beauty! may
 No untimely frost decay
 Th' early glories, which we trace
 Blooming in thy matchless face.
 But kindly opening, like the rose
 Fresh beauties every day disclose
 Such as by nature are not shown
 In all the blossoms she has blown:
 And then what conquests shall you make
 Who hearts already daily take?
 Scorched in the morning with thy beams
 How shall we bear those sad extremes
 Which must attend thy threatening eyes,
 When thou shalt to thy noon arise."

The theme is identical with Marvell's. The poet sees the child's "early glories", he considers her more beautiful than nature's flowers, and prays that no untimely frost may cause her beauty to decay. How charming the poem is, and how loose. The idea that Marvell uses in the climax, Etherege squanders in the second line; while Etherege's poem runs an even course, without anticipation or surprise, Marvell anticipates the surprise of the last in the third verse. Both poets work within a convention, but Etherege does not transmute it in any way; the Very Young Lady is as the sweetest bud of beauty, as a flower, whereas the flowers of Marvell, are, as always, paphian. We must look in a predecessor, or a contemporary, rather than in a successor for a like complexity:

"The little Maide, that weareth out the day,
 To gather flow'rs still covetous of more,
 At night when she with her desire would play
 And let her pleasure wanton in her store
 Discernes the first laid underneath the last,
 Withered, and so is all that we have past."
 Fulke Greville.

and

"Such flowers how will florists prize
 Which, on a lover growing,
 And watered with his mistress eyes,
 With pity ever flowing.
 A grave so decked will -- though thou art
 Yet fearful to come nigh me --
 Provoke thee straight to break thy heart,
 And lie down boldly by me.
 Then everywhere all bells shall ring,
 All light to darkness turning;
 While every choir shall sadly sing,
 And nature's self wear mourning.
 Yet we hereafter may be found,
 By destiny's right placing
 Making, like flowers, love underground,
 Whose roots are still embracing."

Davenant, 1655.

Marvell's sense of structure seems all the more excellent when we consider, in the writing of Pindarics, how formless English poetry was becoming. Flatman gives a just summation of this particular infection of the seventeenth century, an infection to which Marvell did not succumb.

"As to the measure observ'd by me, I always took a peculiar delight in the Pindaric strain and that for two reasons; First, it gave me liberty now and then to correct the saucy forwardness of a Rime, and to lay it aside till I had a mind to admit it; and secondly if my sense fell at any time too short for my stanza (and it will often happen so in Versifying) I had then opportunity to fill it up with a metaphor little to the purpose, and (upon occasion) to run that metaphor stark mad into an Allegory, a practice very frequent and of admirable use among the Moderns, especially the Nobless of the Faculty."

Marvell's sense of form is also made manifest in "On a Drop of Dew". The poem concludes a period of composition which was initiated by an exercise suggested by Crashaw. It is not his best poem but is perhaps his most metaphysical. There is a thread of logic in it which is taut to breaking -- indeed it is no more than a thread of dewdrops. But the poem is artistically medelled, and the comparison well sustained. In it Marvell uses most of the ideas which had become associated with dew, and yet "orient," not "dew," is the keyword to the poem. Orient was a popular word, for one will find it used scores of times in any anthology of seventeenth century poetry.

"Lo, in the orient when the gracious light."
Shakespeare.

"Besides, the childhood of the day has kept
Against you come, some Orient Pearls unwept."
Herrick.

Marvell himself uses it frequently. It has several different meanings -- the east, either of the sky, where the sun arises, or of the world; hence it is an arising, and also describes the lustre of an eastern pearl. It is a complex word, and one admirably fitted to seventeenth century usage, although no poet exploits it to the full as does Marvell.

"See how the Orient Dew...."

Marvell's use is Herricks -- the dew is orient because it is like a pearl, also because it is morning, and the Sun has just

risen from the East. Here is the first association. This is followed by some very sensitive description:

"Till the warm Sun pittie its Pain,
And to the Skies exhale it back again."

