Green Paradise: A Study of Andrew Marvell's Concept of the Relation of Man to Nature

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GREEN PARADISE: A STUDY OF ANDREW MARVELL'S
CONCEPT OF THE RELATION
OF MAN TO NATURE

by

William Dennis Sullivan

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of Loyola University in Partial Fulfillment of
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LIFE

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During the academic year, 1952 to 1953, he began graduate studies at Loyola, but discontinued those studies early in 1953. During the academic year, 1957 to 1958, he pursued graduate studies at the State University of Iowa. From 1958 to 1960, the author taught English at St. Ambrose College, Davenport, Iowa. In June, 1960, he resumed graduate studies at Loyola University. Currently, he is teaching English at the Indiana University Center in Gary, Indiana.
PREFACE

This thesis brings biographical and historical data to bear on the interpretation of Andrew Marvell's lyrics, especially The Garden.

The writer was faced with the choice of debating a variety of already existent interpretations line by line, or of providing a fresh context for his own interpretation. He chose the latter as more conducive to his purpose of exploring Marvell's concept of the relation of man to nature, but has paused to deal with the leading variant interpretations which have come to his attention.

All quotations from Marvell's verse are taken from H. M. Margoliouth, ed., The Poems & Letters of Andrew Marvell (Oxford, 1927), I.

Very special thanks are due to Professor Ligeia Gallagher for her kindness, patience, and frank criticism.
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Though it is customary to call Marvell a Puritan poet, there are reasons for thinking that classification to be less than satisfactory. If one excludes the so-called Cromwellian poems for a moment, one seems to find, not a Commonwealth Puritan Marvell, but an undeviatingly Royalist Marvell. Were Marvell's discernible allegiances to correspond as neatly to the shifting political scene as the last observation suggests, we might be able to suspect him of opportunism. As it happens, however, Marvell's so-called Cromwellian period is complicated by utterances that indicate his having had serious reservations about the new government and its leader; and Marvell's adherence to the monarchial principle during the Restoration is complicated by utterances that indicate serious reservations about the extent of the royal prerogative, as well as about the character of the king. Marvell seems to have stood, especially in the years after 1650, between the existent parties and sects of England, attached firmly to none of them.

It is the purpose of this thesis to record the evidence needed for broadening our concept of Marvell's position in the seventeenth-century English scene, and for determining the principle upon which Marvell acted in lieu of following the platforms and creeds of his time. To this end, we shall concentrate our attention upon the history of Marvell's political and religious opinions; the manner of his association with the Commonwealth
The political organization and with Cromwell; the friendships Marvell is known to have valued; and the content of the lyrics he composed between 1649 and 1653.

The lyrics are of special interest to us because they record the inner experience of the poet during the years in which, according to the customary account, he abandoned the Royalist for the Commonwealth cause. As the lyrics reveal, however, Marvell's coming to terms with the Commonwealth was only one aspect of a broader and more profound spiritual development, the nature of which is only vaguely suggested by the history of his political and sectarian alignments. Marvell, during the years, 1649 to 1653, arrived at a principle of judgment and action that was independent, as the lyrics show, not only of the parties and sects, but even of the conclusions arrived at by his equally troubled contemporaries. This independent principle, a concept of the relation between man and nature, finds its final expression in The Garden. And that concept, the present writer thinks, served as a successful, though but partial, solution for Marvell to the religious, political, and philosophical problems of his times. To grasp Marvell's concept of the relation between man and nature as something more than an abstraction, however, we must know a little about the man and his times. Let us turn, then, to Marvell's biography.

The skeleton of a Marvell biography is easy enough to uncover. Born in 1621, in the family of an Anglican minister with noticeably Calvinist leanings, Andrew Marvell attended the Hull Grammar School and, in 1633, went on

to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he took the B.A. in 1638. In April of the same year, Marvell was granted a scholarship at Trinity College, but by September, 1641, he had left the college without taking an M.A. The death of his mother in 1638, just after the granting of the scholarship, and of his father in 1640 may have prompted Marvell to abandon his studies, but no definite connection has yet been established between those facts.

In about 1642, Marvell set out on a tour of Europe, and in 1645 he visited Rome, where he met Flecknoe, the subject of one of his satires. Marvell seems to have returned to England in 1646, but we know very little about his life during these years. Apart from the publication of a few poems, Marvell has left us almost no trace of his activities until 1653, when Milton speaks of Marvell’s having just left the employ of Lord Fairfax, to whose daughter he had been a language tutor. In 1653, Marvell became the tutor of a certain Mr. Dutton, usually referred to as Cromwell’s ward; and, in 1657, Marvell went on to join Milton in the work of the Latin secretariat, a position which they both retained until December, 1659.

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From 1659 until his death in 1678, Marvell served as a member of Parliament for Kingston-upon-Hill, occupying himself with routine business, political maneuvers, and the writing of a number of political pieces.

If we go no further than this skeletal account, few real difficulties appear. But Marvell's life was not as placid as that account suggests. In about 1634, according to a tradition first recorded by Cooke in 1726, Marvell, then about thirteen years old, came under the influence of some Jesuits and left Trinity College, remaining away until his father found him in a bookseller's and persuaded him to return. Margoliouth corrects the date of this encounter to 1639, thus making the event coincide more nearly with Marvell's leaving Trinity College. Again, however, no definite connection is shown. Marvell did not leave directly for the Continent, as we might have expected were he a potential novice, but served a clerkship under his brother-in-law, Edmund Popple, before leaving, and spent his years abroad simply, it would seem, enjoying a grand tour.

In 1637, Marvell, then about sixteen years old, published two poems, the Ad Secum Carolum Parodia and the Tepes KĂłpelov tĂłr BasileĂł in

9 Press, pp. 7-8.
10 C. H. Firth, "Marvell, Andrew (1621-1678)," Dictionary of National Biography (London, 1908), XII, 1209.
12 Ibid., p. 356.
a volume addressed to Charles I and entitled Euvelia. The subtitle contains the phrase, "Seremissimum Britannarium Regem," and one wonders if the irony of "most serene" was not sensed even by the young poets who filled the volume. Again, however, the point is too remote to be pursued. Marvell's Latin poem is interesting for its references to the Plague of 1637 and to the Turkish pirate problem. It foreshadows a less simple imitation of Horace in 1650, as well as suggests the poet's early interest in the practical problems of the nation. His Greek poem plays upon words involving the number, five, and alludes to two attempts on the life of James I, each of which occurred on the fifth day of a month. Princess Anne, the fifth child to Charles, is represented as an antidote to the supposed curse previously borne by that number. Perhaps the chief value of these poems to our present purpose is the indication they give us of Marvell's practical turn of mind and of his linguistic agility. Richard Crashaw and Edward King were also contributors.

If Marvell's first recorded association with Catholics seems to have been, even if true, an event that did not change the course of his life, for more than a brief while, his second association, which he himself records in Flecknoe, an English Priest at Rome, is an event which did not draw him


14Margoliouth, I, 215-216.
nearer to Catholicism. Flecknoe is, first and foremost, a satire against a bad poet, but that poet happens to be a priest who easily dispenses himself from abstinence (ll. 51-57), and who, "were he not in his black habit deck't," would in no way be distinguishable from the rest of men regardless of the hue of their belief (ll. 70-81). Left at that, the poem would only satirize the man, but satirical references to tradition (ll. 75-78), to the Eucharist (ll. 59-62), and to the doctrine of the Trinity (ll. 93-101), to name but the most outstanding instances, mark this poem as the work of one who has little, if any, piety toward Catholic or Anglican doctrine.

Margoliouth informs us that the meeting would most likely have taken place in the year 1645 to 1646, when Marvell was in Rome, perhaps as tutor to Cyriak Skinner. But Margoliouth also suggests that the composition of the poem may have occurred at a later date. Flecknoe may not, then, be an accurate measure of Marvell's feelings toward Catholicism in 1645 to 1646, but it is at least the record of a bad impression left upon the poet at that time, and a herald of the general distaste for doctrinal Christianity that was to mark his later years.

A second Marvell tradition, which may well be mentioned at this time, concerns his alleged adoption into the Skinner family. Marvell's father, when he died in 1640, was crossing the River Humber with the daughter of a Mrs. Skinner. Both perished, and the grief-stricken Mrs. Skinner is said to have adopted nineteen-year-old Andrew and to have left him her property.

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15 Margoliouth, I, 235.
when she died. The operative part of the tradition for our present study lies in the additional allegation that Mrs. Skinner was related to Cyriak Skinner. If true, the tradition would provide us with a non-political explanation of Marvell's introduction to Milton. Margoliouth has since ascertained, however, that no lady of the Skinner family was drowned with the senior Marvell, and that the junior Marvell was not mentioned in Mrs. Skinner's will. The senior Marvell did dedicate a sermon, in 1627, to Mrs. Skinner's sister, a Mrs. Sadleir, referring to her as "a Constant benefactress to me and to my family," but that same Mrs. Sadleir spoke disparagingly, in about 1653, of Marvell's association with Milton, accusing Marvell of being the co-author of Eikonoklastes. This information does not rule out Cyriak Skinner, but it does complicate an otherwise temptingly easy explanation. For the time being, it may be wiser simply to say that it continues to be unclear how Marvell came to be Milton's friend.

In 1649, Marvell, back in England from his tour of the Continent, published a handful of poems that seem certainly to have been poorly timed, unless intended as an assertion of the poet's independence of the tide of

16 Aitken, p. xxiv.
17 H. M. Margoliouth, "Andrew Marvell, Senior," RES, II (January 1926), 96.
circumstance and public opinion. These poems, his elegies on Hastings and Willers, and his prefatory poem for an edition of Lovelace's Lucasta, are all dedicated to Royalists, and all indicate, at the very least, that the poet's friendships were established among the losers of the recent struggle—among orthodox Christians—not among the Puritans to whose cause Marvell's earlier life and utterances might predispose us to think him inclined.

The Royalist cause was lost in 1648. April of that year witnessed the flight of James Stewart and his sister, the Princess of Orange, to the Hague. In 1649, the monarchy and the House of Lords were abolished and Charles I was executed. Marvell's poems for his Royalist friends, thus, were published during an extremely tense period in the birth of the new Commonwealth. Marvell seems to have been determined, however, to risk the dangers of the times for the sake of his friendships and ideals, as the content of these poems testifies.

Hastings, who died of small-pox in 1649, at the age of nineteen, is not, naturally, the recipient of the sort of praise that goes to martyr-heroes, but several segments of the elegy are interesting for other reasons. Marvell writes that Hastings died because his virtues could not survive the times, that men of his worth are spited by heaven, while the "Democratik

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21 Margoliouth, I, 217.
stars" (l. 25), are given Heaven's leave to rise. Then the poet turns to
the consolation movement of the elegy and speaks of young Hastings as the
"most lov'd Ally" (l. 28), Heaven's "Prince" (l. 27), and of his death as
God's way of securing him "for State-Jealousie" (l. 27). This last quoted
phrase is, of course, utterly and, the present writer thinks, purposely
ambiguous. Marvell ends the Hastings elegy with the thought that "Man (alas)
is but the Heaven's sport" (l. 59), and that there are no human remedies,
despite the extent of our arts, for the fact of death. One may argue the
interpretation of this elegy, no doubt, but nothing can convert it into a
Puritan poem, while much is in it that suggests a distaste for the rise of a
government of votes, a world colored by the democratic spirit, even when
that spirit is as far from expressing itself in universal suffrage as it
was in the Puritan parliaments.

The elegy for Francis Villiers, established as a part of the Marvell
canon by Margoliouth, 22 is much more outspoken. Young Villiers, also nine-
teen at the time of his death, had been killed in a skirmish in July,
1648, 23 and had about him, therefore, something of the martyr-hero for
whoever might choose to see him so. Marvell lays the ultimate blame to
"inevitable fate" (l. 12), but goes on promptily to say that Fame, in the
Roman sense, had desired rather to broadcast news of the death of "heavy
Cromwell" (l. 11), or of "long-deceived Fairfax" (l. 16). The modifiers
here are well worth noting. Fame still expects the privilege of reporting

22 Margoliouth, I, 332-333.
23 Ibid., p. 334.
those deaths, Marvell says, but "until then, let us young Francis praise" (I. 17). Francis, as Marvell recalls, was of the seed of "Great Buckingham" (I. 25), who now has a throne of his own in the "Eternal Court" (I. 27). And we, for our part, recall that Buckingham's passport to the next world was the knife of a Puritan fanatic. Following these reminiscences, Marvell praises the person of Francis Villiers and describes the love that existed between him and "Chlora" (I. 69). At the moment of the parting of Francis and Chlora, Marvell turns his poem toward its most emphatic assertion. Young Villiers leaving Chlora to enter battle is identified with "Hector issuing from the Trojan wall" (I. 97), and those that Hector-Francis kills are noted as a "whole Pyramid/of Vulgar bodies" (II. 116-117). In death, young Villiers lies with:

His locks entangled all with sweat
And those eyes which the Sentinel did keep
Of love closed up in an eternal sleep. (II. 105-107)

If the Villiers' elegy is unmistakably a Royalist utterance just in the light of the items already cited, it reveals itself as a Royalist battlecry in the closing six lines. We have written Villiers' obsequies, Marvell says, but in the future we shall turn from writing to the killing of Villiers' enemies:

Till the whole Army by just vengeance come
To be at once his Trophee and his Tombe.

One cannot be surprised to find no action in Marvell's biography to support

24 John Buchan, Oliver Cromwell (Boston, 1931), p. 49.
this utterance. The war was over. The cause was lost. The Commonwealth was waxing. The poem was the action, and a risky enough action at that. It is characteristic of Marvell to flourish his writings in authority's face and come away unharmed.

The poem prefacing Lovelace's *Lucasta* is a verse epistle to his fellow poet and goes a long way toward explaining the Royalist sympathies expressed in the two elegies. In this third poem, Marvell laments the degeneracy of the times, the growth of self-seeking and pettiness, of narrow partisanship. Though it ends playfully, with a vision of England's "beautiful Ladies" (l. 33) sallying forth recklessly to defend their much-abused poet, there is yet some significance, one thinks, Marvell's granting the power of final judgment regarding *Lucasta* to "valiant men" as well as "fairest Nymphs" (l. 189). Those who are apart from, and superior to mere quarreling are made the final critics.

Margoliouth thinks this epistle may have been written before the Hasting's elegy, but the clue it offers to Marvell's attitude would remain valid regardless of the precise sequence of composition. What Marvell seemed to object to in the rise of the Puritans was the destruction of the urbanity, the grace, the wit, the courtly manners of the old order. He resented the abolition of the Renaissance gentleman, a la Castiglione, and of the gentleman-captain of the Philip Sidney sort. One may conjecture with some safety that Marvell's opposition to the growing Commonwealth was not

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25 Margoliouth, I, 216.
based upon a devotion to Charles's monarchial system of government any more
than his earlier opposition to orthodox Christianity was based upon a devo-
tion to Puritan divinity. Like many others during the centuries of human
existence, he seems simply to have sought the good life and found a variety
of obstacles in his way, and, like some others, he struck out in his own
fashion against all obstacles, sooner than suffer defeat. He was a Royalist
by spirit, not letter, in 1649.

In 1650, Marvell entered the household of Lord Fairfax, the great
Puritan general, the "long-deceived Fairfax" of the Villier's elegy, to
serve as tutor to young Mary Fairfax. It is likely enough that Fairfax,
even if he knew of the Villier's elegy, would not have known Marvell to be
its author unless the latter volunteered that information, but the Hastings
elegy and the Lovelace epistle bore Marvell's name26 and, one thinks, would
not have been unknown to a man of Fairfax's literary scope. That he trusted
his daughter's education to their author would seem to indicate that Fairfax
was no stereotyped Puritan leader. The facts confirm this inference.

Fairfax was no longer an enthusiastic supporter of the Commonwealth by
1650, and, by 1653, he was to become Cromwell's openly avowed opponent,
though the two men thought well of each other as men. In the beginning
Fairfax, together with Cromwell and many others, had experienced the outrage
of the Short Parliament and had come back to the Long Parliament with a

26 Margoliouth, I, 217.
willingness to oppose the king strongly. Unlike many of the others, however, Fairfax hoped only to improve the existing English polity, to countenance only a partial revolution. 27 He had no sectarian motives. 28 By 1648, partly because of this reluctance to commit himself totally to the revolutionary cause, Fairfax found himself being circumvented by more practical men, such as Oliver Cromwell and Colonel Pride. Though he was, in name, the leading general of Parliament's New Model Army, he had become, in fact, little more than a figurehead. On December 6, 1648, the day of Pride's Purge, Fairfax was actually forbidden by the Speaker to enter the city of London. 29 Fairfax in his own turn refused to sit in judgment of Charles I, his lady replying to roll-call "that he had too much wit to be there." 30 The execution of Charles marked the end of what Marvell thought of as the deception that had wrapped good Fairfax, and for all practical purposes, the end of Fairfax's services to the Commonwealth. When Cromwell ordered the army to march against Scotland in 1650, Fairfax, pleading ill health and a conscientious objection to breaking an existing treaty between the nations, resigned as figurehead of the New Model Army and was replaced by Cromwell himself. 31

Retired to his country estate, Nun Appleton in Yorkshire, Fairfax collected books and artifacts, enjoyed his gardens, composed verses, and

27 Buchan, p. 151.
28 Trevelyan, p. 411.
29 Buchan, pp. 236-239.
30 Ibid., p. 247.
31 Ibid., pp. 291-295.
translated various works from Latin and French. One of his efforts was a combined translation of and commentary on the *libelli* attributed to Hermes Trismegistus, a fictional contemporary of Moses. Lord Fairfax also translated Saint-Amand's *La Solitude*, while Thomas Stanley, connected to the Fairfax family, translated the poet's *La Jouyssance*, and Mildmay Fane, brother-in-law to Lady Fairfax, composed retirement verses in English. It is no surprise, then, to find Marvell's poetic talent coming to its fullest bloom during the years at Nun Appleton, or to note the quiet secluded character of his images and the moral and philosophic bent of his verses. He had moved into an atmosphere that could scarcely be other than congenial and stimulating. Fairfax was much closer in temper and taste to his cavalier opponents than to his Commonwealth colleagues. He and Marvell could easily enough fraternize over their mutual disappointment in the condition to which England had been brought by what began as parliamentary resistance and ended as social upheaval.

That the quietude of Nun Appleton was a product of disappointment and of the deliberate rejection of Commonwealth England by Fairfax, as well as

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34 M. C. Bradbrook, "Marvell and the Poetry of Rural Solitude," *RUS*, XVII (January, 1941), 38.

of natural setting and genteel pursuits, is an important point, for it tem-
pers the usual statement that Marvell was at this time introduced to the
heads of the Commonwealth. From 1650 onwards, the Commonwealth moved
rapidly toward becoming Cromwell's nation, and the dreams of the moderate
reformers as well as the ardent Republicans and the zealous Democrats were
rapidly dwindling to memories. Fairfax himself was in the opposition party
from the moment of Charles's condemnation, and so the men who came to
Mun Appleton may be supposed, for the most part, to have been men of an
opposition mind, except for the emissaries Cromwell periodically sent in the
hope of reconciling Fairfax to the current cause. Marvell may indeed have
met some important Cromwellians during these years, but any personal advan-
tage he might derive from those contacts would, we surmise, be entirely of
his own making, and there is little evidence that Marvell tried at first to
make any such advantage for himself. His poems suggest the opposite.

Marvell's malodictory elegy, Tom May's Death, dates from the end of
1650, and shows us a Royalist Marvell much the same as the one we met in
1649, but the poem itself is a curse rather than a consolation. May, a
former Royalist poet, had been passed over in preference to Davenant for the
laureatship in 1637 and had, subsequently, attached himself to the Parlia-
mentarians against the king. May represents to Marvell, thus, the

38Margoliouth, I, 260.
39Ibid., p. 239.
quintessence of treachery and self-interest, for he had not only espoused a
disruptive cause against a lawful king but, as a poet, had actively aided in
the destruction of the old order and hastened the degeneracy of the times.
Marvell's final image shows May vanishing, witch-like, into the clouds of
hell. So much for Marvell's opinion of a turncoat poet.

Earlier in 1650, Marvell wrote another poem that is indicative of his
position. That poem, the Horatian Ode, has already been examined in some
detail by Cleanth Brooks and Douglas Bush, but several passages are
especially in point here, for Marvell speaks of "restless Cromwell" (1. 9),
who could not be content with peace, but goes on to portray Cromwell as an
instrument of "angry" (1. 26) heaven, and then to present the events of 1659
to the reader in the light of a paradox of "Fate" versus "Justice" (1. 37-40).
Justice, according to Marvell, was in support of the "antient Rights" (1. 38)
of the Stewarts, but right needed strength to back it. Might does not make
right, but weakness loses it. Though a lawful king, therefore, Charles had
but a "helpless Right" (1. 62) before the fatal strength of Cromwell, who
himself had made his way to supreme power not only against the resistance of
the Royalist enemy, but even "Did thorough his own Side / His fiery way
divide" (11. 15-16).

The execution of Charles I is not a simple event in Marvell's eyes,
nor is the evident success of that action enough to change it from a

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violation to a clear-cut triumph. Marvell speaks of the withdrawal of Fairfax and others under the figure of architects who flee from their project when they discover that its foundation is to include a severed head, and, ironically, of Cromwell obeying the "Republick" (1. 32), which, in fact, he controls, and of Cromwell delivering a kingdom to "the Common's Feet" (1. 86). The thoughts involved here are dangerous, with Cromwell's power ever increasing as it then was, and Marvell honors that danger by seeming to retreat and correct himself in the Falcon simile (11. 91-96), as if the preceding irony had been unintentional. Yet, the ironic edge cuts again when Marvell writes that England may "presume" (1. 97) all manner of docility and obedience to be forthcoming from Cromwell "While Victory his Crest does plume!" (1. 98). The behavior to expect from that same general should events turn against him is left unstated, but the closing couplet of the poem enunciates the principle that power gained by the sword, by deceit, and by violation must be maintained by the "same Arts" (11. 119-120). Such is Marvell's estimate of the leading general of the Commonwealth, his advance epitaph for the Republican hopes of the architects of the Commonwealth, and his warning to those who, for one reason or another, still awaited a happy ending to the great venture. Margoliouth sees Marvell, at this time, as having fixed his hopes on "Cromwell, seeing in him both the civic ideal of a ruler without personal ambition, and the man of destiny moved by and yet driving (1. 12) a power which is above justice (see 1. 37)." This view seems to the present writer

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1 Margoliouth, I, 236.
to be altogether too positive. Even by its least ironic reading, the poem remains one that expresses an uncomplimentary denial of justice to the Cromwellian party's actions, offers only the same consolation, the working of Fate, that was offered for the death of Hastings, and prophecies a continuance of rule by ruthless force.

The most notable change in Marvell's attitude is not, one concludes, a new-born allegiance to Cromwell, but the "detachment" he evidences. Villiers' death in 1648 prompted a defiant elegy. Hastings' death in 1649 prompted a despairing admission that "Man ( alas) is but the Heavens sport" (l. 59) and Cromwell's triumph in 1650 prompted Marvell to extend that same despair to embrace the whole social scene together with the question of mortality. The Horatian Ode, which was not, as far as we know, circulated during his lifetime, shows Marvell emptied of political hopefulness, conceding the victory to him who has obeyed the Fate that makes men its play-things. The Royalists, for all practical purposes, were no more by 1650, except on the Continent and in the colonies. And Marvell himself was just making his entry upon the social world of the English politicians—and making it not as a would-be candidate, but as a language tutor. The years between 1650 and 1653, thus, are the years of the tutor's progress. The years that reveal Marvell as a political figure, in the full sense, do not come until later.

\[1\] Ibid.
\[2\] Ibid.
In May, 1652, Milton became completely blind, and that misfortune is the prelude, it appears, to Marvell's placing himself under the shadow of Cromwell. As yet, though, Marvell was only an observer of the complex events that make up the history of the Commonwealth. Not until almost four years after Milton's blindness had become total was Marvell to play an active part in national affairs. During those four years, Marvell formed friendships that must have had a considerable effect upon his political outlook. The Oxenbridge friendship stands out at once among those Marvell formed.

We are told that Marvell met John Oxenbridge, a minister and former Magdalen tutor, sometime before October 25, 1652. Oxenbridge had been deprived of the tutorship under Laud in 1634, when it came to the attention of the officials of the college that he had been circulating among his students a set of articles for better government. Between 1634 and 1640, he had been twice to the Bermudas where, though he was known to be very "schismatical," he was allowed to preach without disturbance. In 1641, he returned to England, during the sitting of the revolutionary Long Parliament. This was also the year of Marvell's official severance from Trinity College and of the beginning of Cromwell's struggle for power. Oxenbridge seems to have been as little a party to the revolution itself, however, as was Marvell, for he drifted about England, preaching where he could, often gratis, until his appointment on October 25, 1652, to be a fellow of Eton. However, how Marvell came to know Oxenbridge is not clear.

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Oxenbridge may well have been the intermediary between Marvell and Milton, for Oxenbridge seems to have been a man who mixed well wherever there was serious-minded company. He would have been far more likely during 1651 and 1652 to have visited the home of an opposition lord than we can imagine the Cromwellian Milton to have been. The hypothesis suggested here is, of course, only that; but at least it eliminates the need for burdening Cyriack Skinner, whom Marvell does not mention until later, with the introduction.

Milton's letter to Bradshaw on February 21, 1653, stresses Marvell's linguistic background and mentions his recent service in the house of "Lord Fairfax, who was General." The tone and content of the letter indicate that Marvell was only newly acquainted with Milton, for the recommendation is only upon "report and the converse I have had with him," a phrase which suggests an interview shortly after introduction rather than a long friendship. One notes, too, the unnecessarily specific identification of Fairfax as he "who was General," as though Bradshaw could have forgotten the precise history of that lord. In the cautious language of the times, Milton is really offering Bradshaw a point of special interest and stressing it as openly as he dares.

