

A STUDY OF THE WORKING OF MILTON'S IMAGINATION AS REVEALED
IN THE PORTRAYAL OF THE CHIEF CHARACTERS IN "PARADISE LOST",
"PARADISE REGAINED" AND "SAMSON AGONISTES".

Abstract of Subject of Study.

After some suggestions concerning Milton's poems, and imagination in general, the chief influential factors of his life are brought forward in an attempt to trace, first, how his imagination worked upon his life-experience to produce his mature attitude to God and man, and later, how it works upon his life-experience and mature attitude in enabling him to portray the chief characters in his poems.

Suggestions connected with 'primary' and 'secondary' imagination, or inspiration and self-directed reasoning-power, lead to the opinion that Milton came to depend too much upon his self-directed reasoning power for his understanding of God, and by its means created out of himself a conception of God to which he tried in vain fully to conform, with results which are reflected in his three poems.

As characters, God and the Son of God represent Milton himself, consciously under the rule of reason, but they are only portrayed poetically when reason is in abeyance to inspiration. Satan represents a large part of Milton himself in rebellion against the rule of reason, and therefore is continually surrounded by poetry. Adam and Eve, Samson and Dalila represent Milton himself and woman as he sees her; they show how he would be ruled by reason but cannot be, and how woman, to him, rebels against the rule of man and of reason, as he himself in Satan rebels against his own idea of God.

Finally an explanation is offered for his manner of restricting his characters to a portrayal of himself, while, in all, the study is a collection of ideas, many of which not only defy inclusion in an abstract, but, so far, have also defied their owner to control them fully, or, within the time appointed, to reduce them under the unifying rule of law and order.

A STUDY OF THE WORKING OF MILTON'S IMAGINATION AS REVEALED
IN THE PORTRAYAL OF THE CHIEF CHARACTERS IN "PARADISE LOST",
"PARADISE REGAINED", AND "SAMSON AGONISTES".

Thesis submitted by

Gladys Mary Shapcott

for the M.A. degree, May 1930.

Introductory: Imagination and Poetry.

Chapter I. The Portrayal of God and the Son of God.

I. The Portrayal of Satan.

III. The Portrayal of Adam and Eve.

IV. Recitals and Conclusions.

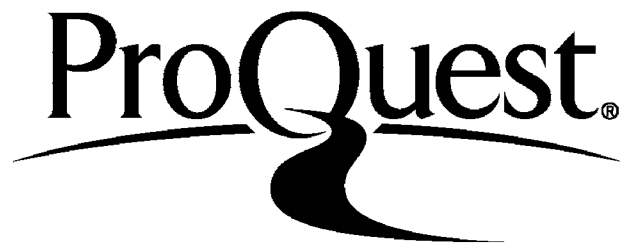
ProQuest Number: 10097150

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



ProQuest 10097150

Published by ProQuest LLC(2016). Copyright of the Dissertation is held by the Author.

All rights reserved.

This work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.
Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

ProQuest LLC
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

A STUDY OF THE WORKING OF MILTON'S IMAGINATION AS REVEALED
IN THE PORTRAYAL OF THE CHIEF CHARACTERS IN "PARADISE LOST",
"PARADISE REGAINED", AND "SAMSON AGONISTES".

	<u>page.</u>
Preface	i

PART I.

Milton's Poems, his Imagination and his Life.

Chapter I. The Approach to the Study.	1
II. Influential Factors in the Development of Milton's Mature Attitude towards Life, as recorded by his earliest biographers.	22
III. The Subjective Development of Milton's Mature Attitude towards God and Life.	46

PART II.

The Portrayal of the Chief Characters.

Introductory, Imagination and Poetry.	69
Chapter I. The Portrayal of God and the Son of God.	72
II. The Portrayal of Satan.	102
III. The Portrayal of Man and Woman.	128
IV. Results and Conclusions.	155

A STUDY OF THE WORKING OF MILTON'S IMAGINATION AS REVEALED
IN THE PORTRAYAL OF THE CHIEF CHARACTERS IN "PARADISE LOST",
"PARADISE REGAINED", AND "SAMSON AGONISTES".