We realize that "orient" is becoming expanded in meaning, for the dew also, with the sun, rises. Finally through the Biblical reference Marvell alludes to Palestine, for it is in the East of the world that the Sun and this dew is rising, and it is from Palestine that the Christian religion emanates. The structure of the poem is undoubtedly centred in orient. For this reason I am inclined to disagree with Margoliouth's statement that the Latin poems were written first -- certainly this one was not. The poem is one which has obviously been written to a pattern, and from its occasional obscurity, a weakness rare in Marvell, one guesses, with some difficulty. It is as though Marvell set himself to write a poem which included all the meanings of orient, and as "eoi", "of the morning star" is in no way so significant, and could not have been the main spring of the poem, I am sure that of this poem at least, the English version was written first. It is interesting also to note Marvell's handling of another word which was popular in the seventeenth century, namely "sun". The word is punned on constantly, but Marvell's usage is acute for his is a perfect parallel; we see the "warm sun" of the first part of the poem as a natural object, whereas "th'Almighty Sun" of the last line is God himself.

The poem is a conceited one, working over as it does, contemporary literary usage, and as such is very well constructed.

The Drop of Dew besides being Marvell's most prominent attempt at the metaphysical style of writing, is also his contribution to the doctrine then popular, namely that of reminiscence, for here the soul is "recollecting its own light" and fears contamination will result from contact with the body "the human flow'r". The doctrine is, of course, Platonic, and had been popularized by the writings of the Cambridge Neo-platonists. Platonic philosophy uses in its embodiment images of spheres and circulations, and Marvell incorporates this imagery -- "sphere", "light", "pure and circling thoughts". Such imagery is Vaughan's:

"In what Rings
And Hymning Circulations the quick World
Awakes and Sings."

and

"I saw Eternity the other night
Like a great Ring of pure and endless Light
All calm as it was bright...."

Indeed Vaughan's theme:

"Before I understood this place
Appointed for my second race,
Or taught my Soul to fancy ought
But a white Celestial thought,
When yet I had not walked above
A mile, or two, from my first love,
And looking back (at that short space)
Could see a glimps of His bright face."

is Marvell's:

"How it the purple flow'r does slight,
 Scarce touching where it lyes
 But gazing back upon the Skies,
 Shines with a mournfull Light."

The comparison with Vaughan is interesting for in his poetry his imagery is an integral part of his religious belief, but Marvell, one knows, had no belief in the theory of reminiscence; yet using any subject matter to hand, he can write a poem which if not as exciting as Vaughan's, is perhaps more equal. It is Marvell's broad ecleticism which ^{lies} at the root of his urbanity and wit.

3.

I have endeavoured to show that Marvell in his treatment of a contemporary theme displays a temper of mind which is not common in the seventeenth century. Similarly his treatment of the Bible is at once unorthodox and isolated. I have already said that the finest religious poetry of our literature was written in the seventeenth century and the prose writers as well as the poets found in religion a fresh inspiration. The challenge which Kepler, Copernicus, and then later Descartes levelled at scholasticism, may have smashed its philosophy, but it revived the religious temper. Marlowe might teach his fellows to spell God backwards, but in general the new philosophy aimed at increasing rather than diminishing God's glory. In an age in which Milton magnificently justified God's ways to man, an age in which Vaughan and Traherne looked upon the prelapsarian state (or the state of childhood) as the most perfect, Marvell

trifles brilliantly with the Garden state, and with careful obliquity casts the passion of Our Lord on the Cross into a pastoral poem. Marvell's taste is too pure to write blasphemy, his artistry too sure for one to be certain, but this, I think, is the subject matter of *The Nymph Complaining for the Death of her Fawn*. The poem deserves some analysis.

Marvell's use of the name Silvio perhaps substantiates the belief that he was copying Virgil in writing on a nymph complaining on the death of her fawn.