Bradshaw was an extreme Republican despite his connection with Cromwell. He had denied Cromwell's right to dissolve the Long Parliament only

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45 Margoliouth, II, 293.
46 Atkin, p. xxvii.
47 Buchan, p. 369.
a month before receiving this letter, and he would, in 1654, refuse to sign the pledge of allegiance to Cromwell's government. Having refused, he too, like Fairfax, would resign his position. We may assume, then, that the mention of Marvell's recent Republican connection would appeal to Bradshaw, and that Milton expected that item of information to assure Marvell's appointment. Marvell may have left the Fairfax household on that expectation. But Bradshaw did not accept the suggestion, perhaps because of the turbulence of the events which had threatened Cromwell's replacement by Fairfax only weeks before this application.

Nonetheless, Marvell's case was not simply shelved. Again we must resort to pure hypothesis, but it seems not unreasonable to imagine that it was Milton who arranged Marvell's appointment as tutor to William Dutton. Such a position would further purify Marvell's connections and keep him, talented prospect that he was, within the possibility of joining Milton afterwards. Dutton was the son of a Royalist, Sir Ralph Dutton, who died in 1656. His father's death put William under the guardianship of John Dutton, a Cromwellian, and plans were afoot at this time, to wed young Dutton, eventually, to Cromwell's daughter, Frances. Although John Dutton's will was to place William under Cromwell's guardianship, that event was not destined to take place until after January, 1657. In July, 1653, Cromwell's interest was only that of a future father-in-law. Young Dutton's fate was legally his uncle's concern. The situation was ideal for the sort

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18 Buchan, p. 344.
19 Margoliouth, II, 348-349.
of transaction being suggested in these pages.

Milton's authority would have been weighty enough for a reference to John Dutton. Oxenbridge's home would have been free enough of the taint of opposition to pass Cromwell's scrutiny and Cromwell, as the heavy partner in the proposed Dutton-Cromwell alliance, would have been a person to whom the new tutor would be expected to make a formal report, as he did, soon after meeting his charge. Under the stress of the political circumstances of that year, Cromwell would not have been likely to question the combined judgment of Milton and Dutton.

Marvell's letter of July 28, 1653, to Cromwell, suggests some such pattern for the preceding events. The opening lines speak of Marvell's duty to "performe honestly the work you have set me about." Then Marvell goes on to say that he has examined young Dutton "several times in the presence of Mr. Oxenbridge," to suggest Oxenbridge as an impartial witness to those proceedings, and to mention his own willingness to follow "those Rules your lordship hath given me," and to thank his lordship for "having placed" both tutor and pupil in the Oxenbridge home. Marvell closes with a promise to keep Cromwell informed of his and Dutton's "little affairs."

Taken all in all, it seems a very politic letter, and Marvell's praise of the Oxenbridge's is detailed enough to suggest that they were, perhaps, as little personally known to the future Protector as was Marvell himself, while his estimate of the intended son-in-law, though flattering in some ways to John Dutton's hope of alliance, makes no reference whatsoever to

50 Margoliouth, II, 291-292.
the youth's mental abilities, even in Marvell's own line, languages. It is interesting to note that the match did not, in fact, occur, and that young Dutton was wed to John Scudamore's daughter, Mary. Marvell's caution here may well have saved him some embarrassment when the match was broken. As to the rest, the position of Cromwell in the affair was enough to justify such words as "placed" and "obey," and it is altogether probable that his wishes in regard to young Dutton would have been made explicit to Marvell and Oxenbridge once Milton and John Dutton had concluded the basic arrangement.

It should be noted that the Dutton tutorship, as it was arranged, had the additional advantage of moving Marvell closer to Bradshaw, who was also an Eton resident, and that, Bradshaw's history considered, Fairfax may well have approved, even encouraged, the initial attempt to place Marvell under his direction. Milton's defense of the execution of Charles I and his subsequent Cromwellian utterances might, in the normal course of events, have prompted Fairfax to oppose such a scheme or even to break with Marvell when the intention became known. Milton, however, was blind, and a young Republican with good eyes and several languages would seem more likely to take over the whole foreign correspondence than events proved to be the case. For the purposes of the opposition, Marvell's attempt could be well worth the effort.

Just what passed between Oxenbridge and Marvell during the years at Eton, we have no way of knowing. It is safe to say, however, that though Marvell may have developed a deeper sensitivity to the religious problem, toward which Fairfax had been somewhat indifferent, Oxenbridge's company
would not have led Marvell any closer to Puritan Presbyterianism. Oxenbridge was a Congregationalist, and his wife, whose epitaph Marvell was to write in 1658, had scandalised the godly folk of England by preaching "in the house among her gosips and others." That habit, common enough to Bunyan's followers, was not tolerable to Presbyterian eyes. In 1660, Oxenbridge was to lose his position at Eton, and Marvell's epitaph was to be hacked from his wife's monument, then the monument itself removed. This last brutality was years away, of course, when Marvell joined the Oxenbridge family circle, but we may assume that twenty years of wandering had supplied the Oxenbridges with matter enough for much talk about religious toleration and freedom of conscience.

In January, 1653, six months before Marvell wrote his report to him, Cromwell, as Lord General, with the aid of thirty musketeers, had put an end to the sitting of the Long Parliament, and, more gently, to the Council of State. This move had come at the very moment when Parliament was planning to restore the lord generalship to Fairfax and to relegate Cromwell to a lesser role. By April of the same year, Cromwell had offered Fairfax a seat in the new Council, and by July he had offered Fairfax a seat in the new Parliament as well. Fairfax refused both offers, and the Barebone Parliament opened, on July 6, 1653, without him. Thus the revolutionary Long Parliament was undone, but the undoing brought no gain for either the

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51 Cooper, "Oxenbridge," pp. 7-8.
52 Buchan, pp. 344-345, 353.
Royalists or the Republicans. Cromwell simply had come openly into his own, and his assumption of the title, Lord Protector, in December, 1653, only confirmed a long established fact.

1653 seems to have passed quietly enough for Marvell. When not engaged with his pupil or enjoying the company of the Oxenbridges, he could turn to John Hales, who lived near by. Marvell described Hales as "one of the clearest heads and best prepared breasts in Christendom." Formerly a chaplain to Archbishop Laud, Hales had refused to sign the engagement of 1649, had been ejected from his Eton fellowship as a result, and when Marvell knew him, was dragging out his days in the poverty that was to enclose him until his death in 1656.53

Marvell wrote some complimentary verses this same year, 1653, to accompany a gift portrait sent by Cromwell to Queen Christina of Sweden, 54 but no definite significance can be attached to that action in an age when poets were still somewhat functional, unless one should wish to see it as simply another little step toward Marvell's joining Milton in the Latin Secretariat. Marvell also wrote a verse epistle to Dr. Ingelow—chaplain of the Sweden mission, but normally an Eton resident—in praise of the treaty commemorated by the portrait. That Christina's covey of philosophers and scholars, including Descartes, would in itself have made the event attractive to Marvell seems certain enough, but even in this poem Marvell notes that

53 Birrell, p. 51.
54 Margoliouth, I, 249.
Cromwell is not a man to lay down his armor before winning his battle, and that battle, as seen through Marvell's eyes in the Horatian Ode was one that could not be ended.

Another of Marvell's poetic efforts for 1653 was his The Character of Holland, published in an apparently pirated edition in 1665. Perhaps the most noted line in this poem is that in which England is called the "Darling of heaven, and of Men the Care" (1. 11:6). By itself that line scarcely can be thought of as an unreserved endorsement of the Commonwealth; nor does the fact that The Character of Holland is an occasional poem deriding the Dutch enemy do anything to increase the value of such praise as it may give to England and Englishmen in the process.

On June 2, 1654, Marvell carried a book and a letter to his neighbor, Bradshaw, from Milton. The book was Milton's Defensio Secunda, a reply to the anonymously issued Regii Sanguinis Clamor of Peter du Moulin, for whom Marvell later was accused of being a secret agent. The Defensio Secunda is notable not only for its rhetorical excellence, but also because it

55 Ibid., p. 248.
56 Margoliouth, I, 244.
57 Atken, p. xxviii.
contains, besides the inevitable panegyric on Cromwell, a laudatory sketch of Fairfax, who had opposed the very actions being defended by Milton. Marvell was deeply impressed by the book. He told Milton in his June 2 letter: "I shall now studie it even to the getting of it by Heart," but Marvell's admiration is attached to Milton's "Roman eloquence" and to the rhetorical impact he reckons the work will achieve. He makes no comment on content as such.

Immediately after praising the Defensio Secunda, Marvell injects a personal comment worth note. "I have an affectionate curiosity," he writes, to know what becomes of Colonel Overton's businesse." Overton had been the Governor of Hull since 1647, but was arrested in May, 1654, on the suspicion of favoring a Republican or Anabaptist revolt in the North. Colonel Overton was released on this occasion but was sent to the Tower in 1655 and remained there until 1658. Evidently, Milton was in a position to know about the case, and Marvell was not afraid to ask him.

Milton had given out three copies of the Defensio Secunda: one to Bradshaw, and one each to Marvell and Oxenbridge. With Bradshaw's copy, however, had been a letter. Marvell notes that Bradshaw avoided opening the letter in his presence, and hazards that the latter may have thought it "brought in it some second Proposition like to that which you had before made to him by your Letter to my Advantage." That Bradshaw was consistent

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60 Margoliouth, II, 293.
61 Ibid., p. 349.
62 Margoliouth, II, 292.
in his refusal to employ Marvell is plain enough even from this instance of mistake. (The letter apparently had nothing to do with Marvell.) But that Bradshaw was being tactfully cautious seems also to be the case. He had reason enough to be so. In 1653, Cromwell had obtained the service of John Thurloe.

Thurloe, a quiet little lawyer, was entrusted by the new Lord Protector with the establishment and supervision of an intelligence network and of a political police force. Before long, he had become the "linch-pin of the whole regime," and had agents everywhere, combing the ranks for suspects such as Colonel Overton, and going outside the ranks after men like George Fox, who was arrested and brought to Cromwell in 1655, only to leave the Protector's presence shortly afterwards as a personal friend. One cannot avoid supposing that Marvell would have noted this sort of liberality in Cromwell and admired it. Such a trait could explain the continued respect that even Fairfax had for Cromwell.

It was not that Cromwell did not punish all who varied from the line, but that Cromwell had no clear-cut line in religion, and tolerated a surprising amount of political disagreement; but, when it came to loyalty, the ground was slippery. Someone with Milton's unblemished record could recommend a Marvell. Someone with Bradshaw's record of rebelliousness had need for care lest Thurloe should suspect a plot.

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63 Buchan, pp. 375-376.
64 Ibid., p. 432.
The year 1655 came, and Marvell, still Mr. Dutton's tutor, is said to have published the First Anniversary of the Government Under His Highness the Lord Protector, in that year. Published anonymously, the poem was ascribed to Waller, except by Marvell's enemy, Parker, the Archdeacon whose utterances Marvell attacks in his The Rehearsal Transposed (1672). Margoliouth includes the First Anniversary in his collection because of its having appeared in the folio of 1681. Since the contents of that edition come to us only on the guarantee offered by Mary Palmer, alias Mary Marvell, we are, this writer believes, entitled to treat the poem with some distrust. We shall, therefore, simply pass over the contents of The First Anniversary in silence, and turn instead to one of Marvell's friends.

Press tells us that James Harrington was one of Marvell's few known friends. In 1646, after serving in the Dutch army, Harrington was appointed to the suite of Charles I, who was already a prisoner. Following the execution of Charles I, Harrington wrote his Oceana, which proposed the ballot vote and the rotation of leaders, concepts which pleased neither the Royalists nor the Cromwellians. The book was seized by Cromwell, but restored to its author through the mediation of Elizabeth Claypole, the Protector's daughter. It appeared in print in 1656, while Marvell was at

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65 Margoliouth, I, 250.
Eton. In 1659, when Marvell was in Parliament, Harrington formed a political club, the Rota, to promote the Republican concepts about which he had written in _Oceana_, but when Charles II returned to England the existence of the group was interpreted as a conspiracy, and Harrington was first imprisoned without trial, then released on a writ of habeas corpus to the comparative exile of Nicholas Island, where he died in 1677.

If Harrington was suspect in 1656, he was not alone. Though only unofficially, Marvell was causing some comment. John Scudamore, whose daughter young Dutton was actually to marry rather than Cromwell's, met the poet at Saunton and, on August 15, 1656, wrote to Sir Richard Browne, originator of the idea of the New Model Army, that he had encountered "one Marvill a notable Italo-Machiavelian." John Lilburne had used the words, "sons of Machiavel" in 1647 to brand Vane and St. John. They among others, had held Parliament to be above the army. Though he ended his days quietly, Lilburne was a democratic Leveller earlier, and his words must be taken simply as the reflection of a radical's view of the moderates.

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69 Buchan, p. 153.
70 Press, p. 7.
72 Buchan, pp. 352-353.
But can the value of Soudamore's words be cut in the same fashion?

Perhaps we shall fail ever to be sure of what Soudamore and Browne understood by the phrase in question. Soudamore's daughter married young Dutton, we recall, but that certainly tells us nothing of Soudamore's political position. Bradshaw had resigned only a matter of weeks before Soudamore wrote, but the relationship between Bradshaw and Soudamore is utterly obscure. One simply cannot say at this time whether Soudamore really felt the distaste for Cromwellian politics that the tag, "Italo-Machiavellian" so patly suggests to modern minds. The situation might have been quite the other way around. Soudamore might have been scenting the un-Cromwellian elements of Marvell's make-up. One can find some ground to argue so, for the prefix, Italo-, could suggest Catholic Royalist leanings. The associations of the Stewart family with Catholicism were fixed in the minds of Protestant Englishmen, and not everyone would have forgotten Marvell's having linked himself to the Stewart cause in 1649. 1656 was a good year, perhaps for strange suspicions. Bernardi, the Genoese agent who had Cromwell's ear, had written home in 1653 that he believed Vane to be a Spanish pensioner. The same Vane, however, was imprisoned by Charles II in 1662, for having supported the Commonwealth. Granting the existence

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73 Duchan, p. 379-380.
75 Duchan, p. 343.
of such an atmosphere, no mere remark, even though it be as attractive as Scudamore's little maladiction, is of any real value without a brief biography of the speaker. The most it tells us is that Marvell was a "notable" person. At any rate, Scudamore did Marvell no harm, for Marvell left the Oxenbridge home the following year, having been accepted into the Latin secretariat on September 2, 1657.  

Cromwell had been installed as Protector for the second time, but with vastly greater powers, just three months before Marvell joined Milton; and as Latin Secretary, Marvell was undoubtedly able to observe England's ruler at much closer range than had before been possible for him. In 1650, of course, Marvell had stated Cromwell's central dilemma in his Horatian Ode, but now he must have become more acutely aware of the ramifications of that dilemma. The sword which Cromwell wielded was the New Model Army, but the New Model itself was more than just a military monolith. It was a decidedly un-Presbyterian association, for the Presbyterian chaplains had, for the most part, drifted away from the ranks by 1647,76 and men like Lilburne, the Leveller, and Colonel Harrison, a Fifth Monarchy man who expected the conversion of the Jews to occur in 1660,79 were rich enough in followers to start a mutiny which Cromwell was obliged to quell in November, 1647.80

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77Press, p. 7.

78J. E. Tanner, English Constitutional Conflicts of the Seventeenth Century 1603-1689 (Cambridge University, 1926), pp. 136-137.

79Buchan, pp. 352-353.

These were men who wanted such radical changes in the constitution as total democracy, for the Levellers, and, for the Fifth Monarchists, a system whereby all officials would be elected by church congregations. These were extremist groups, but they could and did unite with each other and with still other less virulent sects against a common enemy, the Presbyterian bloc. The army, thus, became the headquarters of the so-called Independents, just as Parliament became the center of Presbyterianism. Though Cromwell was never to succeed in making peace with or among the jarring sects in his army, the fact emerged that "to support Cromwell meant to make sure of toleration." It was a fact that would not be lost on Marvell after his years of friendship with Oxenbridge, Hales, and Harrison, or in the light of his present association with Milton, to whom "new Presbyterian was but old Priest writ large."

Cromwell had, in fact, written concerning a cashiered Anabaptist officer that "the State, in choosing men to serve them, takes no notice of their opinions; if they be willing faithfully to serve them, that satisfies." This sort of objectivity and open-mindedness must have had much to do with Marvell's being taken into the service of the State after Thurlow's scrutiny,

81 Tanner, p. 159.
82 Ibid., pp. 136-137.
83 Ibid., p. 285.
84 Tanner, p. 105.
85 Ibid., p. 129.
which would not have overlooked the poems of 1649. Such praise as Marvell gives to Cromwell in 1658 has its roots here as well, one thinks.

On April 20, 1657, about five months before Marvell became a Latin secretary, Admiral Blake entered the bay of Santa Cruz and sank a sixteen-ship treasure fleet under the muskets of the Spanish shore batteries. Marvell is thought to have written his poem, *On the Victory obtained by Blake*, sometime before August of the same year, but it was not to be published until 1674. Three weddings also took place during the year 1657. Frances Cromwell married Robert Rich, grandson of the Earl of Warwick. Their happiness, however, was cut short by Rich’s death in February, 1658. Mary Cromwell married Lord Fauconberg, a Royalist peer, who was later to become an ambassador and privy councillor to Charles II. (Elisabeth Cromwell had some years before married the Royalist, Claypole, who was described by one partisan lady as a “debauched ungodly cavalier.”) Marvell wrote two songs for the Fauconberg wedding, which occurred in November, but no song comes down to us from his pen for the Rich wedding, or for the wedding of Mary Fairfax—his former pupil—and the Duke of Buckingham, a month earlier. The George Villiers who married Mary Fairfax was the second of his family to hold the Buckingham title. His father had tried to arrange the marriage of Charles I to the Spanish Infanta, then to Henrietta Maria. The second attempt succeeded, and so, in a sense, Villiers could be held responsible

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86 Margoliouth, I, 255.
87 Buchan, pp. 420, 237.
88 Trevelyan, p. 389.
for the very existence of Charles II, and even for the Roman Catholic threat that lay in that young prince's person. In August, 1628, a Puritan named Felton had assassinated the first duke. The second duke had escaped to Rotterdam in 1651, but returned in 1657 to marry Marvell's former pupil on September 15. By October 9, he was under arrest on suspicion of organizing a Presbyterian plot against the Protectorate. He remained in custody until February, 1659, despite Fairfax's intercession. If Marvell failed to celebrate that wedding, one can only admit that it was a wise failure for a man under Thurloe's eye, for Thurloe was now urging Cromwell to become King Oliver and end the pretensions of Republicans and Fifth Monarchy men alike.

Margoliouth tells us that Marvell was more directly under Thurloe's than Milton's control, that Marvell's employment was listed simply as "publique service" during the year 1657 to 1658, and that although Marvell apparently replaced Philip Meadows, a Mr. Sterry is listed as having replaced Meadows. Yet records do survive of Marvell's having written letters both at Thurloe's and at Milton's direction, and of Marvell's having received the Dutch ambassador and an agent of the Elector of Bamberg, and of "Latin-Secretaries, John Milton and Andrew Marvell" having been granted mourning when Cromwell died. Just what situation lies under the surface of this

89 Buchan, p. 49.
90 Gibb, p. 280.
91 Buchan, p. 387.
92 Margoliouth, II, 350.
confusion the present writer refuses to guess.

Cromwell’s death, September 3, 1658, brought forth from Marvell his A Poem on the Death of O.C., which seems not to have been published until 1681. That Marvell could have come to feel a sincere admiration for Cromwell, as this poem indicates, is not at all surprising, despite his earlier reservations. Cromwell began as many of the others of the Commonwealth had begun. His first speech, eleven years before the ill-fated Short Parliament, had been a plea for mutual honesty and honorable action. He is presented by Buchan as a fundamentally tolerant man, despite the brutalities of the Irish campaign and the use to which he put his army in Pride’s Purge and during the rule of the Major-Generals. If Buchan’s estimate be correct, Cromwell found himself in the position of a dictator who desires to rule democratically, but is caught between the very forces that preserve him. To stereotype the Lord Protector as an unmitigated villain seems no less a mistake than to see him in the image of a harmless philanthropist. His actual achievement was the opposite of the Republican aim. He merely substituted a plain-clothes monarch for a monarch crowned, but during his time England became a world power again, regained her naval supremacy, and regained her self-respect. The man who could achieve all this had a right to admiration, and we sense that admiration not only in the poem on Cromwell’s death, but also in the poem on Blake’s victory. England may have changed as drastically in some respects as Marvell had feared in 1649, but her new prestige

\[93\] Ibid., p. 257.

\[94\] Buchan, p. 67.
among the nations of the world brought with it a new hope and a new pride. Whatever reservations Marvell might still hold, he was not insensitive to the positive values at hand, nor was he unaware of the troubles in store for any lesser man who tried to fill Oliver Cromwell's space in the realm.

Marvell's A Poem on the Death of C. is, perhaps, the only wholeheartedly laudatory utterance the poet made about that ruler. Certainly it testifies to a personal affection in such lines as "the wondrous softness of his Heart" (l. 20) and "So loose an enemy, so fast a friend" (l. 200). Two other points about the poem are even more suggestive, in view of the material we have discussed so far. The first is the stress that Marvell lays upon the relationship of Cromwell's daughter Elizabeth's death to that of her father. Elizabeth Claypole was the daughter who had interceded two years earlier in behalf of Marvell's friend, Harrington, and who had frequently interceded in behalf of Royalist prisoners.95 She was an altogether unpuritanical member of the Commonwealth community, and shocked the restrained ladies of the other leaders of realm by her penchant for gay attire and easy manners.96 Marvell calls her the "Image" of her father (l. 54) and carries the figure from the area of the commonplace to that of mago, by speaking of her as a tortured wax image, the destruction of which brings about the death of its original. Nor does the poet stop with that spectacular figure.

95Margoliouth, I, 257.

96Buchan, p. 120.
In the two lines that follow, he goes on to speak of her as a "Flour with ring which the Garden crown'd" (l. 55) and of Cromwell as the "sad Root" pining "under ground" (l. 56). Elizabeth died on August 6, Cromwell on September 3, 1658, and one ought, perhaps, to allow that such a proximity of dates would sorely tempt any poet, but the association of unconventional, tolerant Elizabeth with the crowning flower of "the Garden" and of Cromwell with the necessary but buried root of her virtue cannot be explained in terms of chronology; nor can the identification of the two in the wax image figure be so explained. Cromwell is locked away from the light in these figures, but is not a force of darkness. He is, perhaps, presented as a victim of his own goodness and virtue, if the wax image be taken into consideration at the same time. Be that as it may, Marvell is clear enough in his meaning later, when he writes that

The Stars that for him fought had only pow'r
Left to determine now his fatal Hour.
(11. 137-138)

The next point is of more complexity than the first. If the text we have be reasonably accurate, and there are reasons both for accepting and rejecting the portion following line 134, then the poet expressed an unmistakable uncertainty in the final segment, which is devoted to Cromwell's son and successor, Richard. Richard is described as not only mild, but as

97 Margoliouth, I, 257.
98 Margoliouth, I, 214, 257.
absorbed in his grief; not only as unaccustomed to public life, but as of questionable "splendor" (l. 311). Then, as if repeating someone else's words, Marvell inserts the line, "A Cromwell in an hour a prince will grow" (l. 312), but renders that line dubious in intent by his treatment of the next two.

How he becomes that seat, how strongly stregnis,
How gently winds at once the ruling reins?
(11. 314-315)

The question mark, if actually Marvell's work, is unmistakably operative, and the last line, "He threatens no deluge, yet foretells a showre," seems to the present writer to be a deliberate instance of bitter bathos, especially marked by its contradiction of the line, "Rainbows to storms, Richard to Oliver" (l. 322). This reading of the Richard Cromwell lines is, if correct, even more interesting when one notes that Marvell's friend Baxter, in a speech supporting Richard's accession, hailed the ruler as peacemaker and healer of breaches.99 It is possible that Marvell here is questioning the validity of Baxter's optimistic view. Again, that point remains uncertain, but Marvell's dubiousness about Richard is amply borne out by the history of his brief reign.

Richard Cromwell had not the same force of character that his father had possessed, and most of the nation was well aware of that fact. When the Long Parliament reassembled in May, 1658, Richard's abdication was universally demanded. He complied on May 25, 1658, and retired from public life

99 Margoliouth, I, 259.
entirely, living out the bulk of his remaining years as a fugitive from
Charles II, who, for some reason, thought him dangerous. Marvell was a mem-
ber of Richard's brief parliament, and of the revived Long Parliament. 100

We know very little about Marvell's actions in the two years from May,
1658, to May, 1660, but we may assume, from his survival in office, that he,
like Fairfax, accepted the necessity for restoring Charles II and worked
toward that end. We know that Marvell was one of Milton's defenders in
1660. That Marvell could have taken Milton's part at all, considering
his own former position as Cromwell's Latin-secretary, without harm to him-
self is, however, a cause for question. Milton had, in 1660, no Paradise
Lost, no Paradise Regained, and no Samson Agonistes to give him a claim
upon his enemies' leniency. Nor was the parliament of 1660 an ideal audience
for such a claim, had it existed. One thinks of Cicero's Pro Archia. One
also thinks that Marvell could not have been a notable Cromwellian and have
duplicated that feat. A Republican might, but the general amnesty which came
close to excluding Milton must have come somewhat close to Marvell himself,
unless he too had friends in high places.

Perhaps the histories of two more of Marvell's friends will help to
establish a clearer perspective for what is to follow. Admittedly, the risk
in inferences based upon friendships is very great, but the note of unjust
privations and, occasionally that of strange survival, seems to be an earmark

100 Margoliouth, II, 350.
Aitken, p. xxxi.

101 Hanford, p. 53.
of the Marvell circle. Oxenbridge, Hales, Milton, and Fairfax are the basic
types in the pattern, but a brief tracing of the lives of men like John Pell,
John Owen, Richard Baxter, Prince Rupert, and Lord Fauconberg does much to
give that pattern depth and add to its suggestiveness. Suppose we concern
ourselves first with Pell, Owen, and Baxter, and save the others for a
little later.

If the undisturbed course of Marvell’s public life after 1660 seems
somewhat strange, that of John Pell, another of Marvell’s handful of known
friends, seems even stranger. Pell, a mathematician educated at Trinity
College, Cambridge, was a professor of mathematics at Amsterdam, from 1643
to 1646, and, at the request of the Prince of Orange, at Breda from 1646 to
1652. One would mark him out at once as a Royalist, but for the fact that
he returned to England between 1652 and 1654, and that he served as Thurlow’s
agent in Switzerland from 1654 to 1658. His mission was unprosperous,
though his reports were detailed enough to indicate that he was clearly in
touch with the people assigned to him. “Some obscure services, however,
rendered by him to the royalist party and to the church of England secured
his position at the Restoration,” writes his biographer. 102

Not so fortunate was Marvell’s almost-Anglican friend, Richard Baxter.
Baxter is listed as a Presbyterian, but was far closer to the Church of
England than to Presbyterianism. From 1645-1647, Baxter was chaplain to

102 A. M. Clerke, “Pell, John (1611-1685),” Dictionary of National
Biography (London, 1908), XV, 706.
Colonel Whalley's regiment, not because he had embraced the Puritan cause, but because he hoped to use his talents in that position to counteract the Republican tendencies of the Parliamentary troops. After Cromwell's death, Baxter had helped to bring about the Restoration, and, in 1660, he was offered the bishopric of Hereford, but refused that gift because it involved strict conformity to the Church of England. For the remainder of his life, Baxter was to suffer persecution for this unflinchingly held scruple.

John Owen, former chaplain to Lord Lovelace, and another on our list of Marvell's friends, also experienced a number of adversities, but ended his years more happily. He had been a schoolmaster at Wroxeter with Richard Baxter, as well as a chaplain to Lord Lovelace, but had joined the side of Parliament in the Civil War. By 1649, he was Cromwell's chaplain. By 1651, he was chancellor of Oxford. After Cromwell's death, he had joined those who favored a republic rather than a protectorate, and, in this position, he had confronted the Restoration. His tendency since 1646, however, had been toward Congregationalism, and he was, for that reason, to be rejected by the Presbyterians and the Anglicans alike until the Declaration of Indulgence, 1672, which allowed him to preach again, an allowance for which he was markedly grateful to the Stewart king.

Some hope stirred in Puritan breasts in October, 1660, for Charles II had sponsored a compromise between the Presbyterians and the Anglicans.

103 Lodge, pp. 114-115.
whereby, it seemed, a working, unified ecclesiastical arrangement could be found. Such an arrangement would do no good for the Congregationalists and the other extreme groups, but it promised at least to be better than a completely Anglican establishment. November 27, 1660 saw the end of that promise, for the proposed church alliance was rejected by Parliament, the Royalists having successfully opposed what Charles now represented as parliamentary interference in church affairs. Hard upon this rejection came the dissolution of the hold-over Parliament, and in the same month, December, 1660, came James Stewart's admission of his marriage to Anne Hyde, the daughter of Lord Clarendon, an Anglican peer. The tide was running out on Puritan and Independent hopes alike.

If 1660 was a dark year for the Puritans, 1661 was almost stygian. January saw the New Model Army disbanded. Only Monk's infantry was allowed to remain intact under the new name of Coldstream Guards. Monk had already become Duke of Albemarle for his part in paralyzing the army before the king's return, an action in which Fairfax had cooperated. January also witnessed the ceremony of the exhuming, hanging, and reinerring of Cromwell, Ireton, and Bradshaw. They were buried, to the satisfaction of the restored government, beneath the gallows at Tyburn, but no one could find the remains

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105 Lodge, p. 15.
106 Turner, pp. 64-65.
107 Lodge, p. 12.
of Charles I, and so the gayer Westminster ceremony had to be cancelled.

This disappointment faded in the splendor of Charles's coronation on April 23, however, and the splendor of the coronation had the effect also of prompting a heavy Royalist return in the 1661 election. After May 8, Parliament was a Royalist organization. But the final touch of this first half of 1661 was the King's announcement of his betrothal to Catherine of Braganza, a Catholic connection which, while it kept Spain at bay, pleased Louis XIV of France, and alienated England still more from the Protestant powers represented by the House of Orange and Prince Rupert's family. All in all, the events of this half-year seemed to spell the doom of Republicanism and Dissent alike.

For Marvell, the time was made even less pleasant by the Gilby affair, an irregularity in the 1661 elections. Colonel Gilby seems to have been the guilty party, but Marvell, because of his being also a representative of Hull, was forced to repudiate Gilby in order to perform his own duties. His main fear seems to have been that the Gilby affair would hamper his proper execution of his office. He seems to have left England shortly after, bound for Holland—possibly for the camp of the Prince of Orange—and to have remained abroad until early 1663. During Marvell's absence, Charles,

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108 Ibid., p. 9.
109 Ibid., p. 16.
110 James Russell Lowell, ed., The Poetical Works of Andrew Marvell with a Memoir of the Author (said to be by Henry Rogers) (Boston, 1857), p. xvii.
111 Ibid., pp. xix-xx.
with Clarendon's advice, continued his program to rebuild the Stewart absolu-
tism. Three measures taken to achieve that end deserve mention.

The Corporation Act, December 20, 1661, provided that all municipal
office-holders must take oaths of allegiance and supremacy, declare that
resistance to the king on any pretext was unlawful, and repudiate the Solemn
League and Covenant. The Licensing Act, May, 1662, provided for the appoint-
ment of master printers by the archbishops of Canterbury and London, and for
the censorship of all books. The Act of Uniformity, in the same month,
provided that no schoolmaster or private tutor might teach without a license
from the bishop of the diocese; that the use of the Prayer Book was compul-
sory; that no minister without Anglican orders should hold a living; that all
ministers holding livings must declare their acceptance of Anglican doctrine;
and that all university teachers, officers, and private tutors must declare
their acceptance of the Anglican liturgy and of the doctrine of non-resis-
ance.\footnote{112}

What Marvell did during the eighteen months he seems to have spent in
Holland is not known to this writer. His friend, Prince Rupert, nephew to
Charles I, as well as opponent to Charles II's marriage to the Catholic
lady from Portugal, seems to have turned his interests toward the New World,
and to have involved himself primarily in the enterprises of the Hudson's
Bay Company.\footnote{113} Rupert, "that diabolical cavalier,"\footnote{114} as a contemporary

\footnote{112}Lodge, p. 17.
\footnote{113}Trevelyan, p. 1442.
\footnote{114}Tanner, p. 135.
called him, had already been slighted by Charles's scornful attitude toward the "foory" German ladies proposed as candidates for his hand, and was to be taunted frequently during the years that ensued for voting, as his enemies said, under Marvell's direction. That Rupert was in the opposition is clear, but his precise relationship to Marvell is not yet clear.

The Prince of Orange, whom Marvell mentions a number of times in his letters, was at this time in much the same condition as Charles had been a few years earlier. In 1650, the House of Orange had lost its power to De Witt, and being thus dispossessed, had not figured in Charles's plans in 1660, though most of the English king's subjects, and especially the Republicans, had hoped that the Princess of Orange would be their king's choice. Charles had dismissed the House of Orange as inconsequential, the Germans as boring, and pursued a policy of playing France and Spain against each other, with Portugal as his trump card.

Agitation in the House to deprive Marvell of his seat brought him back to England briefly in 1663. But Lord Carlisle, who had been favored by Oliver and Richard Cromwell but, finding Richard a weakling, had assisted in the Restoration, persuaded Marvell, in 1665, to accompany him on an embassy to Russia, Sweden, and Denmark. This trip, being public rather than

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115 Lodge, p. 19.
116 Lowell, p. xxii.
117 Buchan, p. 318. 
Lodge, p. 19.
private business, seems to have met with the approval of all concerned.\footnote{Aitken, xxxiii.}

Marvell did not return to England until 1665. During his absence, the Conventicle Act and the Five Mile Act were added to the restrictions placed upon religion in England, and the condition of the House of Orange continued precarious, while the resentments of England's non-Anglican Protestants and of her Republicans continued to mount. The Plague of 1665 and the fire of 1666 probably seemed to the downtrodden groups to be a kind of divinely written exclamation point in a story of ruin.

Charles II's complicated policies were beginning, in 1665, to bear fruit for the House of Orange, though it is altogether doubtful that Charles was endeavoring to help his cousin regain power. On October 22, 1665, Marvell wrote to Mayor Bloome that "they \[the Dutch under De Witt\] have drowned their country to prevent his \[Louis XIV's\] further irruption, and that they press the States-General to make up a peace and restore the Prince of Orange."\footnote{Margoliouth, II, 100.} That restoration was not to occur, however, for seven years more. In the meanwhile, England was to be involved in a very inglorious Dutch War against the government of De Witt, and to find that enemy able, in 1667, to sail up the Thames and burn English shipping there with impunity. The Duke of York was not a Blake, nor was there money enough in the treasury to send a fighting navy to sea if a Blake existed to command it. Pepys is an eloquent witness of England's sense of shame.\footnote{Aitken, p. xxxvi.} The peace treaty of
July 21, 1667, was a defeat for England. 121

By October 30, 1667, Clarendon had come to the end of his years as Charles's chief advisor, and not too many seem to have regretted the fact. Pepy's records that "some rude people have been...at my Lord Chancellor's, where they have cut down the trees before his house and broke his windows; and a gibbet either set up or painted upon his gate, and these three words writ: 'Three sights to be seen; Dunkirk, Tangier, and a barren Queen!'" 122

Edward Hyde, Lord Clarendon, had begun as a Republican in the Long Parliament, deserted the Commonwealth because of his preference for the Anglican establishment, joined Charles in exile, and invented the formula, "subject to future approval of a new parliament," which delivered England to the Stewart grasp in 1661. 123 He urged Charles into the actions which are indicated by the various penal laws pertinent to religion, by the alliance of England with Portugal, by her conflict with De Witt's Holland, and by her oblivious attitude toward the House of Orange and the German princesses. Marvell was one of those who attacked Clarendon in 1667.

Clarendon's fall may have made Charles the master in his own house, but it neither bettered the position of the Catholics and non-Anglican Protestants nor clarified the English political scene. The so-called Cabal,

121 Lodge, p. 80.
122 Margoliouth, p. 263.
123 Lodge, p. 2.
124 Ibid., p. 81.
which rose up to fill the vacancy left by Clarendon, was composed of five lords bound together only by a mutual opposition to Clarendon's religious and political policies. Clifford and Arlington were Catholics. Lauderdale was a Scotch Presbyterian. Buckingham and Ashley were, at best, un-religious. They attempted, as a group, to relax the penal laws pertaining to religion, and they prompted, as a group, the signing of a treaty with Holland against France and Spain. Even as the Cabal pursued these goals, however, the king was making secret pledges to Louis XIV, and the Cavalier majority in Parliament was continuing to support the exiled Clarendon's religious policies.

By 1670, we find Charles employing Arlington and Clifford to negotiate the secret Treaty of Dover, and, in the following year, sending Ashley to negotiate the open, but sham, Treaty of Dover, for which that unsuspecting lord was given much credit and was created Earl of Shaftesbury. The sham treaty seemed to be only an alliance between France and England against the recently victorious Dutch under De Witt. The real treaty included the provision that Louis XIV should send 6,000 troops to England to re-establish the Roman Catholic Church. The reactions of the irreligious Buckingham and the skeptical Shaftesbury, when once that news leaked out, may be imagined without difficulty. The affair had its roots deep in Charles's own life, however, not in any special power Arlington and Clifford possessed.

Charles had begun to think seriously about Catholicism in the years of

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125 Lodge, p. 85-88.
his exile, and had come to develop, in the course of these thoughts, a kind of religious aversion to the House of Orange, and to the German Electorate, which political circumstance served only to fortify.\footnote{Lodge, p. 63.} That he would reject the prospect of a Protestant queen is not surprising. That he would strengthen the Anglican establishment is not surprising either, for Charles harbored the notion of leading his Anglican flock into the Church of Rome just as Henry VIII had led them out, by royal mandate. In 1662 to 1663, Charles negotiated with the Pope, in 1669 and 1672 with the Pope and King Louis XIV. The proposition was for a semi-independent state-church, but the Vatican rejected such an arrangement. It was to this end that the king revealed to Arlington and Clifford in 1669 that he himself was of a Catholic mind, and arranged for the secret Treaty of Dover.\footnote{Trevellian, \textit{England Under the Stuarts}, pp. 365-371.}

Meanwhile the Anglicans were hard at work strengthening the establishment against both the threat of Catholicism and the fact of Nonconformism. Archdeacon Samuel Parker issued his \textit{A Discourse of Ecclesiastical Polity} in 1670. It was an exhortation against religious toleration, penned by a man who had abandoned the religious and political causes of his earlier years to become an ultra-Anglican.\footnote{Birrell, pp. 152-153.} Two years later Harvell was to attack Parker roundly in \textit{The Rehearsal Transposed}. In the interval, as his letters
testify, Marvell was keeping an eye on the progress of the House of Orange and on other matters as well. On November 28, 1670, he wrote to his cousin, William Popple, that: "The Prince of Orange here is made much of. The King owes him a great deal of money." In the same letter Marvell tells his cousin of the abuses practised against the Quakers and of the likelihood of a "terrible Act of Conventicles." That Marvell's conviction was accurate enough we know from the fact that on April 11, 1670, Charles abandoned the cause of toleration entirely and consented to a new Conventicle Act. At the same time it began to be clear that the continued barrenness of Queen Catherine was a real flaw in Charles's defenses. This, too, Marvell noted in his letter 131.

In 1670, Buckingham set about the task of justifying to the king the notion of setting aside Catherine of Braganza for barrenness and arranging a second marriage for the sake of the state. The scheme failed, and England continued to exist with its childless king and barren queen. 132 The following year, the Treaty of Dover drew England into Louis XIV's war against Holland, but Charles did not draw the 6,000 troops from Louis to effect England's conversion, an omission which seems not to have troubled the French king. 133 Instead of a proclamation of national conversion, Charles

130 Margoliouth, II, 305.
131 Lodge, pp. 94-95.
132 Ibid.
133 Trevelyan, England Under the Stuarts, p. 373.
issued his Declaration of Indulgence, which not only undermined the whole of the rebuilt Anglican establishment but threatened to set the Catholics at liberty to undermine Protestantism itself. 134 Buckingham, Ashley, and Lauderdale backed the move toward toleration. Arlington and Clifford accepted it as a second best. Shaftesbury tried to sell the House of Commons the idea that the third Dutch War was to be a "destruction of Carthage," but too many of the members thought they detected a Catholic scent in the undertaking. 135 James Stewart's admission of his conversion to Catholicism did nothing to allay these suspicions.

The third Dutch War did not result in the "destruction of Carthage" after all, but it did result in the assassination of De Witt by his own countrymen, in the dissolution of the Republic, and in the restoration of the House of Orange. 136 By 1673, the Prince of Orange had brought Spain and Austria into the battle against France and England, and by February 9, 1674, Parliament had finally compelled Charles to withdraw his forces and agree to a peace. 137 Another Dutch War had ended ingloriously, this time with the slighted Prince of Orange as victor. In addition to this failure, Charles had been forced to withdraw even the Declaration of Indulgence. It had been

134 Lodge, p. 107.
135 Trevelyan, England Under the Stuarts, p. 373.
136 Sirrell, p. 197.
137 Trevelyan, England Under the Stuarts, p. 373.
replaced in 1673 with the Test Act, which forced the resignation of Clifford, of Arlington, and even of James Stewart. The Test Act may have bid fair to control the Catholic inclinations of King Charles, but the condemnation of the Dutch War in almost the same breath put Buckingham and Shaftesbury into eclipse as well. Out of the resulting confusion rose a leader who was neither pleased with the alliance nor favorable to the ideals of toleration and popular government. This man, the Earl of Danby, was to determine events on the English scene until after Marvell's death.

From this time onward, William of Orange showed a marked and not especially friendly interest in the doings of his English cousins and, under the guise of reunion, established his agents throughout England in preparation for the peaceful conquest known as the Glorious Revolution of 1689. Marvell mentions the impending marriage of Mary Stewart to the Prince of Orange on several occasions during the interval, 1674 to 1677, commenting in 1674 to Edward Thompson that "things stand as I heare but ticklist & insincere betwixt us and Holland." The marriage took place in November, 1677. In January of the following year, Marvell wrote to Henry Maister that a committee had been appointed in the House of Commons "to draw up an humble Adresse to his Mty for expressing his great care of the Protestant Religion

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138 Aitken, p. xli.
139 Tanner, pp. 236-237.
140 Trevelyan, England Under the Stuarts, p. 412.
141 Margoliouth, I, 314.
in marrying his Niece to the Prince of Orange," but the same "humble
Adresse," Marvell indicates, was to contain a plea against dealings which
might even now grant any new advantage to the king of France. 1h2 That the
men of the House of Commons rested more easily for the marriage seems clear
enough. That they thought the marriage an insufficient protection seems
equally clear. It is not possible here to follow the progress of the Prince
of Orange in English politics, but it is interesting to note that
Lord Fauconberg, for whose marriage twenty years earlier Marvell had written
two songs, was one of the nobles who helped to effect the 1689 triumph of
William III. 1h3

It is worth noting that Marvell's *The Growth of Popery and Arbitrary
Power in England* appeared one month after the marriage of William and Mary,
that an attempt to have Marvell sent to the Tower preceded that marriage by
less than a year, and that rewards were being offered for discovering the
writer of *The Growth of Popery* within seven months of its appearance.

By the end of the Third Dutch War, Marvell was rumored to be working with
the Dutch underground in England, and in the year of his death the anonymous
*A Letter from Amsterdam to a Friend in England* appeared with the following
lines as part of its content: "make sure of Andrew; he's a shrewd man
against popery, though for his religion you may place him, as Pasquin at

1h2 Margoliouth, II, 203.

1h3 Ibid., p. 257.

1h4 Aitken, pp. xlvii-xlvi.
Rome placed Henry the Eighth, betwixt Moses, the Messiah and Mahomet, with his motto in his mouth *Quo me vertam nescio*. It is well he is now transposed into politics; they say he had much ado to live upon poetry.\(^{115}\)

This last tradition of Marvell as an underground agent may be mere fiction, but it suggests a great deal about the man, as does the other tradition that Marvell was the victim of a political poisoning.\(^ {116}\)

Any positive statement of Marvell’s position in his times must, in the absence of more detailed information, be hypothetical, but perhaps it is this very failure on his part to seem to conform to the abstract standards we set for the various portions of Puritan and Restoration England that suggests the more valuable clue we can hope for in the effort to understand both poetry and poet. Marvell’s friendships follow no set line, but they do tend more often to include spiritual and political rebels rather than conformists, and unfortunates rather than successes. Milton was not a model Presbyterian, nor was Cromwell. Baxter and Owen were unfortunates and rebels. Fairfax was, in a sense a double rebel, and Rupert, though a Royalist, was scarcely among the most successful nobles of the Restoration, while Fauconberg seems to have followed a path much like Marvell’s own, though he was a Catholic. Harrington’s failure is very plain. Lovelace died in poverty. Fell retired quietly from public life, but his earlier years mark him, too, as one of Marvell’s community of non-conforming souls. Both the Oxenbridges and

\(^{115}\) *Press*, p. 10.

\(^{116}\) *Margoliouth, I*, 237.
John Hales were to come on very hard times for refusing to conform.

Marvell's early Royalist sympathies, as we have seen, were tempered with a frank recognition of the weakness in Charles I that made the rise of the revolutionaries possible, but his recognition in 1649, of the cultural chaos occasioned by the civil wars, and his prophecy in 1650, that Cromwell having superceded Parliament by the sword, would have to maintain his position by the same means thereafter, point up not only his recognition of the failure of the Republican experiment, but also his reserve about the substitution of a dictator for a king. As early as 1665, Marvell had rejected orthodox Christianity, and his friendships with the indifferent Fairfax, with the un-Presbyterian Oxenbridges, and with the arch-Congregationalist, Milton, may be seen, in this light, as genuinely congenial. After the Restoration, moreover, we find Marvell writing in a tone of distress that "there is like to be a terrible Act of Conventicles,"117 and expressing a sensitivity to the plight of the Quakers. But his friendships also include Anglicans and displaced Presbyterians, and in his polemic writings he deals with the religious issue not as an exponent of doctrine, but only as an exponent of toleration. He rises to the threat of a spiritual dictatorship, not to the defense of any one sect against the others, just as he opposes the drift of Charles II toward the reestablishment of a Catholic state church—to Marvell's thought the most intolerant of all arrangements—though his fortunes in 1660 imply his cooperation in returning Charles to the throne.

117 Margoliouth, II, 305.
In keeping with his classical background, Marvell seems to have sought for and fought for a middle way, and this may in large measure explain his relationship to Cromwell, to Charles II, and to William of Orange. Not bound by any narrow partisanship, Marvell was able, contrary to his own expectations, to see and honor Cromwell's tolerant attitude toward the turbulent sects surrounding him, and Cromwell's genuine, if ephemeral, achievement in raising England again to the status of a world power, in salvaging what the corruption first of the court of Charles I and then of the revolutionary parliament had almost lost. One sees Marvell being drawn into Cromwell's orbit as a tutor and a linguist, and remaining, not as a partisan, but as a political realist; for, whatever drawbacks the plain-clothes king may have had, the alternatives to his reign were far less desirable. A nation of warring factions with Presbyterianism in the ascendancy, was not a likely place for toleration to flourish. Cromwell was irreplaceable as well as inevitable.

Strange as it may seem that Marvell would come to support a dictator in the interests of moderation and toleration, that same explanation seems to resolve the apparent inconsistencies of the poet's later actions equally as well. When Richard Cromwell was thrust into the protectorship by his father's death, the two spectres of the age rose again. A weak rule could only mean England's collapse as a world power, and the renewal of internal strife. To avert these evils, Marvell and many others, strangely assorted by any measure other than fear for England's future, combined to restore the kingdom to the Stewarts, to avert the national suicide that must otherwise result from Oliver Cromwell's army taking power without an Oliver Cromwell to unify,
harmonise, and direct it. Again, one concludes, Marvell's seeming return to the Royalist camp was not, in fact, a change of allegiance, but another step in a straight line of personal policy.

In the same way, Marvell's apparent switch of allegiance from the House of Stewart to the House of Orange reveals itself as an expression of a permanent personal policy rather than of a change of mind. His association with Charles's cause no more demonstrates his endorsement of Charles's known inclinations toward state-churchism and absolute monarchy than his association with Cromwell's cause demonstrates his endorsement of dictatorship as such. His opposition to Parker and his advocacy of the interests of Prince William make plain the course he was actually following. Now that the threat of internal war had been averted, now that England had survived as a nation, Marvell turned his attention again to securing toleration and to opposing the interests of France and Spain, supporting those of the Protestant princes. Thus, from the death of Francis Villiers in 1648 to his own death in 1678 we see Marvell to be spiritually independent of England's sects and parties, and fighting more and more vehemently year by year to preserve the often slim possibility of maintaining that independence. It is in the light of this constant struggle for independence in the midst of sects and parties and in an age marked by the avidness, often fanaticism, of sectarian and party alignments, an age of clear-out either-or choices, none of which appealed to Marvell, that the composition, sometime between 1650 and 1653, of The Garden must, the present writer is convinced, be viewed by the critic. But, before an analysis of that poem can be attempted, some account of the seventeenth-century intellectual background must be made.
To that end the next chapter is devoted.
CHAPTER II

MARVELL'S PROBLEM IN ITS BROADER CONTEXT

In 1650, as we may conclude from the content of the preceding chapter, Andrew Marvell was neither a Republican, a Democrat, a Cromwellian, a Presbyterian, an Anglican, a Catholic, nor an Independent. He seems to have been, rather, a man without a party or sect, once a Royalist, once perhaps a Calvinist of sorts, but now simply a man trying to work out his own salvation, to find a way to the good life despite the pervasive atmosphere of conflict in which he was fated to live. His problem was internal as well as external. He had not only to preserve his spiritual integrity, his liberty of conscience, but to formulate for himself the content of that conscience, and to establish to his own satisfaction the basis of that integrity. As we shall see in the next chapter, The Garden is Marvell's statement of the solution he managed to achieve for the internal part of his problem. To see that solution in a proper perspective, however, we must understand some of the elements in the mid-seventeenth-century background that complicated the poet's problem and some others that seem to have contributed to his solution.

To propose to review in a single chapter the whole intellectual situation of England in 1650 would be foolish. Excellent texts by qualified scholars already exist to serve the need for such a general view. The present chapter is intended merely to stress several items which the present writer thinks to be of special importance in Marvell study, and of particular
importance for the explication of The Garden.

The mid-seventeenth century was and is amazing both for the complexity of its intellectual background and for the novelty of some of the items that constituted that background. In England, classical learning and ancient superstition, medieval and reformed religions and philosophies jarred against each other. Occult and mystic creeds flourished. And the new science was rapidly growing despite the scorn its methods drew from some of the gentlemen who witnessed its growth. Strange blends of theory and belief arose.