"Their sister Silvia, cherished with her care
 The little wanton, and did wreathes prepare
 To hang his budding horns; with ribbons tied
 His tender neck, and combed his silken hide,
 And bathed his body. Patient of command
 In time he grew, and, growing used to hand,
 He waited at his master's board for food;
 Then sought his savage kindred in the wood,
 Where grazing all the day; at night he came
 To his known lodgings, and his country dame.
 This household beast, that used the woodland grounds,
 Was viewed at first by the young hero's hounds,
 As down the stream he swam, to seek retreat
 In the cool waters, and to quench his heat,
 Ascanius, young and eager of his game
 Soon bent his bow, uncertain of his aim;
 But the dire fiend the fatal arrow guides,
 Which pierced his bowels through his panting sides.
 The bleeding creature issues from the floods
 Possessed with fear, and seeks his known abodes,
 His old familiar hearth, and household gods.
 He falls; he fills the house with heavy groans;
 Implores their pity, and his pain bemoans,
 Young Silvia beats her breast, and cries aloud
 For succour from the clownish neighbourhood."

Dryden's translation.

In Virgil the incident is simple, and its expression straightforward whereas Marvell's poem is composite, in that it echoes the Song of Solomon. It is indeed no more than an echo, for its charm becomes

pallid and pretty before the passionate eroticism of its original.

"Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth; for My love is better than wine."

"The voice of my beloved! behold he cometh, leaping upon the mountains, skipping over the hills. My beloved is like a roe or a young hart....."

"My beloved is mine, and I am his: He feedeth his flock among the lilies, until the day cool, and the shadows flee away."

"Turn my beloved, and be thou like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether."

"....Thy lips are like a thread of scarlet, and thy mouth is comely: and thy two breasts are like two fawns that are twins of a roe, which feed among the lilies."

"....Thou art all fair, my love; and there is no spot in thee....."

"My beloved has gone down to the garden, to the beds of spices, to feed in the garden and to gather lilies. I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine: He feedeth his flock among the lilies."

As has been shown, Marvell was well acquainted with the Song; it is not impossible that his natural sensuousness discovered here a way of expression, and the verses from The Garden, Appleton House, and the Bermudas, are not unworthy successors. Commentators have, over a long period, endeavoured to justify the legitimacy of the Song's place in the Bible. They have written allegory, and explained the sexual passion of the Shulamite and Solomon as the love of Christ for His Church; the poem is not written by Solomon nor is it an allegory. It probably dates from the fourth century and strongly resembles the pastorals of Theocritus, Bion, and Moschus. It is almost certainly a marriage

idyll. Marvell's classicism, which is that of Marlowe and Jonson, is strengthened through his use of the Song. Whether or not Marvell was aware of the Song's spuriousness (and it is unlikely that he was, as Vaughan, as later Eliot, in *The Waste Land*, was to do, identifies "the beloved" of the Song with Christ:

"I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night."

"When my Lord's head is fill'd with dew, and all
His locks are wet with the clear drops of night,
His still, soft call:
His knocking time; The souls dumb watch,
When spirits their fair kindred catch."

Night.

his mind was sufficiently acute, and his classicism profound enough, for him to realize that this was no allegory for Christ's love of his Church. There is a complacency in all Marvell's work; it is this complacency which enables him to work on a poetical assumption, a certain temper of mind which lies at the bottom of his wit and urbanity; this complacent temper would have allowed him to accept as allegory the Song of Solomon, if it suited his own poetic impulse. Throughout the poem there are references which seem only applicable to Christ:

"There is no such another in
The World, to offer for their Sin."

"Thy Love was far more better then
The love of false and cruel men."

The Fawn's purity is stressed, and elsewhere Marvell uses lilies

in the conventional way, namely as symbols for chastity.

"And its pure virgin Limbs to fold
In whitest sheets of Lillies cold.
Had it lived long, it would have been
Lillies without, Roses within."

Its tears are given to the goddess of chastity:

"I in a golden Vial will
Reep these two crystal Tears; and fill
It till it do o'reflow with mine;
Then place it in Diana's shine."

for the Fawn is the most pure:

"There at my feet shalt thou be laid,
Of purest Alabaster made:
For I would have thine Image be
While as I can, though not as Thee.