Robert Boyle (1627-1691) is an example worth noting. While busy formulating the equation known as Boyle’s Law, this founding member of the Royal Society retained his belief in alchemy, and continued his studies in Scripture, the latter endeavor being facilitated by his knowledge of Hebrew and Syriac, which he acquired solely for that purpose. Robert Fludd, who died when Boyle was ten and Marvell was sixteen, combined his practice of medicine with a belief in Paracelsus’s doctrine of spiritual and physical correspondences and with the defense of Rosicrucian doctrines. Thomas Vaughan, twin brother of the poet, Henry Vaughan, is even more colorful as a blender than the two just noted. He denied being a Rosicrucian, attacked the

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1 Frederick Copleston, A History of Philosophy (Westminster, Maryland, 1959), V, 1143.


Platonism of Henry More, and asserted, as a solution to problems of the day, that religion and magic were one and the same thing, that magicians were the first to know Jesus for what he really was, and that the practice of true magic, as opposed to witchcraft, was a sacred calling. Our list of examples could be extended without difficulty, but enough material has already been presented to suggest that the atmosphere of Marvell's England was charged with ideas which one might, were it not for their common distribution, suppose to be the peculiar results of isolated scholarship, and that the likelihood of finding Marvell, or any other seventeenth-century poet, to be the representative of any single school of thought, is much slimmer than one might at first suppose.

For Marvell, the pervasive variety of the thought of his century would have been both an advantage and a problem, for his task, between 1649 and 1652, was, as this writer sees it, to construct a personal philosophy to replace the conventional allegiances he had lost during the rise of the Commonwealth. If this be true, we would hardly expect to find him simply attaching himself to some one or other dominant school of thought. Rather, as we have seen him do in his public life, we would expect to find him uncovering some principle basic enough to be followed consistently without involving him in a permanent attachment to any particular school or group that advocated or touched upon that principle. The facts of his own biography

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and the intellectual turmoil of his age would have forced him, subtle and practical man that he was, to make the attempt, at least, instead of accepting a ready-made solution that might crumble as the old order had. He had the problem of forming a consistent view in the midst of contradictions, but the advantage of a wealth of divergent suggestions to stimulate his thought. His was, in brief, a fine but trying time in which to furnish and support a conscience.

Scholasticism, Platonism, and Materialism would all have entered into Marvell's problem, but in different ways. It is a bad habit of students, and sometimes critics, to overemphasize the role played by Platonism in seventeenth-century thought, to become unduly absorbed in the Platonic dress of Renaissance literature and overlook the Scholastic underpinnings of sixteenth and seventeenth-century thought. As Father Walter J. Ong, S.J., points out, the chief development in Western thought has been, not humanism, but the emergence of the mathematical world view, and the more general shift of attention from the man thinking to the thing about which he thinks, a development for which Scholasticism prepared the foundations and in which Scholasticism has remained as an ingredient, though somewhat altered by the overall change in outlook. The real question in studying an age is not, therefore, which philosophic school sparked the most controversy, or attracted the most testimonials, but which philosophic attitude, which habit

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of thought was the most operative upon the society being studied. So measured, Scholasticism and Materialism are revealed as the genuine operatives, Platonism as a tempering agent of sorts, but by no means an integral part of the main stream of thought, which runs from Scholasticism to Empiricism. For Marvell, then, on the most basic level, the problem was one of modifying the Scholastic habit of thought, still formally inculcated during his school years, either by drifting with or paddling a little ahead of the current toward Materialism, or by swimming across the current with the Cambridge Platonists and others. He seems to have solved it by doing a little of each, as we shall see when we analyze The Garden. But there are other complications to be noted first.

We have suggested, in a simplified form, the philosophic problem confronting Marvell in 1649 to 1652, but to suppose that Marvell himself saw that problem in such neat abstraction would be extremely risky. Operative habits of mind are far less visible than the by-products and contradictions of them that serve for popular thought and for advanced thought. It seems much safer to assume that Marvell was more acutely aware of the multiplicity and conflict of seventeenth-century thought, of its several extremes, than of

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7 Copleston, p. 65-66.
8 Ong, p. 128.
its general slow drift. As with Bacon, who died when Marvell was five, the problem would present itself not so much as one of choice, but more as one of elimination. Idols of tribe, den, market place, and theatre had to be overturned. Some tenable, rational position and attitude had to be found. The privilege of saying that Marvell's final position lay in this or that particular part of the general pattern of English thought remains, one thinks, with later generations than his own.

In noting the elements of popular and advanced thought that seem pertinent to Marvell study, we are, of course, confronted with the old riddle of chicken-versus-egg. The present writer is persuaded, though, that, however much advanced thought may modify the existing habit of mind, the starting place for advanced thought itself is in the thinker's attempt to remedy the shortcomings of the popular world view. We need not look far to find the most glaring shortcomings in the popular thought of Marvell's age. Witch-hunting is, by all accounts, the most visible extreme of seventeenth century popular thought. The roots of the witch problem, however, lay much farther back in history, and are tied up with troubles that came upon the Catholic Church and with the rise of the reformed sects.

"Religion in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries seemed to lose its restraining power," one historian remarks, "and moral depravity, sorcery, and occult science corrupted the true sense of the superiority of things spiritual which characterized the thirteenth century."

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10 Turner, History of Philosophy, p. 399.
Pope Innocent VIII, in response to this state of affairs, issued an anti-witch bull in 1484, but by that time St. Joan of Arc's being burned as a witch was already a half-century past. And roughly forty years after Pope Innocent's Bull, Edward Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, would be condemned for leaguing himself with a demon against the interests and welfare of Wolsey. Both of these cases involved some trumpery, of course, but they depended, nonetheless, on a large portion of sincere belief for their success, and that is the point they make for us here.

Far from being a dying peculiarity of an earlier age, the witchcraft problem was to grow in scope and intensity until the eighteenth century. From 1578 to 1582, the Earl of Shrewsbury, who held Queen Mary captive, maintained a staff of detectives to protect him from conjurers. In 1599, James I, in his Daemonology, exhorted the officers of the state to take decisive action against witchcraft. In 1625, though, the same King James was attended on his death-bed by the Duchess of Buckingham, who performed a ceremonial to ward off his death. Wife to the George Villiers whom Marvell praises in his elegy for Francis Villiers, the duchess was reputed to be a

As we shall see shortly, this is not the only instance that may have impressed itself upon Marvell's mind.

It would have been difficult for anyone in Marvell's age to ignore witchcraft. The prisons in Bordeaux were overflowing with convicted witches in 1610. More than nine hundred persons were executed for witchcraft in Bamberg between 1627 and 1631. The so-called Plague of the Smearers in Milan, 1629–1630, was attributed by the Milanese to diabolical influences. And, in 1640, Dr. Lamb, an associate of the Duke of Buckingham, was beaten to death by an English mob that thought him to be a wizard and poisoner.

But the wholesale slaughter of English witches was to begin about the same time Marvell left for the continent. In 1645, while Marvell was enduring a dinner with Flecknoe, witches were being executed in batches of threes, fives, and sevens in counties all over England. In Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk, in August, 1645, between sixty and seventy persons were executed—a score which reduces the Salem affair somewhat in prestige, though failing to outdo the thorough-going Bamberg executions. As a suggestive later

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16 Summers, p. 407.
17 Ibid., p. 488.
18 Ibid., p. 561.
19 Ibid., p. 138.
20 Notestein, pp. 403–405.
instance, we ought, perhaps, to mention that Anne Bodenham, former servant to the Dr. Lamb who was beaten to death thirteen years earlier, was hanged as a witch at Salisbury in 1653. 21 The charge of witchcraft seems to have been contagious and fatal. The list of instances could be extended vastly, but the following two items will be enough to serve our present purposes. In 1673, Madame de Montespan, mistress of Louis XIV, allowed herself to serve as the altar for a Satanic Mass celebrated by the Abbe Guibourg. That ceremony involved incantations to Ashtaroth and Asmodeus at the consecration and hinging upon the sacrifice of an infant. By 1676, the people of Paris were rioting over the unexplained disappearance of young children. Investigations revealed eventually that many of the missing children had been sacrificed in just such ceremonies as that performed by the Abbe and Madam de Montespan. 22 Diabolism, it appears, was something more than just a bogey to the seventeenth century mind.

"It is quite impossible to grasp the social conditions, it is impossible to understand the opinions, fears, and hopes of the men and women who lived in Elizabethan and Stuart England, without some knowledge of the part played in that age by witchcraft," writes one scholar. 23 Certainly the literature of the age reveals the seriousness of the matter in the minds of Marvell's

21 Summers, p. 139.
22 Williams, pp. 270-272.
23 Notestein, p. 1.
contemporaries. Glanvill, in his _Sadducismus Triumphant_, argues that witchcraft is imaginary. This much we might have expected, but Hobbes, in his _Leviathan_, dispels any tendency we may have to dismiss the whole affair as peripheral. "As for witches," he writes, "I think not that their witchcraft is any real power; but yet that they are justly punished for the false beliefs they have that they can do such mischief, joined with their purpose to do it if they can."

The playwrights of the age reflect the intensity of public interest in witchcraft as well as the skepticism and commercialism of the writers themselves. Dekker, Heywood, Shadwell, Rowley, Ford and Jonson all had a turn at presenting or satirizing witch lore, sometimes drawing on the records of trials for their information. Shakespeare utilizes the witches in _Macbeth_ to further involve that fearful lord in the bloody pursuits he has undertaken, though some doubt remains about whether Shakespeare's witches are more than poetic devices. The witch problem and witch lore seem to have been all-pervasive, and we are, actually, less surprised at the emergence

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25 Notestein, p. 248.

26 Notestein, p. viii.

of the seventeenth-century Cult of Death, as voiced by Donne\textsuperscript{28} than we are at the soft and pleasant lines that end Marvell's \textit{The Garden}.

Marvell would have encountered an almost first-hand account of witchcraft in action when he entered the Fairfax household, even if he had not, as seems unlikely, heard many others before. Edward Fairfax, translator of Tasso and grand uncle to Marvell's patron, Thomas Fairfax,\textsuperscript{29} had charged six women with bewitching his children.\textsuperscript{30} The alleged bewitchment occurred in 1621 and was recorded by Edward Fairfax in his \textit{Discourse on Witchcraft}, but probably would have come to Marvell orally.\textsuperscript{31} The question which confronts us now, however, is not whether Marvell would have been aware of witch lore, but what this whole business of witches and witch-hunters must have meant to him. Our answer, for lack of utterances on Marvell's part, must needs be provisional, but some items are suggestive in view of what we have already said of Marvell.

The vital point is that witchcraft was an essentially religious activity, and that witch hunting was a distinctly Christian undertaking. By the end of the fourteenth century, heresy and witchcraft were regarded as two varieties of the same sin, and in 1599, James I speaks of witchcraft as a "sin against the Holy Ghost."\textsuperscript{32} The same sense of theological justice seems

\textsuperscript{28}\textit{Patrick Cruttwell}, \textit{The Shakespearean Moment and Its Place in the Poetry of the 17th Century} (New York, 1960), p. 84.

\textsuperscript{29}\textit{Margoliouth}, I, 230.

\textsuperscript{30}\textit{Nettestein}, p. 111.

\textsuperscript{31}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 144-145.

\textsuperscript{32}\textit{Williams}, pp. 81-84.
to have motivated the government during the Interregnum, when Matthew
Hopkins, in two years, 1645 to 1647, succeeded in having more than two
hundred persons executed for witchcraft.\footnote{Williams, pp. 187-188.} And the definition of witchcraft
apparently remained equally narrow for some years after Hopkins's great
endeavor, at least for men such as Cotton Mather, who, in his account of the
Salem incident, remarks that "the witches do say that they form themselves
much after the manner of Congregational Churches."\footnote{Murray, p. 62.}
Mather's selection of
that item to record reveals the old sense of identity between heresy and
witchcraft, but now embracing Independents and makers of wax-figures in a
single term. We may hazard, then, that Marvell looked upon the witch-
fighting frenzies of the thorough-going Puritans with a sense of bitter
amusement and alienation that the political consequences of their rise to
power, or even the hostility they displayed toward the independent sects,
could not otherwise have provoked. The Puritans had begun with a flight
from ceremonial religion and from what they thought to be the tyranny of
Rome. With this much Marvell would agree. To him, as to the Puritans of
1588, the Bucharist seemed to be something of a "Jack of the Box."\footnote{Paul R. Rust, The First of the Puritans and the Book of Common Prayer (Milwaukee, 1949), p. 65.} And
Marvell could not have helped being aware that witchcraft depended for its
very ceremonies upon altered Catholic liturgy, as much as upon anything
else. One need not suppose that Marvell had any more affection than the Puritans toward this tangle of facts. But now the champions of religious liberty were themselves enforcing an orthodox tyranny, not only upon the witches, but upon the Independents as well. Heresy was the cry, and that cry, made unambiguous by hundreds of executions, could not but have put Marvell into the opposition.

One of the chief ironies of the Puritan movement and of the Reformation more generally lies in the point that the Protestant insistence upon Christian miracles having ceased with the death of the Apostles left almost the whole scope of supernatural intervention to Satan and his legions, or, in other words, to the witches.\(^{36}\) In a sense, the Puritans prompted and stimulated the growth of their own dread enemy, by ruling out the tangible signs of religion and by ruling out the miraculous. Mystics and contemplatives could solve the problem on their own. Many others could not. As we shall see, though, more than just witchcraft was used to fill the void.

Marvell’s friend, Richard Baxter, testified to one means by which the people satisfied their need for a tangible liturgy, though we might be hard-pressed to call their actions consciously religious.

In the village where I lived the Reader read the common prayer briefly, and the rest of the Day, even till dark Night almost, except Eating time, was spent in dancing under a May-pole and a great Tres, not far from my Father’s Door; where all the town did meet together; And though one of my Father’s own tenants was the Piper,

\(^{36}\) Willey, p. 195.
he could not restrain him, nor break the Sport: so that we could not read the Scripture in our Family without the great disturbance of the Taber and Pipe and Noise in the Street.37

Baxter adds, regretfully, that he sometimes slipped out to join the dancers, but that when he "heard them call my father Puritan it did much to cure me and alienate me from them."38 The peccadillo and remorse recorded here belong to the years, 1620 to 1630, when Marvell too was a boy. But such events were by no means rare in England. Puritans and non-Puritans alike had a constant accompaniment of superstitious practices and vestigial ceremonies.38a In 1580, Edmund Asheton wrote to William Farington, urging supression of "Robyn Hoode and the May games as being Lewde sports."39 We


38 it. ibid., p. 11.

38a It should be noted that the Puritan mind was especially prone to be upset by the survival of customs that had their origins in pagan religious practices. Unlike the Catholic Church, the Puritan sects seem never to have recognised the legitimacy and potentialities of accommodation. The Catholic Church practice, since the earliest times has been to convert not only nations but cultures, to re-inform the matter of folk-customs with the new significance of Christian truth. The result of the Catholic practice has been the enrichment and perfection of the cultures converted, as well as the elimination of the resistance to conversion that is generated by the attempt, characteristic of the Puritans, at obliterating a people's heritage. Only when a custom or ceremony proves itself detrimental to doctrine or morality does the Church forbid it. But the Puritans often condemned items de facto because of origin, thus producing a needless breach between religion and culture, as well as the unpleasant task of maintaining a moral and religious police service. Illustrative instances of the sort of accommodation practised by the Catholic Church are the use of Christmas trees, Easter eggs, and May Day events as material instrumentalities for the inculcating of Christian doctrines and Christian morality. Instances of Puritan practice are noted in the present Chapter.

39Murray, p. 35.
can quickly see the objection to the May games, but Robin Hood, as we know him today, is not sinister enough to merit suppression. If Margaret Murray is correct, however, the men of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries knew quite a different Robin from our romantic outlaw. She identifies Robin Hood with Robin Goodfellow, who, in turn, is identified with Herne the Hunter, with the Horned God of the old pagan religion of Britain, with Puck, and finally with Pan. 40 This somewhat startling chain of identifications supports Professor Murray’s contention that “till the end of the seventeenth century the Old Religion still counted large numbers of members” 41 in Britain. The present writer is inclined to take that thesis only with some reservations, and to regard Professor Murray’s larger contention, that witchcraft and the Old Religion are one, with a still greater reservation, based on the existence of frankly Satanic activities. Yet, it seems reasonable enough to accept the thesis in a reduced form: that something of a vestigially religious motivation still clung to the folk-practices that attracted Marvell’s contemporaries, that a kind of homage to Nature and her manifestations remained in the periodic bonfire building, mistletoe hanging, green gathering, and Maypole dancing commemorated in the writings of that age. Sir James Frazer’s *The Golden Bough* cannot be dismissed in speaking of the religious values of superstitious practices, and that study would support

40 Murray, pp. 32-35.

our modified thesis even if Professor Murray's attractive identifications should prove wrong in the end. As we shall see later in this chapter and again in the next, this survival of native pagan spirit combines with the unattractiveness of Orthodoxy and the influence of Renaissance classicism to prompt Marvell in the formulation of his personal philosophy. For the moment, however, it is enough to note that Puritanism found itself in conflict with the well-intended pagan survivals and the malevolent practices of witchcraft and Satanism. It is time now to turn to some of the solutions attempted by Marvell's contemporaries.

We have already noted Hobbes's attitude toward witchcraft, but Hobbes is a polar figure in the century, "the first in a long line of English nominalists and sensists." His scepticism, which led him to affirm religious subjectivism, materialism, the social compact, and, finally, state absolutism, is a natural enough by-product of the great transformation toward a mathematical world picture, but it serves rather as a term of the problem faced by Marvell and others than as a solution. The place to look for solutions is among men who sought a way of preserving the fundamentals of body and spirit, not among men who were willing to sacrifice one or the other for the sake of simplicity.

Lord Herbert of Cherbury is a good example. He combines scepticism and optimism in his viewpoint, and is remembered as a forerunner of the

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\[^{1}a\] See page 69.

\[^{2}b\] Turner, p. 443.
eighteenth-century Deists. Sidney Lee defines Lord Herbert's religious position as follows:

Herbert's religious doctrine starts with the assumption that religion, which is common to the human race, consists merely of the five innate ideas, or axioms that there is a God, that he ought to be worshiped, that virtue and piety are essential to worship, that man ought to repent of his sins, and that there are rewards and punishments in a future life. He rejects all appeal to Revelation and describes so-called Revelation as the artifice of priests, for whom he has little respect. In practice he seems to have conformed to the ceremonies of the Church of England.  

Lee goes on, in the same passage, to suggest that Herbert's "true affinity is with the Cambridge Platonists." The affinity Lee mentions is definitely present. In poems such as The Idea, Platonic Love, A Meditation upon his Wax-Candle burning, and Elegy for a Prince, neo-Platonic ideas are clearly visible. But in his effort to reduce doctrine to a minimum, to distrust whatever comes from other than rational sources, we detect the beginnings of that larger caution and conservatism which finds its voice a century later in Pope's Essay on Man. The prevailing temper of the seventeenth century is not so much that of "anti-intellectualism," one is

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13 Copleston, p. 53.


15 Ibid., pp. 22, 73, 82, 84 and 85.

inclined to think, as that of fear of dangerous commitments. The Puritans feared that they might unwittingly commit themselves to heresy or to heretics, the Independents that they might commit themselves to religious tyranny, and men like Herbert that they might commit themselves to some innocent-seeming article or promise that would, in the end, render them as narrow and unnatural as they judged the witchhunters, the scrupulous Puritans, and the empty ritualists to be. In an era of vast and often contradictory changes, many men suffered simply from the fear of unknown consequences. This fear might express itself in any number of satirical references to various intellectual endeavors, but it also stimulated intellectual activity, forced individuals to provide themselves with personally satisfying philosophies.

Whatever its past history may have been, the Platonism professed and adopted in England had, by the mid-seventeenth century, the motives of reaction and fear to support it. It was intended as an answer to the growth of Materialism and sceptical disillusionment, as a defense of spiritual and aesthetic ideals. Consequently, it is extremely unsafe to treat seventeenth-century English Platonism as a speculative endeavor, but quite rewarding to view it as a practical expedient adopted and modified by a number of individuals, most of whom were not philosophers, almost all of whom were in a defensive attitude. The practical result of this state of

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47 Copleston, pp. 54-55.
affairs was that English Platonism became utterly protean, degenerating at last to a useless defense. The reasons for this decline are not far to seek.

In the hands of uncritical thinkers, Platonism, Deism, and Pantheism are by no means as distinct from one another as they appear to be in textbooks, for the definition of a Platonic world-view involves the notion of innate ideas and the endorsement of some form of contemplation. Much depends upon the treatment given to each of these items. The ordinary tendency of Platonism is toward the contemplative, toward what is loosely called the mystical. Plotinus's goal was to be alone with the Alone. Courtly Love supposedly led, by means of an aesthetico-sexual relationship, to a contemplation of Divine Beauty as reflected in human beauty. New England Transcendentalism, feeding simultaneously on the related streams of English Platonism, Alexandrian neo-Platonism, German Transcendentalism, Romanticism, and Eastern Scripture, made a religion of aesthetic involvement with nature. But Platonism could, and seemingly did, take quite the opposite line of development as well. The notion of innate ideas, primarily of technical value in supporting the general theory of Platonism, could, in uncritical hands, become an excuse for positing just such a set of axioms as Sidney Lee finds in Lord Herbert's view. The practical distance between such an attempt at reduction to irreducibles and the Deism expressed by Alexander Pope in his Essay on Man is actually very slight, despite the fact that Lord Herbert himself retains contemplative notions.

The traits we detect in Lord Herbert's view are the marks, not of a bold assertion of Platonic contemplation against the sceptical trend of the
century, but of an attempt to modify that trend by a compromise between Platonism and Scepticism. In a sense, therefore, Lord Herbert pays his homage to the spirit of the age while still refusing to travel at the full speed of the intellectual current.

Just as one may move from Platonism to Deism by a gradual negation of the contemplative element and a simultaneous gradual adoption of scientific objectivity and abstraction, so one may move from Platonism to Pantheism by an intensifying of the stress upon contemplation, by a merging of the individual objects contemplated into a world soul, and, finally, by confusing the reflection of the Ultimate Reality with its original. There are, of course, other paths to Pantheism. The only point to be made here is that Platonism can be a step in that direction.

John Toland, the first man to be called a free-thinker, was to go almost the whole round, and with a vengeance, moving from Catholicism to Protestantism to Deism to Catholicism to Protestantism to Pantheism. That he did not begin from Platonism, or embrace Platonism along the way, is due to his being, in reality, more a materialist than anything else. His case suggests not only the changeability of the seventeenth-century mind, but also the more valuable point that a more extensive study would show the materialists also attempting a number of compromise solutions in the endeavor to harmonise their traditional values and practices with the emerging mathematical world view.

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166 Copleston, p. 163-164.
The case of Henry More, the Cambridge Platonist, is directly in the line of our discussion. Born a Calvinist, More rejected that faith as too severe. Together with the other Cambridge Platonists, he saw little enough difference between Predestination and Determinism, and, like many others besides the Cambridge Platonists, he refused to grant faith the primacy over reason. More turned to neo-Platonism whole-heartedly, stressed the practice of contemplation, and elaborated the doctrine of a creative principle in nature, a world soul that was God's instrument.¹⁹ So far, the case is simply one of reactionary Platonism, coming within a single step of Pantheism, but remaining Platonism despite that nearness. More's pupil, Lady Conway, with whom he spent much time, was, however, a spiritual enthusiast and a wonder seeker. Among her associates she numbered Baron von Helmont and Valentine Greateakes, both thaumaturgists, and, through her friendship, More became acquainted with and ensnared by spiritualism, so that what had begun for him as an attempt to rationalise religion without sacrificing its spiritual values ended in a maze of mysticism and ghostly fantasy. Lady Conway seems to have stopped short at an earlier point, for she is known to have turned from thaumaturgy to Quakerism before she died.⁵⁰

Henry Vaughan is an even more interesting example than the last. His brother's prime inspiration was drawn from the writings of Cornelius Agrippa.⁵¹ Both brothers, as a matter of fact, shared that interest in the

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 54-56.


occult, and Henry is said to have achieved an "intellectual synthesis of Christian doctrine and Hermetic thought," the latter element being a blend of theosophical, astrological, alchemical, and other lore. For Thomas, these interests were to lead to the conclusions we have already noted. For Henry, however, they were to furnish, unlikely though it may seem at first, the matter from which a personally satisfactory understanding of the relationship between God and the individual soul could be drawn. And the key point upon which that relationship rested, Henry concluded, was the contemplation of nature.

The chief irony of the Vaughan situation as it developed is that, despite the recriminatory atmosphere that prevailed between Thomas Vaughan and Henry More, and despite the fact that the Vaughans were not a part of the Cambridge movement, all three ended fully in the stream of the Renaissance Platonic tradition, with much the same handicaps and advantages. As S. L. Bethell points out, the Renaissance doctrine of corresponding planes of existence is a Platonic modification of the Scholastic doctrine of analogies. Once established, though, the correspondences opened the door to the speculations of men like Pico della Mirandola and Cornelius Agrippa, to the finding of parallels between earth, heaven, and man, to the rationalization of astrology, numerology, and alchemy, as well as to the rationalization of


mystical contemplation. One might well add that the doctrine of correspondences opened the door also to learned belief in magic and witchcraft, for those sister arts depend, in theory and practice, upon correspondence between the matter and form of the rite, and the matter and intended motion or affliction of the object, upon the so-called laws of Similarity and Sympathy as well as upon actual or virtual contact with the object or victim. Thus it is that, though individuals may have stopped here or there in their acceptance of the Renaissance Platonic tradition, Platonism, as a movement, had come full circle by the seventeenth century. Thomas Vaughan's magic and Henry Vaughan's spiritualism and Cabalism are only symptoms of Platonism's larger failure to preserve the Christian values it was intended to support, just as witchcraft and the lure of the old seasonal games and ceremonies are only symptoms of the failure of the Christian sects to supply the people with a satisfactory liturgy and a sense of religious security.

Seen in this light, the whole Renaissance Platonic movement reveals itself as a vast but unsuccessful experiment, sparked initially by ecclesiastical corruption and by the breakdown of medieval Scholasticism, pushed to a frantic enthusiasm in seventeenth century England by the conflict of the sects and by the concomitant growth of the witchcraft problem and of sceptical Materialism. This experiment, an attempt to substitute a literary and

54 Bethell, pp. 41-43.
56 Wallerstein, p. 213.
poetic account of the world for the now distasteful logical and scientific account, was destined to fail for three reasons. The logicality of the habit of mind formed by Scholasticism prompted the experimenters, on the one hand, to elaborate their Platonic assumptions into complicated and indefensible theories of contemplation. At the same time, the objectivity of the Scholastic habit prompted the experimenters to reduce Platonism to essentials, to irreducibles. Meanwhile, the character of Renaissance Platonism, especially as it found expression in the broad notion of correspondence, tempted the experimenters to amalgamate their theories with occult lore and supernatural complications. The first results of this situation were the mystic, sceptic, and magic solutions described in the last several pages. The final result was the division and destruction of Renaissance Platonism. Pope's Great Chain of Being is the outgrowth of de-spiritualised Renaissance Platonism. Emerson's Transcendentalism is the revival of dematerialised Renaissance Platonism. But the dominant trend was to be empirical Materialism, and the significant year for documenting this assertion is 1859, when Darwin published his *Origin of Species* and Huxley took up the cudgel to defend that work.

Marvell, two centuries earlier, witnessed the critical moment in this whole process, the moment when Platonism was strained to the utmost by the three-way tension of Scepticism, Mysticism, and Magic, the moment also when the successor to Platonism and Scholasticism alike was being born under the

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57 Bethell, p. 42.
pen of Thomas Hobbes, and the moment when ancient folk-practices, the malevolent and benevolent together, seemed as if they were about to overwhelm an already enfeebled Christianity. This is the broader context of Marvell’s problem.

As we have been stressing from the first, the situation confronting Marvell was more a practical than a theoretical conflict, and elements of the tension felt in the 1650’s included the extremes of popular as well as of advanced thought. As we shall see in the next chapter, Marvell’s solution is that of a well-educated man. It will repay us to pause before examining that solution and turn our attention momentarily to the solution offered during those same years by a poorly educated man who succeeded in modifying religious history while Marvell was busy trying, together with others, trying to hold the Restoration drive toward religious establishment in check.

George Fox, three years younger than Marvell, was one of five or six children born to “righteous Christer” 58 Fox and his pious, anti-Anglican wife. Young Fox tended his father’s flocks, meditated upon the Bible, and wondered about the religious attitudes of his associates. Later, he became a cobbler, but remained a questioner. In 1643, rejecting institutional religion and the unedifying society of his native Fenny Drayton, he set out to roam the counties of England, a voluntary but lonely exile.

One Sunday in 1646, Fox came to the decision that “being bred at Cambridge or Oxford was not enough to fit and qualify men to be ministers of

58 Henry Van Etten, George Fox and the Quakers (New York, 1959), p. 15.
Christ," for truth came, not by learning, though learning might confirm it, but by means of an Inner Light, distinct from reason and from conscience, a variety of personal revelation rather than of corporate doctrine, but a revelation that turns the heart, that motivates decision, not that supplies information plain and simple. Fox's view has much in common with Anabaptist teachings, and owes a debt of some sort to Platonism as well. The important facts here, though, are that it was a home-grown view and that it was free from cumbrous theorizing and obscure learning.

The key premise of Quakerism is that of the Inner Light, but a second premise, implied in Fox's phrase, "unity with the creation," is that only man has been injured by the Fall, that the religious life is also the natural life. This view touches upon Hermetic thought, perhaps, but, the present writer believes, only indirectly. The retreat from social institutionalism is a broader phenomenon of the seventeenth century, it seems certain, than the interest in Hermetic thought, just as the stress on contemplation is a broader phenomenon of that century than Platonic mysticism. It was this general motion toward individualism and simplicity, one thinks, with which Fox agreed in his utterances and actions. Stressing the "indwelling life of Christ," as revealed in the Inner Light, and stressing the natural, as

59 Ibid., p. 22.
60 Ibid., pp. 23-27.
62 Ibid., p. 38.
opposed to the artificial, Fox and his followers found themselves bound in conscience to reject, not merely sacraments and rituals, but all that was formalized in religion. More than that, they found themselves bound to reject the artificialities and mere courtesies of society at large. Hence, the Quaker refusal to give "hat-honor" and the Quaker Plain-speech. These men and women were rebels of the most radical sort, true rejecters of the world that men have made. For the Quaker, the rebellion was not at all negative in essence, though, for he sought "communion with a living Presence within his heart, so that the earthly life was felt to be a part of the larger eternal life." 65

Fortunately for their peace of mind, the Quakers were also alive to the notion of martyrdom and aware that the worldly and the unillumined would misunderstand, fear, scorn, and attack them. And such was spectacularly the case. The Quakers were mistaken for everything from secret Papists to open witches during Fox's lifetime, and even Bunyan thought them to be the latter. Only in Holland, mostly in Amsterdam, did the Quakers find toleration. They continued to grow, however, despite the opposition of the older sects and, by 1655, they were sending missionaries as far as the Bermudas. 67

63 Ibid., p. 138.
64 Breithwaite, p. 493.
65 Ibid., p. 511.
66 Ibid., pp. 53, 102, 193, 220, 550.
67 Ibid., pp. 404-405.
Marvell's solution, in *The Garden*, has much in common with the spirit of the Quaker solution, as we shall see, but certain vital differences exist which should warn the critic against attempting to read *The Garden* as a Quaker document or classify Marvell as a disciple of Fox. Lacking in *The Garden* is the specifically Judaeo-Christian content, the notion of a definitely inner light, the stress upon taking up the Cross, accepting martyrdom, and spreading the Gospel. Present in *The Garden* is a marked tendency toward the integration of classical and Christian morality, and an equally marked tendency toward denying the existence of any specifically mystical element in experience and any specifically mystical faculty in man. Marvell and Fox agree only in their rejection of current social values and habits and in their conviction that the relationship between man and God, whatever it may be, is necessarily individual rather than corporate. Yet, there is a greater affinity, the present writer is convinced, between Marvell and Fox than between Marvell and any of the other persons mentioned in this thesis. Each in his own way was a fundamental sort of rebel. Each in his own way sought to reduce the problem of furnishing and supporting a conscience to its irreducible minimum. Each went about solving his problem not as a philosopher, theologian, or formal scholar, but simply as a private individual. Where they diverge, the divergence is a result of background, of station, and of the solution itself, not of temper or deliberate intention.

One last remark to be made in this chapter is that both men clearly reflect the tension between Scholasticism, Materialism, Platonism, the survivals of the Old Religion, and the witch problem. Fox was to honor the reductive tendency of the age by preaching the central doctrine of the Inner
Light. The same doctrine was to serve the non-philosophers as Platonism served the Cambridge men, but it was also to provide the spiritual elevation and sense of mystery for which the surviving pagan practices and superstitions were but poor seconds, and the direct connection with Supernatural Power, for which witchcraft, Satanism, and Spiritualism were unacceptable substitutes. Fox's doctrine, though not new in any absolute sense, was new, fresh, and invigorating in the seventeenth century and, despite the attacks made by contemporaries, must have seemed eminently more tenable and reasonable to those who turned an open ear toward it than did the claims of all the other jarring sects. To one sort of mind, however, even the simplicity of Fox's doctrine would seem a bit too complicated by unnecessary assumptions and fraught with consequent limitations. Marvell, motivated in a similar way, but ahead of Fox in the drift toward the mathematical world view, must have seen, if The Garden be evidence, that the Inner Light was a gratuitous assumption, and that the enthusiasm sparked by belief in that assumption was, therefore, at the very least, questionable. What Marvell sought was certitude. He did continue his sympathy for Fox's cause and his defense of Fox's right to promote that cause to the very end, as we shall see in the fourth chapter, but Marvell was compelled to work out his own solution to the seventeenth-century problem during the same years that the Quakers were establishing themselves in Yorkshire.

68 Braithwaite, Map 1.
CHAPTER III

MARVELL'S ENTRY INTO THE GREEN PARADISE

Any list of the crucial events in Marvell's life must include the following: the execution of Charles I, the appointment to Nun Appleton, and the blindness of Milton. Charles's death shocked Marvell into abandoning his youthful idealism and searching for a more tenable view of life. The two years at Nun Appleton supplied the disillusioned Marvell with a refuge from the world, with a congenial example of personal integrity, and with a sense of his own moral freedom. The blindness of Milton occasioned the entry of the spiritually mature Marvell into the world of public affairs. The poems to be discussed in this chapter were almost all composed, as far as we can tell, between December, 1649, and February, 1652, and their content reflects much of what was happening in Marvell's soul as he passed from idealism to disillusion to the moderation he expresses in The Garden. In a broad sense, these poems record an intense, interior debate culminating in a firm statement of principle—but only in a sense. We have no chronology for these lyrics. As a result, though we can find the statements, counterstatements, and distinctions proposed by our poet, we cannot find the order in which they came. The most we can hope for is a reasonable account of the major areas of Marvell's self-argument.

For the sake of a neat statement, we may divide Marvell's debate according to the following subject headings: the pastoral ideal, the Petrarchan
tradition, the service of Pan, the Platonic experiment, and the necessities
of the flesh. In actuality there is considerable overlapping among these
topics, and one is led by this fact to think that the poems represent ideas
that were being considered more nearly simultaneously than successively by
Marvell. A further point to be noted at once is that a respect for and
desire of the experiences of the senses is a constant element in all of
Marvell's lyrics, even those in which he attempts to assert a Puritan rejec-
tion of all but the spirit. This persistent sense of the goodness of all
created things found its grand utterance in The Garden. Before that, how-
ever, it was to undergo several unsuccessful mutations and repressions
springing from the events and influences that forced themselves upon the
poet's mind.

A final point to be made before turning to the debate is that Marvell
had ceased to think of himself as either a love poet or a religious poet by
the time he came to write The Garden. In The Coronet, he records how he
turned from making "fragrant Towers" (l. 7) for his "Shepherdesses head"
(l. 8) to an attempt to atone for his follies by weaving "a Chaplet" (l. 11)
for Christ, only to find that "Fame and Interest" (l. 16) had become his
motives. The insight of the satirist into hypocrisy is operative in this
self-evaluation, and so, it seems, is the firmness of decision that character-
izes Marvell so markedly from The Garden until his death. Except for
The Match, no love poem by Marvell has come down to us, and no rich chaplets
of atonement by him are known to us. Love and religion bulk large in the
debate, but only as elements of problems and solutions, not as occupations
in themselves. Presumably, Marvell destroyed two groups of poems, for it is
unlikely that the uncritical Mary Palmer would have failed to publish them had she found them. The Marvell we deal with is a questioner, not a troubadour, divine or otherwise.

Marvell's treatment of the Petrarchan tradition offers a convenient point for beginning our discussion of the debate and supplies much data to be kept in mind when we come to discuss The Garden. For the most part, it should be noted, Marvell's poems involve the young man's rejection of a professed relationship or his complaint against the influence of the lady. In the instances where this is not so, some very un-Petrarchan attitudes are revealed. In To His Coy Mistress, for example, the sudden violence of the last nine lines utterly overwhelms the preceding love-debate, which is itself dependent upon the clause, "Had we but world enough, and Time" (1. 1). There is a tone of desperation in the phrase, "am'rous birds of prey" (1. 38) that suggests the bursting forth of emotions far more complex than mere sexual passion and not at all involved with love as an ideal. Marvell's expression, "vegetable Love" (1. 11), both excuses and derogates that outburst, if we view that phrase against Burton's definition of the vegetable soul as that which has the powers of "attraction, retention, digestion, expulsion" and no more. 1 There is no claim for spiritual benefit in the phrase thus read, but there is an implicit claim simply for rights of life against death, and that claim is strengthened by the lines

But at my back I always hear
Times winged Chariot hurry near:

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And yonder all before us lye
Deserts of vast Eternity.
(11. 21-24)

To His Coy Mistress is not so much a poem of desire as a poem of rebellion against death.

Related in attitude to the last poem is Marvell's An Epitaph upon—, which fully endorses the praises heaped upon the virtues of the lady, but points out that the more important fact is that the lady now is dead. Even in Ametis and Thesstylis making Hay Hopes, a pastoral dialogue, the lover proposes no ideals, makes threats rather than promises, derogates love itself, and ends with a decision based purely upon a mutual carpe diem. The Match, a thoroughly optimistic, joyful, unquestioning celebration of love is, as the present writer suggested earlier, probably the sole survivor from Marvell's early love poems. Certainly it is out of step with the others we possess.

With the Mower Group, we turn from the joyless seizure of pleasure to the lamenting of the disruptive influence of Juliana.

In Damon the Mower, we find Marvell having his rustic swain cry out

How happy might I still have mow'd,
Had not Love here his Thistles sow'd;
(11. 65-66)

Again, in The Mower's Song, we find

My mind was once the true survey
Of all these Medows fresh and gay;
And in the greeness 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.
(11. 106)

And, in The Mower to the Glo-Worms, Marvell has poor Damon despair of over-
coming the influence
For She my Mind hath so displac'd
That I shall never find my home.  
(11. 13-16)

Love in these three poems is Prose, and the notion of his gaining an unwilling victim is standard enough, but Damon thinks of Juliana, not as an unattainable object of desire, but as an unavoidable disturbance of an agreeable and promising way of life. Her role, regardless of her motives, which Marvell does not mention, is destructive. She is a scythe, a weed sower, a promoter of mental darkness. Her influence over Damon parallels that of Clora over the victim who speaks in The Gallery.

The operative figure of The Gallery is the metaphor of the lover's soul as a great hall in which images of the beloved are on display. She is shown "in the Dress / Of an Inhuman Murtheress" (ll. 9-10), in one mental picture, but, in another, "Idae to Aurora in the Dawn" (1. 16). Marvell lists other contrary images from the gallery's display, but concludes by writing that the image at the entrance to the hall remains the most pleasing of all—the image of

A tender Shepherdess, whose Hair
Honds loosely playing in the Air,
Transplanting Flow'rs from the green Hill,
To crown her Head, and Bosome fill. 
(11. 53-56)

This is, one thinks, the same "Shepherdess" mentioned in The Coronet, and, if so, The Gallery confirms and expands our reading of The Coronet. In The Gallery, the poet presents the "Shepherdess" as a fiction, just as the enchantress, the murderess, Venus, and Aurora are fictions. He puts the case even more strongly, calling the mental pictures "Forms thou can'st invent / Either to please me, or torment" (ll. 13-14). Thus, Marvell rejects
the Petrarchan mistress of pastoral love poetry as delightful, but artificial, and sets the stage, this writer thinks, for the poems in which he presents woman as a disruptive element in life, as an obstacle between man and nature. The Gallery is interesting simply for its testimony on the fact of Marvell's development, but also, in specifying the event that prompted its own central rhetorical device, it suggests one of the causes of that development.

The ghost of King Charles broods over The Gallery. With the phrase, "White-hall's or Mantua's" (l. 48), Marvell points to the sale and dispersal, in 1649 and 1650, of a collection of paintings acquired by King Charles from the Duke of Mantua. The images that had captivated Charles were being scattered at the same moment that the illusions which had influenced Marvell were being reduced to mementos by his recognition of them as such. If we take Charles I as a symbol of the old order, of the Cavalier ideal, the relationship between his pictures and Marvell's development is seen to be more than casual. Marvell gives us good reason to take the late king as such a symbol, for the same ghost appears often in the poems we possess. Daphnis and Chloe is an instance.

In Daphnis and Chloe, we find the young man refusing favors he has sued for, because they came too late. The point is not that his dignity has been offended, but that the moment for such favors has passed. What might have been fruitful before can only be destructive now. But the refusal does not save Daphnis, nor does he expect it to do so. He merely avoids adding the

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2 Margoliouth, I, 223.
involvement of an empty love affair to the psychological desolation already visited upon him. Taken autobiographically, the poem is worth noting for the light it casts upon Marvell's rejection of the Petrarchan tradition, but again the rejection is tied in with the death of Charles I. Marvell uses the images of a king's decapitation in stanzas XVII and XXV to metaphorize the psychological state of Daphnis, and, one thinks, draws upon more than just the physical data of the real event.

The destruction of Daphnis sprang from a double error in the game of love as he and Chloe played it. She resisted him too well. Neither gave the other a chance to come to terms until it was too late for a fruitful relationship to result. In like manner, Charles I had laid siege to Mistress England, demanding her complete acquiescence to his will, and failing to understand the risk he ran of losing all by that unflagging demand. England resisted but failed, especially in the case of men like Fairfax, to realize that so total a resistance could end only at the chopping block. By the time Fairfax and others were ready to compromise, it was too late. The rest of that story is told in the Horatian Ode. And the present parallel cannot be extended to cover the final eight lines of Daphnis and Chloe, for those lines apply, this reader thinks, to Marvell, not to Charles I, and reflect the aimlessness, the lack of allegiance, and the puzzlement he experienced after his youthful ideals received their death-blow in 1649. The fierce militancy of the last lines of the Villiers elegy had disappeared. The vision of the shepherdess had dwindled to a memory, and Marvell could only ask why all this had come to pass. Significant of the general attitude Marvell now held are the lines:
Gentler times for Love were sent
Who for parting pleasure strain
Gather roses in the rain,
Wet themselves and spoil their Sent.
(1. 85-88)

One is carried by those lines from Daphnis and Chloe to Marvell's prefatory epistle to Lovelace's Lucasta, where he laments that "Our wits have drawne th' infection of our Times" (l. 4).

That more than a king had been destroyed is brought out again, even more clearly, in The Nymph complaining for the death of her Fawn. The Nymph is a two part poem, the first part (11. 1-24) being a lament for Charles I, the second a reflective and associative extension of that lament to include the poet's own condition. This structural arrangement, it should be noted, is in keeping with Marvell's habit of mind, a habit of proceeding from actual persons and events viewed objectively to the examination of the subjective phenomena associated with those persons or events. We saw this habit at work in The Gallery and in Daphnis and Chloe. We shall see it again in Upon Appleton House and The Garden. One thinks, on reading the entire collection of Marvell's verses, however, that the habit of which we are speaking was born perhaps as late as 1649. Before that, by his own testimony, Marvell was an idealist, a would-be poet of romantic love and penitential religion. After the Nun Appleton period, Marvell's poems scarcely ever deal directly with the history of his own soul. Patrick Cruttwell is not quite fair in saying that, after the Restoration, "Marvell has become a propagandist and nothing but a propagandist." Yet, it is certain enough that Marvell's lyric

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3Cruttwell, p. 199.
production, from 1649 to 1652, involved an element of self-questioning, of balancing fact against his own fancy, that simply disappears in his later production. The habit of Marvell's later mind is objective to the exclusion, one thinks, of even the lyric attempt.

The two-part structure of The Nymph necessitated by the change from an objective to a subjective mode of vision, involves a parallel change in significance for the nymph and fawn as figures. Thus, any attempt to read the poem with univocal meanings for those figures is destined to end in confusion. The fawn of the first part, as this writer takes it, is Charles I, and the fawn of the second part is the Courtly Love tradition and somewhat more. The "wanton Troopers" (l. 1) are the New Model Army, which heeded tactics more than honor, and was "Ungentle" (l. 2) at least insofar as it was short of nobles and, to some extent, of the educated aristocracy. Silvio is not an historical person. Rather, as the name suggests, he is an idealized pastoral figure, the male counterpart of Marvell's shepherdess. The nymph is Marvell himself, or by extension, any innocent person whose experience of the Petrarchan and pastoral ideals has been broken in upon by raw reality.

In the first part, the killing of the fawn is presented as a senseless "murder" (l. 11), which, even though forgiven on earth, will not be forgotten in heaven.

_Wy'n Beasts must be with justice slain;_  
_Else Men are made their Deodands._

*(ll. 16-17)*

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Marvell here inverts an old law under which any beast that killed a man was forfeited to the lord of the manor. But the beast in the poem is Charles I, whose blood is of such a "Purple Grain" (l. 22) that its "Stain" (l. 21) cannot be washed from the killers' hands. Nor can the price of blood for blood absolve them, since

There is not such another in
The world, to offer for their Sin.
(II. 23-24)

Thus, Marvell, while still asserting the several rights of King Charles, allows that vengeance, after all, is the Lord's.

In the second part, we learn about "Unconstant Sylvio" (l. 25), who gave the fawn to the nymph, but did not give her his promised love. The fawn, tied with a "silver Chain and Bell" is typical of the tamely-wild creatures of the pastoral tradition, but suggestive, by means of a pun, of the fawns of classical literature, creatures who live outside the pale of morality. One is led to think, if these identifications be correct, that Marvell is saying that from the old tradition of love poetry, one derives an ideal that seems to have no reference to morality. As he notes, though, Sylvio himself is "counterfeit" (l. 26). Hence, Sylvio gives no real love. More than that, the fawn itself is metaphorized as a dog that (by means of a rather grating pun on "Dear") hunts the nymph. Marvell converts the nymph, by that same pun, into the dog's prey. And the fawn was to remain with the nymph even after the counterfeit Sylvio left, absorbing her whole attention until the

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5 Margoliouth, I, 222.
senseless event occurred which destroyed not only King Charles but the whole attitude toward life which, for Marvell, was associated with King Charles's day.

The nymph is not without some doubts in retrospect. She wonders whether the fawn might not have proved, "Had it liv'd long" (l. 47), as false as its donor had been; but the doubts are submerged for the moment by wonderful memories, and followed by a statement of the relationship between the trusting nymph and the fawn. The nymph tells us the setting.

I have a Garden of my own,
But so with Roses overgrown,
And Lillies, that you would it guess
To be a little Wilderness.

(ll. 71-74)

If we take the garden to signify the soul, the roses to signify the old love ideal, and the lilies to signify ideal purity, what follows makes easy sense. The fawn, unnaturally white, seems indistinguishable from the lilies, in whose shade it rests (l. 81). But the fawn fed itself on roses, not lilies (ll. 87-88), was really, therefore, only associated with purity by illusion and proximity. It was too young an ideal to have become involved with vice as yet, but

Had it liv'd long, it would have been
Lillies without, Roses within.

(ll. 91-92)

Marvell does not say what would or could have become of the nymph had the fawn lived long, but we suppose that she would have suffered a parallel fate, for the fawn was already instrumental in her enjoyment of a sublimated participation in the love flowers.
And then to me 'twould boldly trip,
And print those Roses on my Lip.
(ll. 85-86)

In the line, "Lillies without, Roses within," Marvell, again with the instinct of a satirist, penetrates the confusion of lily-white and fawn-white, to reveal that the attempt to live by such ideals as the fawn and the rose represent can end only in hypocrisy, a spiritual condition utterly repugnant to Marvell. Thus, Marvell rejects the old love tradition not simply as illusory and troublesome, but as destructive and degenerative. The nymph, however, is a slightly earlier Marvell than the author, and experiences the despair that is also recorded in Daphnis and Chloe, while the fawn-ideal, still pure because so young, dies "as calmly as a Saint" (l. 94). Perhaps that phrase echoes the sentiment promoted by the Eikon Basiliké. If so, it is only an echo, for any attempt to read the affectionate, rose-eating fawn of part two as Charles I produces little but the ludicrous.

In The Unfortunate Lover, Marvell takes up the old love ideal at a more advanced stage, stresses the element of violence, satirises the storm imagery of Petrarchan love verse, and, though admitting that the "Banneret" (l. 57) of love leaves a fragrant memory "And Musick within every Ear" (l. 62), makes it clear that such a one "in Story only rules, / In a field Sable a lover Cules" (ll. 63-64). Again, too, the imagery ties together the old love tradition and the old political order in this final granting of heraldic

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6 L. Spitzer, "Marvell's 'Nymph complaining for the Death of her Pawn': Sources Versus Meaning," MLQ, XIX (September, 1958), 238. Reads the line otherwise.
symbolism and in the satirical treatment of the epic battle scene (ll. 47-56), which reminds us of the poet's earnest and militant use of epic battle imagery in the Villiers elegy.

The final step in Marvell's break with the old love tradition is recorded in The Definition of Love. Here Marvell, using the figure of a love affair that cannot be consummated, distinguishes firmly between love and passion, making impossibility the test of true love, and "Magnanimous Despair" (1. 5) the agent which raises him high enough to see that true love is a "Conjunction of the Mind" (1. 32). Hope of physical union has a "Tinsel Wing" (1. 8), and cannot reach such heights. With these distinctions drawn, Marvell is free to set the old love tradition behind him. He has not only undone the old, but furnished himself with a new and positive view. This, too, is characteristic of Marvell. Throughout his lyrics we find him not only rejecting but constructing. He takes no step without examining the ground or finding the stepping stone.

As we have seen, Marvell's rejection of the Petrarchan tradition involved at least a strong censure of the pastoral tradition with which it was interwoven. But even so, the possibility of combining the pastoral ideal with the notion of the higher love asserted in The Definition of Love remained. This, apparently, is what happened in Clorinda and Damon, one of Marvell's less successful attempts at the sort of synthesis we are to encounter in mature form in The Garden.