(There are two further references to Christ, but only one perhaps is legitimate; the Fawn's tears are referred to as healing and

"The brotherless Heliades
Melt in such Amber Tears as these."

The Heliades were weeping for Phaeton, who in the century of Donne and Vaughan is constantly identified with the Son of the Father.) It is to be remembered that sacred and profane love interconnect more easily in the poetry of Marvell than in that of Donne. It would suit Marvell's temper to imagine the Fawn, a lover's gift, as an elusive equivalent for Christ, but it is also to be remembered that with Marvell identification is never

more than suggestion, whereas Donne's lovers are a pair of compasses, and are similar in all characteristics. This perhaps is as far as it is legitimate to interpret.....but if the Fawn' is Christ, then the Nymph is the Virgin. It is "with sweetest milk and sugar" that she reared the Fawn, and such a supposition makes the reference to Niobe intelligible:

"First my unhappy Statue shall
 Be cut in marble; and withal,
 Let it be weeping too: but there
 The Engraver sure his Art may spare;
 For I so truly thee bemoane,
 That I shall weep though I be Stone:
 Until my Tears, still dropping, wear
 My breast, themselves engraving there."

and the unconstant Silvio is God, or perhaps more doctrinally the Holy Ghost. To Marvell, whose taste can be so exquisite, much of Donne's poetry might have seemed a parade of bad taste:

"Thou shalt be a Mary Magdalen and I
 A something else thereby.
 All women shall adore us, and some men."

and he would have shrunk from making a bald statement like Marlowe's "Christ was a bastard, and his mother dishonest"; yet there is subtle blasphemy implicit in the poem, for if Christ is the Fawn, what can the Nymph mean by:

"They cannot thrive
 To kill thee. Thou ne'er didst alive
 Them any harm; alas nor cou'd
 Thy death yet do them any good."

But can one be sure? No; that is Marvell's charm -- his elusiveness and irony, if irony is the ability not to say what

you mean.

A Dialogue between the Resolved Soul and Created Pleasure is not one of Marvell's best poems but it exemplifies so well his characteristic attitude of scepticism and detachment that that one is surprised to find Grierson in his "Metaphysical Poetry" ranking it among the divine poems of the seventeenth century. Marvell's use of the dialogue form is mainly based on the example of the Sicilian writers, but here I think Marvell is also copying Herbert's structure. Because of the very nature of the struggle to accept his God -- "God has broken into my study and taken off my chariot wheels; I have nothing worthy of God" -- Herbert evolved the dramatic lyric. It is Herbert's evolution rather than Donne's for Herbert's poems are dramatic in that one feels the interaction of mind on mind. There is always a development of situation:

"That is all if that I could
Act without repining,
And my day my creature would
Follow my resigning:
That as I did freely part
With my glory and desert,
Left all joys to feel all smart --

Ah no more; thou breakst my heart."

while in Donne one feels that his poetry is more of a conversation -- and a very one sided one. While Herbert uses the dialogue form to express the bitterness of his struggle, Marvell writes denying the importance of such a struggle.

"But I will not much oppose
 Unto what you now advise:
 Only take this gentle Rose,
 And therein my answer lies."

and

"On these downy Pillows lye,
 Whose soft Plumes will thither fly:
 On these Roses strow'd so plain
 Lest one Leaf thy Side should strain."

It is immaterial that the Chorus joyfully shouts

"Triumph, triumph, victorious soul"

for there has been no negation of the pleasures of the senses.

What I admire most in the poem is the suavity with which Marvell,
 the most sensuous of poets, denies the senses. He is prepared
 to recall a biblical reminiscence in order to emphasize his denial:

"Courage my Soul, now learn to wield
 The weight of thine immortal Shield."

"But thou, O Lord art a shield for me; my glory,
 and the lifter up of mine head." (Psalm 3.)