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7 Frank Kermode, "Definitions of Love," RFS, (N.S.) VII (April 1956), 18h.
In *Clorinda* and *Damon*, Marvell again picks up the theme of the woman as seductress and as disrupter of the good life, and of the man as refuser of her favors. Damon rejects Clorinda's offer of a tryst for three reasons: because the deed could not be hidden from "Heaven's Eye" (1. 12); because the soul needs more than the fulfillment of passion to "slake its Drought" (1. 16); and because he had heard ineffable "Words" (1. 21) from "Pan" (1. 20), which have caused him to lose interest in material pleasures and to turn his whole talent toward singing Pan's praises. Clorinda, thereupon, abandons her scheme and joins Damon in the service of Pan. The poem ends with the sentiment, sung in choralus, that "all the World is our Pan's Quire" (1. 30). Marvell has transmuted God into Pan, the "Conjunction of the Mind" into a union with the great god of the fields and forests. His delight in sensuous experience, his preference for natural surroundings, and his classical training would combine, at any rate, to make such a concept attractive to him. The transmutation of God into Pan tempts one, perhaps, to read the philosophy and theology of *Clorinda* and *Damon* somewhat too literally and unwarily. Pan often serves as a figure for Christ in Renaissance poetry,\(^7a\) however, and so the apparent paganism of the poem can be resolved into an aspect rather of the classical tradition than of formal theology. The next poem we shall note is not quite as easily disposed of as this.

The companion piece to *Clorinda* and *Damon* is *A Dialogue between Thyrsis and Dorinda*, in which the couple, longing to go to Elysium, "the Center of

the Soul" (l. 18), resolve to commit suicide together. Their eagerness is heightened by the hardships and dangers they must otherwise daily face, and the implication seems to be that Pan's quire is, after all, not a very bearable place to exist. The pessimism of the poem, the suggestion of a Pantheistic world-soul, and the endorsement of suicide are scarcely what we would have expected from the poet who earlier lamented his own inability to sing purely to his Savior. Again, however, we are on the slippery ground, for critics, between literal and figurative meaning. That the world of time and space is no garden of song and ease, that God is somehow present in the soul of man, and that heaven begins, not with physical death, but with the renunciation of worldliness— all these are orthodox Christian teachings. Taken together, they provide a background of ideas against which the poet is able to make suicide a striking figure for the act of renunciation. Taken in this way, A Dialogue between Thyris and Dorinda reveals itself as proposing a way of life still more perfect than that proposed in Clorinda and Damon. The earlier poem deals with the motives for avoiding sin, the later with the resolution to achieve detachment from worldly appetites and fears alike.

In On a Drop of Dew, Marvell expresses an other-worldly and Puritan view. Marvell's effort in translating On a Drop of Dew into Latin⁸ suggests, furthermore, that he considered it an important statement.

So that Soul, that Drop, that Ray
Of the clear Fountain of Eternal Day,
Could it within the humane flow' r be seen,
Remembering still its former height,
Shuns the sweet leaves and blossoms green;
And, recollecting its own Light,
Does, in its pure and circling thoughts, express
The greater Heaven in an Heaven less.

(11. 19-26)

Not only do those lines express Marvell's attitude at its Puritan best; they also contain, latently, the reason for which he would abandon the view he had just expressed. Marvell could not bring himself to abandon the "sweet leaves and blossoms green" any more than he could justify to himself an utterly hedonistic existence. The harshness of nature had argued against the carefree life suggested in Clorinda and Damon. Now, beauty of nature argued against its abandonment in favor of a supposedly superior, Platonic mode of existence. Neo-Platonism had failed Marvell, and we see him putting the dilemma raised by the second attempt to a formal debate, probably soon afterwards.

In A Dialogue Between the Resolved Soul and Created Pleasure, Marvell opens with the Pauline imagery of helmet, shield, and so forth, from Ephesians.9 This imagery is neither an admission of allegiance to Puritanism, as the present writer sees it, nor a surprising move. Marvell's attempt to work out the problem of religion had succeeded only in bringing him into the same dilemma of body versus soul that Puritanism already faced. He had either to break that dilemma or, failing, do the sensible thing—join his

thinking with that of the Puritans. To do the latter, though, would not only involve the repudiation of sensuous experience, but also the endorsement of various Puritan severities which Marvell found repugnant. The only course open to him, therefore, was to search out the fundamental flaw in Puritan Platonism and reveal it.

The spirit of *A Dialogue Between the Resolved Soul and Created Pleasure* is not that of a Puritan believer, but, at the same time, is far from being lightly satirical or playful. And when we view the present poem together with its companion piece, *A Dialogue Between Soul and Body*, the spirit we detect is nearer to that of Abelard's *Sic et non* than it is to anything else the present writer can remember. The first debate is won by the soul, the second by the body, and the reader is left to draw his own conclusions.¹⁰

The central problem of *A Dialogue Between the Resolved Soul and Created Pleasure* is caught up in the title and again in the chorus. The soul wins, not by virtue of argument, but simply because it is resolved beforehand to reject created pleasure. Pleasure comes into conflict with the resolved soul, not because it is evil, but simply because it pleases Heaven (l. 48) to see sense and spirit at war, creature fighting creature. This is the same basically cruel Heaven we noted at the end of the Hastings elegy. It may reward, but first it injures.

In *A Dialogue Between Soul and Body*, Marvell confronts the premise

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¹⁰ Bradbrook, p. 195.
underlying the soul's resolution: that body is the source of sin. In so
doing, he has escaped the misuse of abstraction involved in the earlier pit-
ting of soul against pleasure. The Body's defense of itself and accusation
of the Soul are contained in the following lines:

But Physick yet could never reach
The Maladies Thou me dost teach;
Whom first the Cramp of Hope does Tear;
And then the Palsie Shakes of Fear.
The Pestilence of Love does heat:
Of Hatred's hidden Ulcer eat.
Joy's cheerful Madness does perplex;
Or Sorrow's other Madness vex.
Which knowledge forces me to know;
And Memory will not forgo.
What but a Soul could have the wit
To build me up for Sin so fit?
So Architects do square and hew,
Green Trees that in the Forest grew.

(11. 31-44)

Sin may occur in the flesh, but the flesh is driven to its deeds by the
soul. Worse yet, the flesh is rendered unnatural by the soul, is hacked
and hewed until it can scarcely be recognised, and is set to some purpose
other than that for which it was created.¹¹ As with the architects of vast
and useless manors, Marvell suggests, so with the architects of vast and use-
less systems of ideals. The victory in this debate belongs to the body.
The decision, in Marvell's mind, is to add Platonic Puritanism to the old,
destructive ideals already discarded by him. What he seeks is a way of life
that compromises neither body nor soul, that fulfills rather than limits,
his potentialities as a creature among creatures.

That Marvell had come to despair of all the current solutions to the problem of the good life is made clear in *Eyes and Tears*, which catches up the desolation of such a state of mind in the assertion that "the Self-deluding Sight, / In a false Angle takes each sight" (ll. 5-6), and that none of the gardens, "the Red, the White, the Green (l. 18), has yielded him anything but sorrow. One is startled, at first, by this latter assertion, since it seems to condemn in advance the sentiments the poet will express in *The Garden*, but the difficulty in this is the result of an ambiguity. The gardens which Marvell has treated up to this point have been ideal gardens: the red of Love; the white of Purity; the green of Hope. The garden of which Marvell writes under the title, *The Garden*, is not ideal, but real, and the green which he exalts there is not only symbolic but actual. Marvell's mind functions consistently in accordance with its habit in this case as in the others we have noted. The objective fact of Charles's beheading prompted Marvell's rejection of the Cavalier ideals. The objective fact of the Nun Appleton years prompted Marvell's construction of his new, or, at least, personal and positive philosophy. Between the two terms of this mental and spiritual development lies the network of closely related poems we have been discussing.

That the decision to accept a real garden in place of the ideal gardens was not uncritical is made clear in *The Mower Against Gardens*, where Marvell complains of the unnaturalness of contemporary gardens, of artificial fountains, of statues of fawns and fairies, and of the grafts, blends, and adulterations that "Luxurious" (l. 1) men mistake for beauty. In contrast, he cites "the Sweet Fields" (l. 32),
WHERE WILTING NATURE does to all dispense
A wild and fragrant innocence.

(ll. 32-34)

Insofar as it is legitimate at all to speak of anti-intellectualism in connection with Marvell, the Mower Group must be said to represent that attitude. The mower offers no theories about life. He wants only to be left to do his work and enjoy his fields. The Mower Group has its own disabling problems, though, and Marvell notes them for us. The first is the fact that Damon, while lamenting the disturbance and distortion of Nature, must himself cut down the green grass he reveres and distort the nature with which he attempts to live in harmony. The second is that Damon's passions will not let him lead the uncomplicated, agrarian life he envisions for himself. Both flaws are caught up in the refrain of The Mower's Song:

When Juliana came, and She
What I do to the Grass, does to my Thoughts and Me.

The attempt to live without a theory, thus, proves as fruitless as the attempt to use current theories had been. Whatever Marvell's solution may be, as he admits in this refrain, it must allow for man's necessary use of nature and provide for the proper ordering of inescapable human passions. Luxurious abuse and pristine contemplation are ruled out equally by the Mower Group.

The last stages of Marvell's interior debate overlap the first part of the Nun Appleton period, but his acquaintance with the Fairfax family seems to have affected him greatly from the very first. Upon the Hill and Grove at Bill-brow voices Marvell's respect for Fairfax in unequivocal terms. That praise continues into Upon Appleton House, and the virtue of moderation
is the keystone in these poems, upon which all the particulars of praise are erected. Upon Appleton House is, however, a much more complicated poem than that last sentence may suggest. It makes demands upon the reader's knowledge of traditions that are in excess of those made by any of Marvell's other lyrics. The impression one gets is that Upon Appleton House represents Marvell's final summation of the manifold debate he has been conducting since January, 1649. If so, the closing reference to "rational Amphibii" (l. 771), sets the stage well for The Garden.

To attempt even a passingly thorough treatment of Upon Appleton House is out of the question in this place. Note must be made of some of the ideas pertinent to The Garden, however, and so the following pages, after a brief outline, will indicate such ideas without attempting to treat the poem in continuity.

The first ten stanzas indicate the happy relationship between humility, material display, and greatness of soul which Marvell affirms of Fairfax and his family. Stanzas XI to XXXV narrate how Fairfax's ancestor succeeded in winning the hand of a girl shut up by her guardian in a convent, and how the convent itself came to be Fairfax property. Stanzas XXXVI to XLIII lament the passing of the old England of the Stewarts and Tudors. Stanzas XLIV to XLVI express a regret that Fairfax, who could restore England, is in retirement instead. Stanzas XLVII to XXXII are a seeming survey of the Nun Appleton estate and an account of the ways in which the poet spends his days there.

12 Summers, p. 122.
Stanzas LXXXII to LXXXXVI are in praise of Mary Fairfax. And the final stanza serves as a closing comment on mankind.

The portion of first importance to us is that between XLVII and LXXXI. We recall that Damon was the killer of the grass in the Mower Group, but now the grass becomes an "Abyss" (l. 369) in which man is overwhelmed as in an ocean. The seeming order of the world is reversed. Man is insect-like in the world of nature, and merely natural creatures, "Grashoppers" (l. 372) look upon man's gropings and laugh at his confusion. The "tawny Mowers", far from dominating nature, only make a path between walls of "green Sea" (l. 390), but, even in this precarious attempt, they draw innocent blood (l. 395), the blood of a bird that made its nest "below the Grasses Root" (l. 410). But the mowers' sense of foreboding passes into self-justification (l. 405-408) and into heedless merrymaking (ll. 425-432). In the end, the field has been turned into a desert piled with "Pyramids of Hay" (l. 438). Man's insignificance is compensated for only by his destructiveness and irresponsibility, and from those deadly qualities no creature, no matter how innocent, can be safe.

Stanza LVI moves the poet's eye to another barren place, a pasture, which he likens satirically to Locke's "Table rase and pure" (l. 448), and to the political views of the "Levelers" (l. 450). A herd of cattle, domesticated brutes, enters and is compared to "Fleas" (l. 461) and to blemishes on "Faces" (l. 460). Finally, the whole order of nature rebels with a flood, and the scene disintegrates into a "Paradox" (l. 473).

In stanza LXI, Marvell makes use of the story of Noah, but he does so in an ironic and corrective fashion. He substitutes for Noah's ark (made of
dead, hewn timbers) a "green, yet growing Ark" (1. 484). He goes on to substitute God for Noah (11. 485-486), and to suggest that such a wood as he, the poet, now inhabits, may have been what God himself designed to be the vehicle of salvation. If so, the green ark is markedly superior to Noah's ark of dead wood, for the green ark can hold armies of creatures, not just pairs. Then, too, Noah's ark, though built to a divine prescription, remains a work of man, and cannot, therefore, bring about the salvation of all the creatures alive in the hour before the flood. At this point, we note that the words, "Armies" (1. 486) and "shares" (1. 487), recall the Cromwellian army of saints and the democratic preachments of the Levellers. Marvell seems by these allusions, to be linking Noah's method with the hopes and schemes of the current social, political, and religious reformers. They are all alike in requiring that some part of nature be killed, destroyed, or altered for the sake of salvation. The Divine Carpenter, however, may have made his ark in living, unharmed nature. If so, how much more ironic it is to note all the man-made attempts at salvation; for, the living ark, if it exists at all, is open to every man, but the man-made arks involve limitations on the right to enter, warfare and destruction to support, and sometimes, as in the case of Puritan England, the murder of a king to establish. The upshot of such tamperings with nature is a flood, great in the days of Noah, when the whole world was perverted, or small, as in stanzas LIX to LX, where nature simply refused to be limited by human intentions. Seen in this light, the ark itself becomes paradoxical. The building of the ark becomes one of the reasons for needing the ark.

If this reading of stanza LXI be correct, we find Marvell at a very
delicate stage in the development of his personal philosophy. He is full of the foreboding of disastrous times ahead. He is persuaded that the whole range of reform movements, perhaps the Reformation itself, is counter to nature and doomed to failure. But he has no solution to propose. Inasmuch as he links Noah and the reformers together, he criticises both. The ark, as an orthodox symbol of salvation, cannot be replaced with a grove of trees without replacing Catholicism and Anglicanism as well as Puritanism. Marvell seems to be rejecting the whole of institutional Christianity. But he stops just short of formally asserting so total a rejection. He stops because he is not sure an alternative exists. God "might" (I. 135) have designed the grove of trees as the true ark, but the statement remains subjunctive in value. Nature is also cruel, and man is bound by his own needs to be always mutilating nature somewhat. Such being the case, Marvell is stymied.

Briefly, the problem that confronts him is that of finding the true relation of man to nature. Somehow, Marvell must resolve the paradox of living in harmony with that which one must ever be destroying in order to live at all. Not until The Garden does he solve this problem.

In stanza LXIII, Marvell gives his material a Paracelsan twist, but alludes, though only "as ment" (I. 590) to a "Fifth Element" (I. 592) being "thrust up" (I. 592) by the wood, and continues, in a Vaughan-like vein, by comparing the wood to a "Temple" (I. 210) filled with "Quires" (I. 511) of birds. All is not perfect in the temple, though, for the doves have no offspring (I. 526), the heron slaughters its young (II. 533-534), the hewel destroys the oak (II. 551-552), and man himself is eaten from within by a "Traitor-worm" (I. 554). Thus are man and nature one in their imperfection,
in their tendency toward cruelty and corruption. The irony of the poet's
calling himself an "easie Philosopher, / Among the Birds and Trees" (ll. 561-562) stands out. So, too, does the significance of the lines:

Out of these scatter'd Sibyls Leaves
Strange Prophecies my Phancy weaves:
And in one History consumes,
Like Marique Paintings, all the Plumes.
What Rome, Greece, Palestine, are said
I in this light Mosaic read.
Thrice happy he who, not mistook,
(ll. 577-584)

With those words, Marvell disposes of any optimistic reading of nature, but retains the idea that nature offers man priceless instruction. It is for these stern lessons that the poet would remain, and he begs the "Brambles" (l. 615) and the "Briars" (l. 616) to cooperate in keeping him there in the wood—not just the pleasant creatures of the place. The price of knowledge is pain as well as pleasure. But he who reads the lessons of the wood is "safe, methinks, and strong, behind / These Trees" (ll. 601-602).

Passing to stanza LXXXVII, we find Marvell in the midst of spinning out his compliment to Mary Fairfax. That compliment is lengthy, baroque, and sincere. The essence of it comes in two segments of the poem:

'Tis She that to these Gardens gave
The wondrous Beauty which they have
(ll. 689-690)

and, a little later,

This 'tis to have been from the first
In a Domestick Heaven nurst,
Under the Discipline severe
Of Fairfax and the starry Vere
(ll. 721-724)
Marvell's comments are cast into sharper relief when we recall that Mary was only about twelve years old at this time. Her innocence, even more than her physical beauty or her conduct, is the reason for Marvell's enthusiasm. The Picture of Little T.C. in a Prospect of Flowers is a similar praise of the beauty and innocence of a very young girl. So, too, is Young Love. All three poems express a keen realization of the tarnishing effect the world has upon innocence as the child moves into adulthood, and of the disappointed hopes that too often fall back upon parents and friends. Marvell's hopes for Mary (ll. 737-744) were the most secure of any he expressed.

Upon Appleton House closes with a view of "Salmon Fishers" (l. 769) coming home, reminding Marvell that man is an amphibian, half living in the body, half in the spirit, as Thomas Browne's Religio Medici also tells us. The thought is not especially optimistic, and Marvell, after thinking upon it for a moment, suggests that he and Mary take shelter indoors against the approaching "dark Hemisphere" (l. 776) which accompanies the strangers. It is this Marvell—cautious, tender, un-idealistic, yet a lover of virtue; tough-minded, yet sensitive to psychological pain; convinced of the general degradation of mankind, yet determined to live by moral principles—it is this Marvell who wrote The Garden.

Marvell's rejection of selfish ambitions in the first stanza of The Garden is scarcely a surprise after the praises he bestowed upon Fairfax in Upon the Hill and Grove at Hill-brow and Upon Appleton House. But we ought to remember, in making this easy judgment, that the slaughter of the

13 Margoliouth, I, 235.
helpless and harmless, the essential insignificance of man, and the blindness of honor to justice were also items in Marvell’s consciousness when he wrote of the "short and narrow verged Shade" (1. 5) afforded by the crowns of palm, laurel, and bay awarded to civic, military, and artistic conquerors.

And we ought to remember, too, that these black elements of Marvell’s vision had their origin in the events Marvell actually witnessed and were developed carefully and painfully by him before he ever set his pen to the writing of The Garden. Seen in this perspective, The Garden reveals itself as something more than a complimentary verse to Lord Fairfax or an exercise in philosophic poetry.

The point is worth dwelling on for a few minutes, for the critics have too often treated The Garden as if it were some sort of prize trick or else a purely literary utterance. One critic calls it "the finest example, in English lyric poetry, of a completely Hermetic poem." Another tells us that The Garden is an elaborate conceit upon the proposition that a garden is the Neo-Platonic realm of First Forms. Still another rules out biographical criticism altogether for The Garden and proceeds to discuss it as an anti-genre. The list could be extended, but the danger of missing the fact that, whatever else it may have been, The Garden was a personal utterance, is already manifest.

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Marvell had set his problem squarely before himself in *Upon Appleton House*, when he wrote of

> Conscience, that Heaven-nursed Plant
> Which most our Earthly Gardens want.
> A prickling leaf it bears, and such
> As that which shrinks at every touch;
> But Flowers eternal, and divine
> That in the Crowns of Saints do shine.
> (ll. 355-360)

How could a man find holiness, having already given up sect, party, tradition, and theory as hopeless, and having already found nature itself to be cruel and imperfect? Marvell's answer is to put aside all hope of achieving anything among the "busie companies of Man" (l. 12), to seek the innocence that comes with solitary "repose" (l. 8). As in The Definition of Love, the key is a magnanimous despair. The real achievement, moral innocence, can come only when no hope of lesser achievement blocks its path, for even such good intentions as the turning of one's talent to religious verse tend, as Marvell noted in *The Coronet*, to convert themselves into primary objectives when they should be serving holiness. Repose and retirement, thus, are not negative terms. *The Garden* is not a static container for world-weary souls, as one critic suggests, but a place that is full of action. Nature is busy about her work, and Marvell is busy cooperating in that work by weeding out ambition, as he had praised Fairfax for doing (*Upon Appleton House*, ll. 353-354). The "sacred Plants" (l. 13) will grow only in such

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18 F. W. Bradbrook, p. 200.
solitude as that.

If the rejection of selfish ambition is seen, in the broader context of Marvell's ideas, to be a carefully qualified, strategically designed maneuver, so too will his affirmation of sensuous experience reveal itself as something other than an Epicurean assertion that "pleasure is synonymous with virtue." Some critics have stressed the point that the imagery of The Garden is freighted with sexual overtones. There can be no doubt, of course, that the sensuousness of the ensnarement scene in stanza V is intense, but to argue for a more or less Freudian interpretation seems to the present writer to miss the point of Marvell's diction. Marvell's concept of the function of sensuous experience and his attitude toward the experiences he catalogues are unpuritanical enough without forcing a neurosis upon them. Solitude is "delicious" (l. 16), and, in stanza V, the apples, grapes, nectarines, and peaches are ripe, luscious, wine-filled, exotic, and rare. What is more, life in the garden is wonder-filled and fascinating, touches upon intellect as well as the senses.

In Upon Appleton House, Fairfax's ancestor asserts that he knows "What Fruit their [The muns'] Gardens yield" (l. 219). There the assertion is an accusation of vice. But in The Garden we find no suggestion of dishonor. Marvell's garden yields food, not food for the body only, but food for the

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19 P. W. Bradbrook, p. 199.

20 Røstvig, p. 66
Klonsky, p. 21.
soul as well. His delight is made up of wonder and curiosity as well as of sensation. The joy of the body promotes the activity of the mind, and the intoxication of the senses comes when the senses have reached their limit of consumption. The final boundary of sensation, marked by the lapse into a stasis of pleasant feeling (ll. 39-40), is, in effect, the jumping-off point of "Mind" (l. 41), which has its own adventures in stanza VI. "The feelings must be satisfied before the contemplative state is attained. Afterwards he (the poet) returns to earth, and to the details of the garden, refreshed, and more secure," writes one critic. 21 The comment seems good, but it distorts the poem in two ways. First, the senses, or feelings, are presented by Marvell, not as demanding satisfaction, but as feeding the soul with food for "Thought" (l. 46), and that food showers itself upon, engulfs the poet without his making the slightest effort to reach it. Secondly, the poet does not need to return to earth. He never leaves. The "other Worlds, and other Seas" (l. 46) are created by and in his mind as he lies "Insnar'd with Flowers" (l. 40). The point is vital. There is no conflict between sense and intellect in this poetic vision.

Just such a conflict is premised by some critics, however. "With the growing separation of these two realms of sense and thought, each in its pure state becomes dangerous and destructive, and Nature is felt by Marvell, as by Donne in The First Anniversary, as Nature in crisis," writes one...

21 M. C. Bradbrooke, "Marvell and the Poetry of Rural Solitude," RES, XVII (January 1941), 44.
That comment is correct as a remark about the Puritan milieu in
the midst of which Marvell wrote his lyrics, but misses the point that
Marvell's *The Garden* was a solution to, not an assertion of, the conflict of
body and soul. The same critic traces that conflict to the Lutheran
dichotomy of matter and spirit, through the agency of Calvinism, and into
Marvell's milieu.  

William Empson, whose theory of ambiguities commits him to such a
statement, writes that: "The chief point of the poem is to contrast and
reconcile conscious and unconscious states, intuitive and intellectual modes
of apprehension; and yet that distinction is never made, perhaps could not
have been made; his thought is implied by his metaphors." That Marvell
wrote the poem to "reconcile" the terms of a current problem, once his own,
the present writer will agree. When one learns what Empson means by "con-
scious and unconscious," however, it becomes clear that agreement must
cease. Of the poet's experience in the garden, Empson writes: "'Unemploy-
ment' is too painful and normal even in the fullest life for such a theme
to be trivial. But self-knowledge is possible in such a state so far as the
unruly impulses are digested, ordered, made transparent, not by their being
known, at the time, as unruly." Taken thus, Marvell's poem, so far from

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22 E. W. Smith, p. 191.

23 Harold Wendell Smith, "'The Dissociation of Sensibility,'" *Scrutiny*,
XVIII (Winter 1951-1952), 181-186.


25 Ibid., p. 25.
proposing a solution to the dichotomy of body and soul, merely proposes an avoidance. To see that The Garden really is a solution, we must continue our own explication.

Stanza VI demands our attention next, but the writer wishes to inject one observation before going on.

Explicators are very often unable to escape the habits of thought and response characteristic of their own generation. It is a contention of the present writer that twentieth-century explicators of The Garden are prone to become the captives of stanzas III and IV, the misinterpreters (consequently) of stanzas V and VIII, and the merely historical critics of stanzas I, II, VI, VII, and IX. The peculiarity in the twentieth-century habit of mind that leads to the consequences just noted is, as the present writer sees the matter, a combination of dilute Freudianism with the distrust of metaphysical speculation. This leads the explicator to place undue stress and undue limitation upon the biological and psycho-analytical possibilities of such stanzas as III and IV, and it leads him also to treat such a stanza as VI without due attention to the exact philosophical significance of the poet's assertion and without really granting that the poet could have considered that assertion as satisfactory.