"For thou, Lord will bless the righteous; with favour
 will thou compass him as with a shield." (Psalm 5.)

and more pertinently:

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the
 power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye
 may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we
 wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities,
 against powers, against spiritual wickedness in high places.
 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may
 be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all,
 stand. Stand therefore having your loins girt about you with
 truth, and having on the breast plate of righteousness; and

your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith you shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God." Ephesians 6.

Indeed the soul answers pleasure in the words of the apostle:

"And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling perfume."

A soul that knowes not to presume
Is Heaven's and its own perfume."

and one hears in the chorus the "Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" which St. Paul advocated. Pleasure has, however, no reverence and twists the words of the Apostle to suit its own purpose:

"For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth."

"Where the Souls of fruits and flow'rs
Stand prepar'd to heighten yours."

and may not

"Half the World shall be thy Slave
The other half thy Friend."

be the unprincipled pleasure's interpretation of "Wives, submit yourselves unto your husbands, as unto the Lord"?

The rigidity of St. Paul's doctrine calls forth a comment from Marvell, although superficially he is referring to Scripture as an authority for his denial. But there is no denial. Why, one asks, has pleasure twice as much to say as the soul? In

order that the soul's victory may be more glorious? No; in order that pleasure may speak its wonderful poetry, which the insignificant soul is unable to hear:

"All this fair, and soft, and sweet,
Which scatteringly doth shine,
Shall within one Beauty meet,
And she be only thine."

We are to realize the suspicion with which Marvell views the pretensions of the soul, and of the apostle. There is a wealth of irony in

"Now, if thou bee'st that thing Divine....."

which prepares us for the comedy embedded in the statements of the soul. Butler, Pope, Byron and Browning all aimed at deflation through the inappropriate rime but I doubt if any one of them is as insidious in his usage as Marvell. How well the words express the sanctimony of the soul:

"My gentler Rest is on a Thought,
Conscious of doing what I ought."

Marvell could not be serious in such a rime, for he, with pleasure, surely refused to take the moral claims of the soul seriously, for the cultivated mind cannot accept any impersonal and final code of manners. Pleasure mocks the soul:

"On these downy Pillowes lye,
Whose soft Plumes will thither fly!"

for it could not have thought of a less probable use for the down

of a pillow. Here indeed is "the foolish talking, the jesting, which are not convenient" of which St. Paul speaks.

The theme of the poem is that of Marlowe's Faustus, and "of climbing after knowledge infinite".

"Thou shalt know each hidden Cause;
And see the future Time:
Try what depth the Centre draws;
And then to Heaven climb."

The comparison shows how far literature has moved since the Jacobean period, although it may not be an advance. A comparison between Marvell and say, Chapman, makes one feel that man has become more social, more civilized. Chapman's poem "Ovid's Banquet of Sense" is on the same theme as Marvell's Dialogue -- namely the enjoyment of the senses. Ovid's Banquet of Sense, an elaborately patterned poem, is similar to Pygmalion's Image in its rather pornographic interest in the voluptuous, pornographic in that it is cold, with the coldness that demands an aphrodisiac. While Chapman claims that the senses excite the soul to its highest pitch:

"The sence is given us to excite the minde
And that can never be by sence excited
But first the sence must her contentment find,
We therefore must procure the sence delighted,
That so the soale may use her facultie...."

Marvell denies them any such excellence. Both poets we feel to be insincere, but while we rejoice in Marvell's insincerity, we feel uncomfortable with a discomfort similar to that roused by the Exstacie, in observing a certain nastiness in Chapman's

logic. But it was Donne who killed the type -- a type which developed rather weakly in such poems as Carew's Rapture -- for once personal poems of both physical and idealized experience began to be written, the sterile voluptuousness of Chapman was replaced by a certain exuberance and energy. Marvell's poem is different from Chapman's because there has been in writing a change of attitude towards sex. Donne initiated the movement, and Marvell chose his inheritance wisely as can be seen by "To His Coy Mistress".

4.

"To His Coy Mistress", is not, however, a poem depending strongly on Donne; this is more true of the Definition of Love; for here we find that although Marvell does owe something to Donne yet he uses his habitual imagery.

"My vegetable Love should grow
Vaster than Empires, and more slow."

When we realize the idea of three levels of being -- vegetable, animal and human -- popular in the seventeenth century, and that the vegetable world being the lowest, could do no more than procreate itself, Marvell's compliment does not appear so lavish. Nor does his statement

"And the last age should show your heart"

incline us to a belief in the spirituality of his love. Only the cultured mind can be impolite elegantly, and Marvell's

elegance is something quite alien to Donne:

"Who ever loves, if he do not propose
The right true end of love, he's one that goes
To sea for nothing but to make him sick...."

I do not agree with Eliot when he says that in the following lines Marvell is with Donne.

"then Worms shall try
That long-preserv'd Virginity:
And your quaint Honour turn to dust;
And into ashes all my Lust."

for there is an epicureanism in Marvell's temperament which is foreign to Donne's Donne's interest in death as a young man:

"When by thy Scorn, O murtheresse I am dead...."

looks forward to his obsession with the worm; indeed in the early poems, great as they are, we can see the seeds which later grew into emotional sensationalism and a disruption of personality. This is not, I think, an overstatement of the retrogression in Donne's mind:

"What Tophet is not paradise? What brimstone
is not amber? What gnashing is not comfort?
What gnawing of the worm is not tickling? What
torment is not a marriage bed, to this
damnation to be secluded eternally, eternally,
eternally from the sight of God."

It is almost Websterian in the striking of the tragic posture. Donne's attitude to death, one that was transmitted to the romantics of the eighteenth century, was essentially mediaeval in

origin, whereas Marvell's in all its sanity is Latin. Donne carried forward the mediaevalism of that transitional poet, Skelton:

"With hys worm etyn maw,
 And hys gastly jaw
 Gapyng asyde.
 Nakyd of hyde,
 Neither flesh nor fill.
 Our days be datyd
 To be chek matyd
 With drawthys of deth,
 Stopping our breth;
 Oure eyen synkyng,
 Oure bodys stynking
 Oure gummys srynning
 Oure soulys brynning."

In Southwell, a poet in whom Euphuistic morality and metaphysical logic are strangely mixed, there is a continuation of this attitude.

"I often looke upon a face,
 Most ugly, grisly, bare and thinne;
 I often view the hollow place
 Where eyes and nose had sometime been;
 I see the bones acrosse that lie
 Yet little think that I must die."

Southwell, and^a/later Catholic poet, Crashaw, both found emotional content in the mysteries of life, embodied in the birth and death of Christ. The Catholics of the seventeenth century were more concerned with the mysteries of life than its actuality, while the Anglican poets, especially George Herbert and Traherne, found a vital and burning example in the life of Christ. There is a deep and personal love for the man. It is possible that Donne never freed himself from his upbringing, and that his Catholicism must account for the worm. Donne's fear became popular and corrupt.

Donne's emotion was frequently imperfectly controlled, yet with his pride in craftsmanship, the expression is not usually unbalanced to the point of nausea. Self-pity and this nausea at the corruption of flesh are closely allied, an alliance which in Flatman, a follower of Donne, is given complete expression.

"Oh the sad day
 When friends shall shake their heads and say
 Of miserable me.
 Hark how he groans, look how he pants for breath,
 See how he struggles with the pangs of death!
 When they shall say of these poor eyes
 How hollow, and how dim they be!
 Mark how his breasts do swell and rise
 Against his potent enemy.
 When some old friend shall step to my bedside
 Touch my chill face, and thence shall gently glide
 And when his next companions say
 How does he do? what hopes? shall turn away,
 Answering only with a lift-up hand,
 Who can his fate withstand.
 Then shall a gasp or two do more
 Than e'er my rhetoric could before,
 Persuade the peevish world to trouble me no more."