Empson's presupposition of a conflict that is not really resolved springs, the present writer thinks, from the roots just indicated. Kermode's treatment of stanza VI as a "witty Platonism," but yet as a

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26 Kermode, p. 226.
cardinal point of the poem, seems to be from those roots too. Klonsky's description of the "Garden solitude where thought and object of thought copulate in Platonic love" merely confuses the matter further by giving a twentieth-century penchant an Alexandrian costume. And, as the present writer thinks, the stress laid upon Kabbalism, Hermetic doctrine, and, more especially, upon the theory that Adam was androgynous, follows naturally upon commission of such faults as have already been indicated. That Marvell knew and echoed the various sources cited by current critics, the present writer will not argue. The atmosphere about Marvell was pervaded by occult ideas. The point is that the solution expressed by Marvell is not essentially dependent upon such sources and ideas.

We left the poem at the end of stanza V, with the senses having reached the limit of their capacity to take in the delights of the garden. Stanza VI opens with the "Mind" (1. 41) withdrawing "from pleasure less" (1. 41) to enter "into its happiness" (1. 42). Two meanings for the phrase, "from pleasure less," are suggested by Empson. Either the pleasure is diminishing, or the power of the mind is diminishing. The grammar of Marvell's lines, however, does not suggest the translation of "less" into the verbal, lessening, and does not, therefore, support the reciprocal and progressive

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27 Klonsky, p. 20.  
29 Empson, p. 339.
conflict between sense and intellect suggested by Empson's use of verbs. The readings to which these lines are susceptible are: (1) that the intellect has withdrawn from a lesser to a greater delight; (2) that the intellect's motion was less away from pleasure than toward a mode of happiness peculiar to its own capacities; and (3) that the intellect was reduced in capacity as a result of sensuous experience before it withdrew into "its happiness." The third reading would, of course, convert the poem into an epitome of anti-intellectualism by identifying the happiness Marvell describes in stanzas VI and IX with an acquired mental weakness. At the best, such a reading would reduce The Garden to a sophisticated joke, at the worst to a lyric in praise of dullness. Neither the tone of the text, nor the character of the poet, nor the assertions of his other poems suggest any likelihood of either intention. The sense of the lines definitely falls within the boundaries of the first two readings, and the present writer accepts both, but with the qualification that the second reading is subordinate to the first.

"Mean while" (l. 11) is the key to the relationship. The mind has been active throughout the poem. Even at the moment of the most intense sensations, wonder and curiosity assert themselves. They are stimulated by the intensity and the perfection of sensation. The mind, once freed from its earlier, argumentative pursuits by the advent of wonder and curiosity, assumes a speculative attitude in place of its former practical attitude. "Mean while" indicates to us that the transition is smooth and natural, that for a time, at least, sensation and speculation are simultaneous, non-conflicting activities. Even when the poet has reached the limits of
sensation, no abrupt severance of intellect and sense is noted. The intellect merely continues its natural pursuit, and achieves results of which the senses are incapable, but for which the senses must provide the material.

When Marvell calls the intellect "that Ocean where each kind / Does straight its own resemblance find" (ll. 13-14), he is employing a stock metaphor that echoes the Renaissance idea of the microcosm and the Platonic notion of innate ideas. He is also using the word, "straight," in the sense of "at once," as Empson points out. But one must be very careful not to assume that Marvell's primary intention is to affirm Renaissance Platonism simply because his diction includes some well-worn words from the Platonic lexicon. One may read these lines as an assertion of the Platonic doctrine of recognition, but one may just as easily read them in harmony with Scholastic epistemology. In the latter reading, the mind would be an "ocean" because of its apparent boundlessness and

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30 Margoliouth, I, 226.
31a Michael Maher, Psychology: Empirical and Rational, 9th ed., (New York, 1926), p. 311. "The scholastic theory, then, may be thus briefly stated: An object produces an impression on a sensitive faculty. This results in a sensuous phantasm in the imagination, and here the work of the lower power ends. Since, however, in man the sensuous faculties of cognition have their source in a soul also endowed with intellectual aptitudes, the latter now issue into action. The presence of the phantasm forms the condition of rational activity, and the intellect abstracts the essence; that is, by its own active and passive capabilities generates the concept which expresses in the abstract the essence of the object. By a further reflective act it views this abstract concept as capable of representing any member of the class, and thus constitutes it a formally universal idea."
bottomlessness. The word, "kind," would signify the species rather than the individual, and the word, "resemblance" would signify intellectually apprehended form rather than the sensible image of the individual item that prompted the process. To find is also, by its earlier significance, to make or cause to be made. Thus, the two lines under discussion read well as a description of the advent of the universal idea as understood by Scholastic philosophers. One does not need to rely upon the sexual notion of like mating with like, suggested by Empson, to find an adequate fund of meaning for the lines. To support that suggestion, Empson refers not to the lines he is explicating but to "the two entrancingly witty verses about the sublimation of sexual desire into a taste for Nature,"32 which prepare, he suggests, for the notion of intellectual creation. Certainly, Marvell does use the word "creates" (l. 15), in the very next line, but one can continue the explication in terms of Scholastic epistemology much more easily than in terms of "the Freudian view of an Ocean."33

The intellect moves from the medley of universal ideas prompted by sensation to a realm "transcending" (l. 15) such ideas, just as one moves from species to genus, from genus to transcendental in Scholastic metaphysical speculation. That the same lines fit fairly well with the Renaissance doctrine of correspondences, especially the line, "Far other Worlds, and other Seas" (l. 16), is not surprising. Marvell was a seventeenth

32 Empson, p. 310.
33 Ibid.
century poet, not a Scholastic metaphysician. That those lines suggest an
un-Platonic limitation of the doctrine of correspondences is the vital point
to be noted. There is no suggestion in The Garden of a world soul. There
is no assertion that the mind is any mind except the poet's own, or that it
ever enters any world other than the poet's world. The mind "creates" the
other worlds and other seas within itself. And this, again, is sound
Scholasticism. The abstractions are not realities outside the mind, though
they depend upon such realities for their existence. They are "far other"
than that world to which they refer, but, more than that, they are analogous
to one another, so that, in a sense, we find a repetition, among the ideas,
of the relationship Marvell has already asserted between the ideas and the
objects of sensation. Hence, he returns to that figure and speaks of other
worlds and other seas. We may carry this a step further, and say that when
the mind moves from species to genus, it finds the species reflected in the
genus. And when the mind moves from genus to transcendental, it finds the
genus reflected in the transcendental. It is this series of resemblance-
findings that justifies Marvell's use of the plurals in line 146. His notion
is the medieval notion of reflections that has its formal expression in the
Thomist doctrine of Analogy.

The final couplet of stanza VI harmonizes perfectly with the interpre-
tation we have been drawing out of that stanza. "Annihilating all that's
made" (l. 147) encapsulates the poet's ascent of the ladder of ideas. The word
"made" refers simultaneously to created nature and to the ideas his mind has
created. Individuals disappear into the species, species into genera, the
genera into the transcendental. But the whole process is deliberate.
The mind withdrew from mere recognition for the purpose of enjoying this speculative ascent. Hence, the mind annihilated both God's and its own creation. Now it has reached the final step. What is left is only "a green Thought in a green Shade" (l. 48). Again the line is ambiguous. Its first meaning is that the ultimate idea is the idea of Being itself, a single "Thought" that resembles all other ideas. The idea of Being is "green" because the concrete world which supplied the material from which the poet abstracted that "Thought" was a green garden. The idea is in a "green Shade" because the phantasm of the garden hovers in the poet's imagination while his intellect holds the idea. The shade, in its second meaning, soul, is green because the poet has been fed on the fruits of the green garden (stanza V), which has filled it with green sensations. But the meanings do not end with this. There remains one last speculative step. The poet can arrive by inference at the Divine Thought that exists in the Divine Mind. He need not comprehend that thought beyond knowing that it must in some way resemble the green garden that the Divine Mind designed. He need not comprehend God beyond knowing that God must, in some way, be green to have had that thought and created those realities. The final stage of the poet's intellectual ascent is, thus, the speculative contemplation of the Creator.

34 Robert Edward Brennan, *General Psychology: A Study of Man Based on St. Thomas Aquinas*, rev. ed. (New York, 1952), 294. States the view of St. Thomas and Aristotle that the phantasm is to the thinking soul as the sensible object is to sense affected by it.
To read this stanza consistently, one does not need to refer to the Kaballah, or to the Hermetic books at all. Thomas Vaughan, whose debt to the sources mentioned above is as clear as Marvell's is vague, wrote: "In the summer translate thyself to the fields where all are green with the breath of God and fresh with the powers of heaven. Learn to refer all naturals to their spirituals per viam secretioris analogiae, for this is the way the magicians went and found out miracles." Hobbes wrote that philosophy excludes "the doctrine of God, eternal, ingenerable, incomprehensible, and in whom there is nothing to divide nor compound, nor any generation to be conceived." Cowley and Fane spoke of reason and thought being strengthened by the solitary contemplation of nature. The Royal Society would, by 1660, be noteworthy for its distrust of reason and thought. It was in the ever increasing tension between these polar attitudes toward the intellect that Marvell was prompted to write The Garden, to draw a nice line between enthusiasm and scepticism, and to justify to himself the line he drew.

That the foundation of Marvell's affirmation of the intellect is Scholastic is natural enough, when we think of it. The fundamental habit

36 Copleston, V, 5.
37 Harold Wendell Smith, "'Reason' and the Restoration Ethos," Scrutiny, XVII (Autumn 1951), 118-123.
of the seventeenth century mind was, as we noted in chapter two, a scholastic habit. Scholastic logic, not Platonic theory, was the staple of the schools. The poets themselves courted "the experience of syllogistic thinking with its consequences for feeling, attitude, and action. It is a mode of experience that the Renaissance practiced and cherished and expressed with power, dignity, and precision. It is a poetical experience and a logical, and it is both at once."\(^{39}\) The Garden is not a syllogistic poem, but, like Marvell's body-soul debates, it is in the spirit of the Scholastic approach much more than it is in the spirit of the mystical tendency of the Platonic and occult. Marvell was aware of the weaknesses of the theory of the enthusiastic Platonic contemplatives, and too much aware of the potential inhumanity of the rising scepticism. Instead, he chose, or partly worked out for himself, the middle way of Scholastic epistemology and, as we shall note, found it adequate not only to support his belief in God but also to protect the humanistic values he drew from his classical studies.

That Marvell's use of a Scholastic theory of knowledge represents a deliberate choice is a conclusion that fits reasonably with the content of \textit{Eyes and Tears}. The Garden represents his recovery from the despair of knowledge's validity. The Garden, as a consequence of its place in Marvell's spiritual development, as well as of the theory it actually asserts, is a conservative and practical poem, not an escapist utterance. Kermode asserts that Marvell depicts a place "where sense is controlled by reason and

\(^{39}\)J. V. Cunningham, "Logic and Lyric," \textit{MP} LI (August 1953), hl.
intellect can contemplate not beauty but heavenly beauty." But, again, the critic misinterprets the relationship between sense and intellect in Marvell's assertion, and, having done so, fails to find the true center of the poem. Marvell's point is that, when sense and intellect function naturally, there is no conflict between them, and that, as a result, there is no necessity to choose between natural beauty and divine beauty, the one leads inevitably to the other. The experience of the one is, in fact, a pre-requisite and co-requisite of the experience of the other.

The act of knowledge emerges, at last, as the happy nexus between man and reality. More than that, nature itself, as the object of knowledge and sole path to the poet's grasp of Divine Reality, emerged as the measure of human goodness. Of Fairfax's conformity to the modest standards of nature, Marvell wrote in Upon Appleton House:

These holy Mathematicks can
In ev'ry Figure equal Man. 
(II. 47-48)

The holiness of proportion arises, not from any occult theory, but from the fact, as Marvell saw the matter, that nature is analogous to the Divine Idea harbored by the Creator. It is an easy step from this view to the view, expressed in The Garden, that the free enjoyment of nature by the intellect and the senses results in the proper ordering of human life. As Marvell made clear in Upon Appleton House and in the Nower Group, however, nature is no ideal retreat.

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Kermode, p. 231.
Nature is limited, and nature preys upon itself for its own existence. Man, as a part of the nature he contemplates, must recognize this same necessity, must use nature to serve the whole man, body and mind at once. To this dual end, nothing is better suited than a garden. There the flesh and the spirit may feed upon reality simultaneously and harmoniously. The objection voiced in The Mower Against Gardens is not forgotten, though, for the garden in which Marvell locates his solution is the modest garden of Lord Fairfax in which nature is simply improved by art, rendered more serviceable to man, not forced and adulterated and pressed into the service of luxury. Speaking of the whole Fairfax estate, Marvell said in Upon Appleton House:

And what needs there here Excuse,  
Where ev'ry Thing does answer Use?  
Where neatness nothing can condemn,  
Nor Pride invent what to condemn?  
(11. 61–64)

In the matter of evaluating nature, as in the matter of evaluating contemplation, Marvell has reached middle way. The nature he takes as his measure is not free from art but only from artificiality.

Nature is the sole path to and measure of love as well as of the good life more generally. Just as one sees the mind of God reflected in nature, so one sees the beauty of God reflected in the beauty of nature. The first stages of the human experience of love are possessive and destructive. The lovers injure nature in their attempts to assert their love (11. 19–20). So far from signifying a "Platonic identification of Name and Object,"\(^{11}\) the

\(^{11}\) Klionsky, p. 40.
bark-carving signifies a failure to realize that the object of possessive love is only a mediate item in the scale of lovable objects. The trees, by standing for the larger reality, nature itself, have a beauty that exceeds that of womankind. But, it should be noted that this is a qualified assertion on Marvell's part. He is not saying that trees are superior to women as creatures, but just that the desire to possess a woman is more limited in object and reward than the desire to enjoy nature. At the same time, remembering that man must alter nature in the process of using and enjoying it, Marvell vows that whatever alterations he makes in nature will only confirm and perfect it. He will not carve a lady's name upon a tree, but the tree's own name. His art will identify the real object of his attention more clearly, make its beauty more readily recognized. Thus, he passes from the character of a swain to a gardener while remaining a lover, and his love becomes more perfect as it rises from a blind possessive urge to a clear-minded cooperation with the workings of nature-at-large, of the reflected intention of the Creator.

The proper relationship of the sexes is a subdivision of the broader relationship between man and nature, Marvell tells us in stanza IV, using the myths of Pan and Syrinx and Apollo and Daphne as the vehicles for his idea. Pan and Apollo began in "Passion's heat" (l. 25), but found, at the termination of their endeavor, not the delights of mere possession, but the sacred laurel and the musical reed. That the gods made use of the reed and laurel is, of course, true, but the points Marvell makes in his parable are not associated with the twentieth-century idea of the sublimation of sexual desire after its frustration by circumstance. His central point is that
possessiveness is but a means employed by nature in achieving higher objectives. The gods' actual possession of the nymphs produces poetry and music, realities for which the pursuit of sensuous pleasure was only an instrumental motive.

With the words, "Only that She might Laurel grow" (l. 30) and "but for a Reed" (l. 32), Marvell rounds out his assertion. Nature simply will not grant a state of merely sensuous delight to man, but does offer man the chance, through the proper use of his senses, to produce new perfections of nature. The carving of the tree's own name on its bark is parallel to the making of poetry and music out of the experience of possession. That Marvell does not go on to assert that the primary end of marriage is the procreation of human individuals should not trouble us here. The stanzas are not about marriage, nor are they about sexual union as such. The Garden was written by a bachelor as an assertion of the philosophy governing his own life. The question it answers concerns the generalised end toward which sexual desire properly leads, not the specific end toward which conjugal union properly leads. His praise of Mary Fairfax in Upon Appleton House amply indicates his concept of the specific end served by marriage. In The Garden, Marvell resolves the problem presented by Juliana in the Mower Group by viewing "mortal beauty" (l. 27) as an aspect of the " Beauties" (l. 22) of nature-at-large, and, therefore, as a reflection of Divine Beauty. The greater love, the love with "object strange and high" (l. 2), of Marvell's The Definition of Love is, in The Garden, reaffirmed and explained. The result is not the rejection of womankind.
Seen aright, Marvell says, all things tend toward God. One needs only to understand that tendency and to embrace its ultimate object in order to escape the tyranny of desire and to understand that possession is but a single, and the most limited, mode of loving. The contemplation of mortal beauty, too, can be a beginning for the mind in its creation of "Far other Worlds, and other Seas." Marvell's immediate passage from the myths of Pan and Apollo to stanzas V and VI, where he carefully explains the process by which one passes from the sensuous to speculative, supports our reading of the last two stanzas.

Only one note remains to be made about stanzas III and IV, and that note concerns the first two lines of stanza III, which present the proposition discussed in the fourteen lines that follow. In those lines Marvell asserts that "this lovely garden" (1. 18) is more "am'rous" than any red or white. One critic remarks thereon that: "Love enters this garden, but only when the pursuit of the red and white [sexual love] is done, and we are without appetite."¹² That reading is bad for three reasons. First of all, Marvell is not writing of love versus contemplation, but of love and contemplation as a unified activity. The word, "so" (1. 18), signifies degree, not kind. Secondly, love does not enter the garden, but is there from the first. The problem Marvell resolves is one of perspective and intention. Mortal beauty must be seen as one aspect of the larger, green beauty which

¹² Kermode, p. 234.
the poet loves and contemplates. Finally, Marvell is not speaking of the Renaissance red and white, but, as his disjunctive, "nor" (l. 17), indicate, of a separate red and a separate white, the first referring to the old love tradition of the roses, as in The Nymph, the second referring to the Christian ascetic tradition of purity, as expressed in On a Drop of Dew. Both of these traditions, together with the sort of green involved in the Pantheism of Damon and Clorinda, Marvell had already rejected, notably in Eyes and Tears. In stanza III of The Garden, Marvell was looking back on all these ideal gardens which had failed as solutions to his problem, and was contrasting them with Fairfax's real garden, Petrarchan love, ascetic love, and the love of idealized nature all had proved to be unsatisfactory, as Marvell indicates in his other lyrics. The real garden, on the other hand, offered him the speculative experience the benefits without including the detriments of the former items. Thus the real garden, Marvell affirms, is more "am'rous" than those ideal gardens in which the poet had previously dallied.

Stanza VII brings us face to face with Marvell's striking use of the soul-bird image. The use of a bird as a figure for the soul was by no means original, even in Marvell's day. The English interest in it was probably sparked by the translation, a century earlier, of Castiglione's The Courtier. Klonsky, however, suggests that the notion of reincarnation is somehow involved with the soul-bird figure in The Garden. The present

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writer agrees with Pierre Legouis in failing to see the connection. The suggestion of the soul-bird’s being a phoenix and, hence, a Resurrection symbol, is tempting, but also fails to fit the text. Nowhere can the bird be argued to die or to burn, though some argument may be posed that the phoenix occurs elsewhere in Marvell’s writings. Closer to Marvell’s meaning is Lord Herbert’s use of the image of a soul ascending to God on wings of faith and love. The flaw for our purpose, is that Marvell’s soulbird remains earth-bound, and that the ascent that Marvell projects depends, not on faith, but on speculative certitude. The safest reading, perhaps, will have the soul-bird simply as a conversion of “The Bird upon the Bough” (l. 572) of Upon Appleton House. There Marvell, having recognised himself as an integral part of nature, finds a new and wordless understanding to exist between himself and the bird. This sense of unity with creation, reminiscent of Fox’s view, finds its total expression, the present writer thinks, in Marvell’s selection of the familiar soul-bird image for the simile in stanza VII.

The poet’s soul glides into the boughs (l. 52). Again the softness of the presence of green shade are involved. The action is a metaphor of the

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17 Moore-Smith, p. 162.
18 See p. 86.
sensory-intellectual process asserted in stanza VI. So far we are dealing only with a transitional passage. The new statement comes in two parts: that the bird is awaiting a "longer flight" (l. 55); and that the light in which it basks is "various" (l. 56). The phrase, "longer flight" stresses the difference between the poet's speculative vision, bound to and in nature as it is, and the supernatural vision that awaits him. But the phrase, "till prepar'd" (l. 55) sets that "longer flight" ahead in time, and indicates that the speculative experience of the "green Thought in a green Shade" is not an end in itself, but a means of the spiritual perfection requisite before the soul can achieve the Beatific Vision. "Marvell certainly wants to go to a better place some day," writes Legouis, "but no less certainly he does not want to go yet."19 The first clause of that remark is manifestly correct. The second could be stronger. Marvell is confessing his unfitness, his inability, to make the "longer flight" as yet.

The soul-bird cannot "run / Into the Glories of th' Almighty Sun" (On a Drop of Dew, l. 40), but it can find a place of rest in nature. It can, as it does in stanza VI, establish a special, intellectual relationship with nature, a relationship only extrinsically dependent upon the senses. Having toiled in "busie Companies of men," and having raced in "Passion's heat," the soul, like a weary laborer, casts aside "Bodies Vest" (l. 51), relaxes, and is refreshed in the "green Shade" of the garden. There, "like a Bird," it restores order to its faculties, "silver Wings" (l. 54), and lets the

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19 Legouis, p. 387.
light that filters down to it through nature bathe and interpenetrate it, as light bathes and interpenetrates the extended plumes of a luxuriating bird. We recall, of course, the tinsel wings of "Hope" in Marvell’s The Definition of Love, and we recognize the genuine silver of the present wings as the mark of "Magnanimous Despair." Stanza VII, thus, contains two major figures: that of the soul as a hot, weary man slipping in among the boughs to enjoy the refreshing shade, and that of the soul as a bird restoring itself after the ruffling given it by the events of its journey. Neither is a figure for ecstasy. Both exist only to assert the beneficial effects of the speculative ascent outlined in stanza VI.

That the diction of the stanza suggests Platonism is natural enough and certain enough, but connotations cannot exclude denotations. Marvell’s The Garden is, denotatively, a demonstration that the immediate benefits claimed for Platonic mysticism, can be gained from a normal relationship between man and nature, and that the immediate benefits claimed for Epicurean and libertine philosophies can be had without expense of soul. Marvell deliberately uses the diction of both extremes because he is reconciling them, as the terms of a dilemma, by showing the middle term, speculative ascent, with which both sorts of benefits are involved, and by which they are brought into harmony.

As we noted in chapter two, there are affinities between Marvell and George Fox that spring, it would seem, from the fact that both men, confronting the array of seventeenth century outlooks, sought some single, simple principle that would enable them to escape from any future complications of theory and legislation without having to sacrifice the reality of spiritual
life to solve the problem of spiritual living, or the integrity of human experience to preserve the integrity of the human soul. Fox's solution, the Inner Light, and Marvell's solution, the speculative ascent, are closely enough related to each other to suggest a reason for Marvell's concern about the fate of the Quakers in the years that followed. But the two solutions remain, at the closest, two sides of a coin, not to be blended without being obliterated. Fox's Inner Light is a form of direct, personal, supernatural revelation. The light comes immediately from God into the soul of man, and makes it possible for that soul to resume its proper place in nature, and to achieve its own salvation. Marvell's "various Light" (l. 56) comes to a man through nature as a result of his having set his faculties free to cooperate with nature. Only at the peak of the speculative ascent is the Divine Mind apparent, and even then the epiphany is a natural vision, not supernatural revelation. One cannot read The Garden as a Quaker poem.

The last real difficulty in reading The Garden comes with the phrase, "without a Mate" (l. 58), in stanza VIII. That phrase is the peg upon which critics hang either the androgynous theory or the assertion, in rebuttal, that Marvell was merely rejecting marriage, not womanhood, as an evil. Both notions are wrong, it seems to the present writer, for Marvell's comments on the Fairfax marriage, if not flatteries of the worst sort, are evidence of an affirmation of the marriage and of respect for its spiritual benefits. The real key to stanza VIII is the final couplet of Stanza II:

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Society is all but rude,
To this delicious Solitude.
(11. 15-16)

That couplet is ambiguous, and both ambiguities are caught up in stanza VIII. Marvell praises the joys of solitary speculation, an activity that society does not appreciate and that the presence of society makes difficult. And Marvell questions the wisdom of Adam, who thought such speculation a lonely way of life. Adam's loneliness resulted, not in the advent of evil, but simply in the advent of society. Evil came as a gratuitous by-product of the newly existent society, not as an essential consequence of marriage. Evil was made universal, not by the action of Eve, but by that of Adam. And evil spread across the world, not with the increase of women and of marriage, but with the increase of society. Witness Cain. Marvell's complaint is against Adam's folly, not against Eve's nature. And we note that Marvell registers that complaint immediately after his assertion of the benefits of the speculative ascent. For him, as a confirmed bachelor, as one who had already weathered the storm of idealistic love and already learned the secret of controlling the tides of his passions, it seems almost incredible that Adam, who began at the point Marvell has only just reached, would want anything more than the joys Marvell has just described. Then, remembering his own follies, and remembering that Adam, too, was such as he, Marvell adds

But 'twas beyond a Mortal's share
To wander solitary there:
(11. 61-62)

Marvell has yet to explain to himself, we must remember, how it happened that for many years he had shared in society's rudeness toward solitude, when, by simply freeing himself of all that folly, he could have enjoyed the
speculative ascent and its benefits. He sees himself, thus, to be as guilty as Adam was, and of the same folly.

The title of this poem becomes very significant, once we begin the parallel between Marvell and Adam, and once we recall Marvell's mockery of orthodox dogma in Flecknoe, an English Priest at Rome, for, the present writer thinks, Marvell is saying that his experience in the Fairfax garden was in fact the regaining of Paradise, and that, but for the interference of society, each individual could make that re-entrance into the "happy Garden-state" of intellectual vision a permanent achievement. As it is, however, the regaining of the garden is limited to "sweet and wholesome Hours" (l. 71). While it lasts, though, it is the Garden. This interpretation approaches Miss Wallerstein's reading of The Garden as hortus conclusus, perhaps, but the objectivity of the speculative ascent, the present writer thinks, and the insistence upon the preservation of concrete reality, rules out the sort of contemplation she proposes.