One could not find a more adequate example of what Eliot calls the disintegration of the sensibility, Marvell is quite outside such a development. As a man, we do not know how unified his personality may have been, but as a poet, relying on poetic convention rather than personal experience, he achieves complete balance. Here perhaps more clearly than anywhere else one sees Marvell observing conventions, which are largely Hellenic in derivation.

"Why hoard your maidenhood? There'll not be found
 A lad to love you, girl, under the ground.
 Love's joys are for the quick; but when we're dead
 Its dust and ashes, girl, will go to bed."

Asclipiades -- trans. R.A. Furness.

It is an Hellenism which permeates the poetry of Cowley:

"Underneath this myrtle shade
Of flowry beds supinely laid,
With odorous oyls my head ore'flowing
And around it roses growing.
What should I do but drink away
The heat and troubles of the day.

.....

Crown me with roses whilst I live
Now your wines and ointments give.
After death I nothing crave
Let me alive my pleasures have.
All are Stoicks in the grave."

Anacreontiques.

and of Herrick:

"Born I was to be old,
And for to die here;
After that, in the mould
Long for to lye here.
But before that day comes,
Still I be Bousing.
For I know, in the Tombs
There's no Carousing."

Marvell has used his inheritance wisely. In the Garden he made a subtle interpretation of the Song of Songs, while Quarles made a colourless paraphrase:

"He is my altar; I his Holy Place.
I am his Guest; and He, my living Food;
I'm his, by Poenitance, He, mine by Grace;
I'm his, by Purchase, He is mine by Blood;
He's my supporting Elme; and I, his Vine.
Thus I my Best-Beloved's am: Thus he is mine."

In "To His Coy Mistress" he writes a poem which includes Asclépiades and Horace, but is nevertheless pure Marvell; a poem full of double entendre, yet one of great sweetness and light. Here is the voice of the urbane mind of sensibility,

of refinement and true balance, the voice of a man who realized

"For Man (alas) is but the Heaven's sport;
And Art indeed is Long, but Life is Short."

and made the best of both worlds.

5.

Damon the Mower is to me another example of such a conciliation. In this poem Marvell used another poet's atmosphere, but unlike Herrick, this is not all. Herrick is satisfied with reproducing Catullus, Horace, Juvenal, or Theocritus, while Marvell recreates atmosphere in order to complicate his own experience. Herrick, in

"And cruel Maid, because I see
You scornfull of my love, and me."

practically paraphrases Idyll XXIII of Theocritus, except that in accordance with the prevailing code of morality he alters the sex of the beloved; but Marvell to emphasize his statement on frustration is satisfied to recapture the Sicilian atmosphere:

"Oh what unusual Heats are here,
Which thus our Sun-burn'd Meadows sear!
The Grass-hopper its pipe gives are;
And hamstring'd Frogs can dance no more.
But in the brook the green Frog wades;
And Grass-hoppers seek out the shades.
Only the Snake, that kept within;
Now glitters in its second skin.

" This hour intense
 Even the lizard in the roadside fence
 Is sleeping, and abroad no longer roam
 The tombstone-crested larks, but drowse at home.

I cannot outsing yet, in my compare
 Sicelidas from the Samos or the rare
 Philetas; 'tis but as a frog I croak
 Against cicadas".

Idyll VII (translated Headlam)

It is not of the English, but of the Sicilian climate that Marvell is writing in Damon the Mower, for his poetry is literary and impersonal. Browne writes:

"Many things are mentioned in Scripture which have an emphasis from this or that neighbour countries: for besides the Cedars, the Syrian lilies are taken notice of by writers. That expression in The Canticles, 'Thou art fair, thou art fair, thou hast doves eyes' receives a particular character if we look not upon our common pigeons, but the beautiful and fine eyed Doves of Syria."

This is to the point for Marvell's are no common pigeons; he is with Jonson, Milton and Keats in that his sensitivity to words is as great as for natural objects.

Marvell having created atmosphere, makes his statement. It is a complex one. Marvell's symbols are not rigid, but grass, as I have shown in the analysis of The Garden, is used symbolically for desire. Grass is equivalent to the man's desires, flowers to the consummation of these desires.

"Grass withers, and the flow'rs too fade!"

With these assumptions in mind, one may analyse the poem.

Sorrow (the scythe) killed his hopes, but the aching pain of

love ~~less~~ was not killed. Although his sorrows may become blunt, he still is tortured with sharp anguish. Finally the lover, as such, not as a man, is overcome by sorrow, and dies, and with him his desires. In the last two verses Marvell renounces the symbolism.

"While thus he threw his Elbow round,
 Depopulating all the Ground,
 And with his whistling Sythe, does cut
 Each stroke between the Earth and Root,
 The edged Steele by careless chance
 Did into his own Ankle glance;
 And there among the grass fell down,
 By his own Sythe, the Mower mown."

The poem becomes simple only to increase bafflement at the final complexity. Only death can cure the wound inflicted by Juliana's eyes; this is a common sentiment. The last swing of the scythe is the most telling.

"'Tis death alone that this must do:
 For Death thou art a Mower too."

All the previous symbolism is recalled; as the mower killed his hopes, so too death kills all hope. Death and Damon are identified; Damon is death, and being in love is death. This is the statement which Marvell wished to make.

Marvell wrote as an impersonal testimony to the value of poetry. He does not obtrude the man, and perhaps the reader should not seek him. But he wrote on this theme frequently -- in *The Garden*, *The Coronet*, and in *The Definition of Love*, and one feels that he is not with Herrick in

"But (sweet things) ye must be gone.
Fruit, ye know, is coming on."

Marvell was involved in some sort of permanent frustration, for in him the creative instinct, normally a life urge, found no satisfaction. This may account for the sensitivity of his use of flowers, for they, in their beauty and intransience, may have embodied in some intangible way, Marvell's own feelings about sex, feelings that recognized lust as a veritable "joy proposed behind a dream".

This is all guess work, and as such not very valuable, but if what I say is true, Marvell's obliquity in expressing his emotions shows some very fundamental poise of mind. One cannot imagine Marvell reaching the position of Theocritus:

"Daphnis: Boast not, for swiftly thy youth flits by thee
like a dream.

Maiden: The grapes turn to raisins, not wholly will
the dry rose perish."

but nor could one believe that Marvell would have exploited this feeling as Donne did. With Donne the feeling of frustration was only a transitory emotion, yet he must pity himself "in whining poetry". Dr. Johnson was well within his rights in criticizing his taste:

"All others, from all things, draw all that's good.
Life, soul, forme, spirit, whence they being have;
I by loves limbecke, am the grave
Of all, thats nothing. Oft a flood
Have we two wept, and so
Drownd the whole world, us two oft did we grow
To be two Chaoses, when we did show
One to ought else; and often absenses
Withdrew our soules, and made us carcasses."

Marvell is nearer to Fulke Greville:

"For I have vowed in strangest fashion
To love, and never seek compassion."

The so-called Platonic love poem was common in the seventeenth century, and has as yet received no very satisfactory explanation; those of Chapman, Jonson and Donne are written to patronesses, and sex becomes mixed with adulation. Marvell's poem, The Definition of Love, may be within the tradition, but I feel that it is his most personal poem. It has a weightiness and passion in it which one does not find elsewhere in Marvell.

"My love is of a birth so rare
As 'tis for object strange and high,
It was begotten by despair,
Upon Impossibility."

Marvell knew himself, but unlike Donne he did not cast his passion into aching, haunting verse, and was satisfied with writing travesties on the Bible, exploiting classical literature and working within an accepted seventeenth century medium. I have acclaimed Marvell as the most literary of poets, and for him to be this demanded courage, the same courage as that of a woman who wrote poetry, and also knew frustration:

"What though the stars and fair moonlight
Are quenched in morning dull and grey?
These are but tokens of the night
And this my soul is day."

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