The final point to be taken up in this chapter is that of the meaning of "green". The point is important not only to an understanding of The Garden, but of the bulk of Marvell's verses, for greenness, explicit and implicit, seems almost to dominate his poetic vision. Perhaps the best point to make first is that green has a very complicated history as a symbolic color, and that it is difficult to find a time when it did not signify both good and evil, as well as both the natural and the supernatural. The blood of the Greek gods was green. The devotees of Hecate adorned her shrine with green

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51 Wallerstein, p. 242.
boughs, as Marvell may well have known. The ancient Egyptians used green coloring in ceremonies to dispel storm clouds and darkness. Green laurel was burned, in place of victim's limbs. Green was the color associated with fairies and magic in English tradition, and fairies themselves were associated with meadows and deserted grasslands. Green was also the color associated with the Robin Hood of the May Day festivities and, as Fraser tells us, the May Day festivities "probably originated in the belief of the fertilizing power of the tree-spirit." Marvell alludes to this belief in Upon Appleton House, when he has the barren doves complaining to the "Elms" (l. 526).

The color associated with Pan and with the fawns is the green of wild nature. The leaves of the mistletoe are green, and the mistletoe itself, suspended between heaven and earth as it was, contained the oak-spirit, guarded its wearer from witchcraft, and symbolized immortality. Marvell indicates a thorough familiarity with mistletoe lore in stanza LXXXIII of Upon Appleton House, where he likens Mary Fairfax to a "sprig of Mistletoe, / On the Fairfacian Oak" (ll. 739-740), and alludes to the Druidic rites.

52 Summers, pp. 8-12.
53 Murray, pp. 53-57.
54 Murray, p. 35.
56 Ibid., pp. 538-539.
57 Ibid., pp. 813-816.
involved in gathering mistletoe. And, in *Damon the Mower*, he refers to "deathless Fairyes" (l. 61) and to "their Danses soft" (l. 62). Again, in *The Mower against Gardens*, he brings "Fauns and Faryes" (l. 36) together in the wild meadows, and assigns the fertility of nature to their presence.

Green is also the Christian symbol of hope, honored by Marvell in the phrase, "green, yet growing Ark" (l. 498) of *Upon Appleton House*. We find green simply as a symbol of youth in 1597, but in 1601, we find the word, *Greenkin*, signifying one who runs for a prize, and reminding us of Marvell's line, "When we have run our Passion's heat" (l. 25), in *The Garden*. We also note a use, by Montgomery in 1605, of the verb, *grene*, which meant to yearn. That Northern verb may well have been suggestive to Marvell's green-centered mind. And associated with this, perhaps, is the use of green as a symbol of lovers. Marvell, in *Young Love*, made use of this meaning, when he wrote:

> Whose fair Blossoms are too green
> Yet for Lust, but not for Love.
> (ll. 11-12)

Again, in *The Unfortunate Lover*, he speaks of courting couples "By Fountains cool, and Shadows green" (l. 1).
The ballad, *Green Sleeves*, on the other hand, capitalizes on green as a symbol of inconstancy, a meaning that may be reflected by Marvell in his comparison, in *Upon Appleton House*, of the meadow grass to "green Silks" (l. 628). He had already asserted in the same poem that nature was cruel as well as kind. To demonstrate Marvell's awareness of the ambiguity of green as a love symbol, however, we need turn only to the names he gives the personages in his poems. Chloris, Clore, Clorillo, and Clorinda are all variations on the name, Chloris, which means green. Chloris was the goddess of spring and of flowers, the wife of the West Wind, the mother of Carpos, whose name means fruit. Chloris was identified by the Romans with Flora, the goddess of youth and of the May Games. The name, Chloris, comes from a Greek word for blooming. And the name, Juliana, suggests to the present reader, the month of July, the summer greenness, and the summer intensity, all of which is reflected in Juliana's influence over Damon. One has only to see the variety of effects the several green girls of these poems produce and the attitudes they evoke to grasp the flexibility with which Marvell employed green as a love symbol.

One cannot make any precise statement on the basis of this material, but the broad outline of a many-faceted greenness does seem to emerge from

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such considerations. Marvell himself, perhaps, was at just as much of a loss as the modern critic in this respect—until he wrote The Garden and identified green positively and philosophically with the Divine Source of life itself, and with all that reflected the "green thought" of that source. Henry Vaughan, in the same years, was identifying a "dear secret greenness" with the principle of life, but Marvell's green is made of sterner stuff. The "Garden-state" was not permanently regained, he knew, and the light was "various", but the problem, at least, was solved.

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CHAPTER IV

MARVELL'S EXILE FROM HIS PARADISE

To understand The Garden properly, one must avoid supposing it to represent Marvell's final decision. It not only was not, but could not be such. The decisions of society and the events of history took their own course without regard for Marvell's view of the relationship between man and nature. And Marvell was drawn into the stream of history despite his own decision. It is worth noting that nowhere in The Garden does Marvell indicate a belief that the "happy Garden-state" can be maintained, but only that it can be achieved.

In the Horatian Ode, Marvell states quite bluntly that the occupation for ambitious youths is no longer poetry and study, but warfare and state-craft. 1 In The Garden, of course, Marvell rejects ambition and ambitious youths alike, but that rejection need not be thought to have erased the real distress Marvell felt over the condition of England, a distress very definitely asserted in stanza XLI of Upon Appleton House.

Oh Thou, that dear and happy Isle
The Garden of the World ere while,
Thou Paradise of four Seas,
Which Heaven planted us to please,
But, to exclude the World, did guard
With watry if not flaming Sword;

What luckless Apple did we taste,
To make us Mortal, and The Waste.
(11. 321-328)

It is not surprising, after a careful reading of Upon Appleton House, to note
that The Garden is almost the last serious lyric written by Marvell. But to
suppose that the distress expressed in Upon Appleton House was enough to undo
The Garden as a solution is, the present writer believes, to be guilty of a
facile supposition. Smaller circumstances, as well as Cromwell's rise to
power, were to bring about Marvell's exile from his private paradise in
Yorkshire.

We know that Marvell had already left the Fairfax household by late
February, 1652. His reasons for leaving are not known, but his disapproval
of Mary Fairfax's being exposed to the poetry of Saint-Amant, 2 which he
thought dangerous to the morals of young readers, may have had something to
do with his departure. There was, after all, a deep vein of Puritanism in
Marvell, and there was also a deep respect for the innocence of children, and
a keen recognition of the corrosive effect of worldliness and of unguided
passion. Marvell, but newly-emerged from the toils of idealism and the
threat of mere sensuousness would not have found it easy to see his pupil
exposed to libertine verse, even when her father was translator of that verse.

Then, too, there is the effect of familiarity to be considered. Marvell's
initial enthusiasm about the Fairfax family is unmistakable in Upon the Hill
and Grove at Bill-borrow, and, in Upon Appleton House, he even toys with

2M. C. Bradbrook, p. 40.
occult diction, such as "Saphir-winged Mist" (l. 680). In so doing, he
reflects his patron's interest in such matters, but Upon Appleton House also
criticises Fairfax for not helping to restore England to its former happy
condition, and subtly, but definitely contrasts the present Fairfax with a
former Fairfax who had made the law yield justice while still refusing to
resort to force.\(^3\) The reasons for discontent are present, at least embryon-
ically, almost from the first. The very broadmindedness which first prompted
Marvell to admire Fairfax, may well, in time, have caused him to tire of
Fairfax. In 1672, Marvell explicitly condemns, we note, the sort of occult-
ism with which Fairfax was engrossed in 1650 to 1652.\(^4\) We expect as much
after reading The Garden. Marvell's variety of retirement and Fairfax's
variety of retirement were differently conceived and ultimately incompatible.

Marvell sought a defensible philosophic position from which he could
reach out to set his life in order, and by means of which he could achieve
and maintain the clarity of his vision. Fairfax sought to escape the mere
act of living by finding a secret and mystical significance for what must,
to him, seem otherwise an extremely trivial ending of a promising career.
Granting this, we can see a new dimension in Marvell's objection to Saint-
Amant's verses for Mary Fairfax. Marvell had come to realise that, whatever
Fairfax's virtues might be, Fairfax's mind was not nearly so critical as it
was absorptive, Fairfax's judgment not nearly so liberal as it was merely

\(^3\)Hyman, "Politics," p. 1478.

\(^4\)Wallerstein, p. 213.
undiscriminating, and Fairfax's rejection of ambition not nearly so purposeful as helpless.

The Nun Appleton interlude was, nonetheless, of cardinal importance in Marvell's life, and its benefits were immeasurably in excess of any disappointments that may have come with Marvell's better understanding of Fairfax. Even if Marvell could not remain in the Fairfax garden any longer, he could leave it as a free man, unencumbered by any complex philosophy, unlimited by any sectarian obligations, and even, to a large extent, unmarked by his own earlier party allegiance. Marvell enjoyed, thus, in 1652, the enviable position of the uncommitted critic. He could point to the weakness of King Charles or the commitment to power politics of Cromwell, to the superior virtues of life in the Royalist Bermudas, or to the nobility of heart of the dying Cromwell, not as a party hack, but simply as a commentator viewing the world against the measure provided by his personal principles. It was at that moment that the unhappy accident of Milton's blindness opened the door to the latter half of Marvell's life, and began the process that would complete Marvell's exile from his private paradise.

The facts of Bradshaw's refusal of Marvell in 1652, of the Dutton tutorship, of Marvell's term in the Latin secretariat, and of his subsequent career as a member of the House of Commons have been outlined in the first chapter. That Marvell was drawn more and more deeply into practical and often dangerous politics as the years passed is too well-known to bear much comment here. That his role in such affairs was not small is witnessed by the eagerness with which his enemies pounced upon any scrap of a chance to keep him out of action. Lord Bellasis, a Catholic peer, attempted to have
Marvell dropped from the rolls of the House in April, 1663. By 1678, members of the House were attempting to have Marvell excluded, even sent to the Tower, on the most inconsequential of charges. In the same year, rewards for the apprehension of the author of Marvell's anonymously published political pamphlets were being offered, and Marvell was being identified as their author by the equally anonymous authors of other pamphlets and letters.

During the interval between 1660 and 1678, Marvell had done the one thing guaranteed to make life a risky adventure. He had followed his own principles, sought the ends he thought best, and refused to be carried away by the enthusiasm of those around him, or gaunted by the animosity of others. In 1667, Marvell, himself the author of Clarendon's House-Warming, no mild poem for any age, cautioned his own party against any sudden attempt to unseat Clarendon, lest that lord should turn the ensuing confusion to his own advantage. And a few days later, amid a tide of anti-Stuart enthusiasm, it was Marvell who rose to challenge the statement that the king was unfit for royal responsibility. Three months after that, Marvell, having mocked Lord Arlington's inefficiency and conceit, "was called to explain himself, but said the thing was so plain it needed it not," wrote Sir Robert Brock.

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5Grosart, I, 87, xxxvii.
6Aitken, p. xlvii.
7Aitken, p. xlvi.
8Grosart, I, xxviii.
9Grosart, I, xxix.
And, ten years later, we find Marvell still fighting the same battle to end corruption, to achieve a middle road. Against the Bill for Securing the Protestant Religion, Marvell urges the members of the House that the real concern is to have men live up to their faith in terms of morals and piety. Were this done, Protestantism would need no laws to preserve it. "If we do not practice upon ourselves," he adds, "all these Oaths and Tests are of no use: they are but phantoms." 10 As Coolidge points out, Marvell managed to maintain a very delicate position between the Court and the Non Conformist camp, and to avoid actually joining either group. 11 Again, we would expect as much, having seen the same habit of mind at work in the composition of The Garden.

Time itself was against Marvell's continuance in the lyric mode. A reading of Marvell's corporation letters brings one to a realization of the meticulousness with which Marvell carried out the business entrusted to him for nineteen years by the voters of Hull. What little time remained was devoted to political satire and pamphlets, to national and international problems, to a long embassy on the Continent, to trips (for unknown purposes) to Holland, and to conversation with his close friends, most of them adversely affected by the Restoration. A survey of Marvell's actions from 1657 to 1678 is enough to take away any surprise we may feel at his abandonment of lyric verse. But something even more fundamental than time is at

10 Grosart, I, xxxi.
work in that abandonment. It was a predictable consequence of the development of Marvell’s mind from 1649 to 1652, and it was rooted in tendencies Marvell displayed even before 1649.

As we have seen in our survey of Marvell’s lyrics, the satirical attitude frequently reveals itself even in the poet’s lyrical vision. Flecknoe was open satire, but the satirical touch returns in The Coronet, The Nymph, and Upon Appleton House. Marvell, the poet of pastoral love and penitential religion, was, by his own testimony a failure, and the Marvell we meet in 1649 to 1652 is dominantly a questioner, less a singer. He was seeking a vision of reality that was free of the distortions to which he alluded in Eyes and Tears, and his lyrics reflect the intellectual and emotional crisis through which his search was leading him. The lyrics, thus, are directed in upon Marvell’s own soul, the one constant element in an illusive and ever-shifting world. Once he had found the relationship actually linking his soul to the outer reality, once he could be certain that what he saw and said of life and the world was no longer warped by gratuitous assumptions, Marvell felt himself free to turn his attention outward, to depend upon the proper functioning of his soul and his faculties to preserve him in truth and support him in integrity.

Seen in this perspective, The Garden is a culminating lyric and almost a farewell to lyric verse. The Garden is Marvell’s last lyrical exploration of the workings of his own soul. Free, at last, of falsely grounded emotions, of falsely grounded evaluations of society, Marvell, in the years that followed, devoted himself to the task which Fairfax did not, could not, perform: the attempt to restore England to the good life. Now only the times
themselves could hinder Marvell. That they did so successfully was not his fault.

It should be noted, too, that besides the incompatibility of the Fairfax and Marvell concepts of retirement, besides the lack of time, and besides the naturalness of a turning from the inner to the outer reality, there was a limitation in *The Garden* itself which would contribute to the abandonment of the lyric mode by Marvell. *The Garden* solves the problem of the relationship of an individual to nature. It leaves unsolved the problem of society's travesty of that relationship, and it leaves unsolved the problem of society's interference with the individual who tries to preserve himself in a valid relationship with nature. Thus, *The Garden* was only half the solution required by Marvell's situation, and Marvell's turning outward, his long struggle for liberty of conscience, his precarious position between sects and parties, and his concern over the plight of the Quakers and other non-established groups, reflect his attempt to furnish the other half.

Such is the motivation, the present writer thinks, behind Marvell's lines in the *Bermudas*, where he contrasts the liberty of conscience experienced by men like Oxenbridge and, later, the Quaker refugees, in those far-off islands, and expresses the faint hope that such an attitude of simple piety as those religious exiles possess may someday affect even England. Probably written sometime after July, 1653, the *Bermudas*, revives the imagery of *The Garden* against the current religious situation, affirms the

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12 Margoliouth, I, 220.
principle of religious liberty, and comments on the absence of that liberty in England. It is not a self-questioning poem. It is, rather, a lyric complement to the satires.

If any fair statement is to be made about Marvell's exile from his paradise, that statement must, the present writer thinks, define the exile as a positive, self-imposed discomfort, not as a matter of mere circumstance and of inescapable suffering. Marvell was wise enough to know, one thinks, that no solution that failed to change society could last for the individual as long as isolation remained a necessary condition. He chose, rather, to take his new-found confidence in himself into the next problem, the finding of the social solution.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Marvell's *The Garden* is metaphysical in the full, philosophic sense, not just in the technique of its wit, or in the use of some philosophic system to provide a merely poetic solution for the poet's problem. The philosophic center of *The Garden*, as we saw in chapter three, is a concept of the relation of man to nature. That relation hinges upon the act of knowledge, described and analyzed by Marvell in stanza VI of *The Garden*, involves the harmonious interaction of all man's faculties, and results in the proper disposition of all his passions. Further, by means of the speculative ascent which characterizes the act of knowledge, man is able to understand something of the Divine Mind, and to prepare himself for the Beatific Vision. Marvell's concept of the relation of man to nature, we may conclude from our study, is a middle-of-the-road concept, preserving the dignity both of sense experience and of contemplation. Essentially, Marvell's metaphysics and epistemology are Scholastic rather than Platonic, but to call him a Scholastic poet would be almost as misleading as to call him a Platonic poet. From the Platonic tradition, Marvell received a large part of his diction. From the Scholastic tradition, he received a habit of mind, which led him to the conclusions he expressed in *The Garden*. What we find in *The Garden* was, for Marvell, a fresh and original philosophic creation, his own solution to problems of his own times. *The Garden* is not the result of applying a
philosophy, but of making a philosophy. As such, The Garden represents the mind of a man who was a careful, subtle, and original thinker as well as a first-rate poet.

One irony of Marvell's biography is that he seems to have spent his whole life in search of a belief that he himself had rejected before he reached his twentieth year. The Catholic doctrines of Sanctifying Grace and actual grace are concerned with the sort of participation in the Divine Life and right-ordering of man's actions and intentions on earth that Marvell longed for in his A Drop of Dew, and that he tried to reason out for himself in The Garden. Had his contact with the Jesuits in 1639 resulted in his conversion, Marvell's courage, determination, and honesty might have combined with his religion to give us an outstanding Catholic poet. As it happened, however, Catholicism survived and eventually expanded again in England, but Marvell found himself caught between camps. He was disappointed with reformed Christianity, suspicious of Roman Christianity, and determined to live in the spirit, not to surrender to world. His lot was not enviable at all.

That The Garden should, for almost three centuries, be set aside as interesting but obscure is one of the little mysteries of literary history. It may be that 1681 was not a good year for Marvell's kind of metaphysics to be aired. The seventeenth century was the era of a great change in the concept of knowledge, the era of the conversion from the metaphysical to the empirical outlook. That conversion was attended by two major complications: (1) the doctrine of the Inner Light, which seemed to release man from his dependency upon the temporal knowledge-process; and (2) the opposition
between the new science and the late efflorescence of Platonic and occult philosophies. The first was to become an enduring feature of English religious thought through the agency of the Quakers, of the Congregationalists, and of hosts of individuals who saw in it an answer to the threat posed by Empiricism. The second was to result in the identification of virtually all metaphysical reasoning with the Platonic premises, Scholasticism being submerged and thought of as a dead letter.

Those two complications are almost enough to account for the poor acceptance accorded to The Garden. Critics, having tried to read the poem in terms of the Inner Light, of Platonism, of Kabbalism, or of Hermeticism, none of which fit it at all well, had little choice, this writer thinks, but to set The Garden aside as obscure or, in more recent instances, to treat it as the expression of an unresolved conflict. A complete account of the shelving of The Garden would doubtless involve other elements besides those noted above. But, if the seventeenth-century conversion from metaphysical to empirical thought is actually at the core of The Garden's poor acceptance, such an account would be well worth the effort. It might be expected to cast additional light on the last three centuries of literary criticism and particularly on the eighteenth century and the perplexities of Pope's An Essay on Criticism. Such an attempt, however, is matter for another thesis, not for the conclusion of this one.

Another item that deserves a full-length treatment, but ought to be touched on here, is the comparison between Marvell's concept of the relation between man and nature and the concepts held by such other poets as Pope, and Wordsworth. The drift of such a comparison may be suggested by the brief
notes that follow.

Alexander Pope, less than a century after Marvell’s pleasant hours in the Fairfax garden, was to voice sentiments similar to Marvell’s in a number of ways. Pope’s agreement with Marvell about moderation and usefulness, for example, makes the fourth epistle of Pope’s Moral Essays, and especially lines 23 to 28, a fit companion piece for Marvell’s lines about Nun Appleton. Pope’s estimate of man in the second epistle (I. 1-20) harmonizes nicely with the closing stanzas of Marvell’s Upon Appleton House. And Pope’s statement of the Chain-of-Being (An Essay on Man, II, vii) is not in opposition to the notion we found in Marvell’s The Garden of a chain of thoughts leading to the final thought, but there is a discernible difference. Marvell, after his long debate, affirmed the ability of the intellect to make a speculative ascent. He affirmed that ability meta-physically. Pope, on the other hand, stated the objective existence of a series of analogues while at the same time stressing the severe limitations of the human mind. "The idea of the 'way up,' of the ascensio mentis ad Deum per scalas creaturarum, has been abandoned," by Pope.¹ We might add to this last remark that the sort of objectivity that has entered Pope’s view is empirically oriented, though still expressed in generalities. Nature interposes between man and God, loses its metaphysical transparency, and leaves man to say only that "spite of pride, in erring reason’s spite, / One truth is clear, whatever is, is right." (An Essay on Man, I, x, 13-14).

The concept of a living interaction of the human and the Divine Mind was to return less than a century after Pope's utterances, in the writings of William Wordsworth; but Wordsworth's concept of man's relation to nature was differently oriented than Marvell's. Wordsworth felt intimations of a reality deeper than the reach of sensation, and found the validation of his feelings in a Coleridgean doctrine of imagination. He was like Marvell in preferring, on principle, the simple and the useful to the artificial and the socially complicated. And he was like Marvell in believing that contact with nature sets the inner life of a man in order. Neither was blind, either, to the cruelty of nature in some of its manifestations, though both came close to affirming the doctrine of the noble savage from time to time. Where they differ most markedly is that Wordsworth's relation to nature remained intuitive, aesthetic, and superior to reason, as he understood it; whereas, Marvell's relation to nature was grounded in the ordinary motions of human reason, was a philosophic illumination rather than a mystical experience. But by Wordsworth's time, the old Scholastic habit had been almost wholly converted to Empiricism. He simply had not the same basis to which to reduce his experiences.

To carry these comparisons further would be to go beyond the scope of this thesis. What was intended and attempted in the preceding chapters was

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3 Bernbaum, p. 89.
simply an explication of Marvell’s verses, especially The Garden, in terms of the poet’s biography and of the mid-seventeenth-century background. Underlying that attempt was the present writer’s conviction that an English poem requires an English explication, that a grave disservice is done, not only to the poet and his works, but to the history of literature as well, by attempting to apply ancient, modern, foreign, or occult interpretations before evaluating the actual circumstances in which a poem was written. Every human utterance is somewhat ambiguous, somewhat obscure. The older the utterance, the more difficult the case becomes. Until we know the real context of the poet’s act of creation, we are not much better off than a politician’s audience. We have the equivalent of a vague generality, which may mean so many things other than those it first suggests.

Three steps were involved in the present attempt to clarify a poet’s utterance. The first was to trace the events of Marvell’s life in search of material for a statement of Marvell’s position among the definable political and religious groups of his age. We found that Marvell began as an ardent Royalist, ended as a moderate Royalist. In the years of the Commonwealth, he was able to admire the positive qualities of Cromwell’s character and to recognise the actual benefits conferred upon England by Cromwell’s rule. In the years of the Restoration, he seems, while rejecting the idea of another Commonwealth, to have favored the House of Orange rather than the Stuarts, for religious reasons. As far as can be determined, Marvell divorced himself from Anglicanism as early as 1645. He seems to have affiliated himself with no other sect thereafter, though his sympathies were with the Quakers and other religious independents, rather than with the Presbyterians. One does
not find a definite and consistent party or sectarian line in Marvell's thought.

The next step was to consider the intellectual and social tensions to which an independent, such as Marvell, would have been subjected. The fundamental movement from Scholasticism to Empiricism and the Platonic experiment were considered, together with the skeptic, mystic, magic, and occult solutions, and the doctrine of the Inner Light. Witchcraft and pagan survivals were also discussed because of the emphasis they gave, in Marvell's times, to the failure of reformed religion and philosophy. We emerged from these considerations with a frame of reference for the explication that followed.

The third step, the explication itself, was opened with an examination of Marvell's known lyric output. In this examination, we found traces of the poet's progress from Cavalier idealism to the moderate realism of The Garden. Vestiges of the skeptic, mystic, magic, and occult solutions were found, and experiments in Pantheism and Platonism were noted. So, too, were the effects of the act of regicide of 1649. But The Garden was found to be centered upon the old, Scholastic approach to reality, and to have subsumed Marvell's attachment to classical myth, to pastoral life, and to English pagan survivals under his attachment to greenness as symbolic of life, nature, and the Divine Mind. Marvell's The Garden emerges as a thoroughly English and definitely independent utterance.

Having completed the three basic steps of the thesis, we turned, in chapter four, to the presentation of reasons for thinking that Marvell's later abandonment of lyric verse for prose and satire was a natural development, not just the result of circumstance. His later life seems to be in
harmony with his habit of mind at the time of the writing of The Garden. Chapter five suggests reasons for the poor acceptance of The Garden by later generations, offers some remarks toward distinguishing Marvell's concept of nature from those of other poets, and states the rationale and motivation of the thesis.

The poetry of Marvell is as yet far from being completely annotated or discussed. Little scraps of information come drifting in each year. Studies of the mental transformation that swept England in the seventeenth century are slowly multiplying, as also are studies of English life and lore for that age. Perhaps it will be possible, in a few years, to begin a more ambitious and better informed project than the present thesis, to settle upon a more definite order for the lyrics, and to relate the biographical and historical items more closely to the utterances of the poet. Such a study would cast valuable light upon Marvell's times by showing us how an uncommitted and level-headed man met their challenge. Such a study may show us definitively that Marvell was a major poet.
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APPROVAL SHEET

The thesis submitted by William Dennis Sullivan has been read and approved by a board of three members of the Department of English.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated, and that the thesis is now given final approval with reference to content, form, and mechanical accuracy.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts.

June 2, 1961
Date

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