Preface.

There is a famous proverbial remark that fools step in where angels fear to tread. Foolishness is ignorance, and in the confidence of ignorance this study was begun. Before long it led on to such depths and heights of human experience, into such perplexities of thought, and to such limitations of understanding, that the only safe way out seemed by retreat in flight. But, at the moment that retreat was contemplated, there flashed into consciousness the thought suggested by Browning in "A Grammarian's Funeral". It may be a better thing to aim high and to fail than to succeed because the aim is low. In the renewed confidence that the poet's faith is right this piece of work was afterwards carried through to some kind of a conclusion. That conclusion, however, is such, and the whole so incomplete, that under the title to which it

conforms, the present study cannot claim to be more than a series of beginnings. Such is the fate which must attend the inexperienced though enthusiastic student, who, with a year or so at his disposal, sets out upon a task which before long he discovers could more than fill up his time if he made it his life-work.

Therefore with full knowledge of its ambitious nature and incomplete results, this venturesome attempt is laid before those whose fate it will be to peruse it.

Many thanks are due to Professor Abercrombie and to Mr Routh, to Professor Edgell, Miss Covernton and Miss Haydon, for the hints and suggestions by which they made a difficult task easier and more open to success. But above all, my thanks are due to that great Master, without whose daily help and guidance not one sentence worth reading could have been written on a subject which leads to mysteries of life so universal and profound.

PART I.

MILTON'S POEMS, HIS IMAGINATION AND HIS LIFE.

P A R T I.

MILTON'S POEMS, HIS IMAGINATION, AND HIS LIFE.

Chapter I.

THE APPROACH TO THE STUDY.

This study arose out of a love of the beauty of Milton's poetry. It was approached with a general interest, but soon developed a trend of its own, for the preliminary reading of the three poems opened up a problem which a student of the working of Milton's imagination could not escape. The poetry surrounding the characters was often full of the greatest beauty, expressed in imagery and melody, yet the portrayal of the characters themselves, especially those of God and the Son of God, often revealed opinions of God and man so severe and unsympathetic that they were with difficulty attributed to the same poet who wrote with such beauty concerning outward appearances and surroundings. A poet with such an

appreciation of the visible beauty of God as it is manifested in this created world might well be expected to hold an equally comprehensive, appreciative conception of the personality of God Himself and His attitude towards His created human beings.

The beauty of his descriptions of outward attributes may be suggested by such lines as those describing Satan's rebel angels:

"an host
Innumerable as the stars of night
Or stars of morning, dewdrops, which the sun
Impearls on every leaf and every flower."¹

or those describing the God Himself,

"thee, Author of all being,
Fountain of light, thy self invisible
Amidst the glorious brightness where Thou sitt'st
Throned inaccessible - "²

or the Son of God,

"He on the wings of Cherub rode sublime
On the crystalline sky, in sapphire throned"³

or Adam and Eve,

"for in their looks divine
The image of their glorious Maker shone
Truth, wisdom, sanctitude, severe and pure."⁴

or Dalila weeping,

"Wetting the borders of her silken veil."⁵

- (1) Paradise Lost, V, 744-7.
- (2) ibid. III, 374-7.
- (3) ibid. VI, 771-2.
- (4) ibid. IV, 291-3.
- (5) Samson Agonistes, 730.

These might be prolonged indefinitely, but by them must be placed others, revealing aspects of inward personality, such as the attitude of God to sinful Israel,

"till God at last
Wearied with their iniquities, withdraw
His presence from among them, and avert
His holy eyes, resolving from thenceforth
To leave them to their own polluted ways;"¹

or the general impression He leaves upon man,

"But the voice of God
To mortal ear is dreadful."²

Then there are the lines describing the future glory of the Son of God and how He will bring a day

"of respiration to the just
And vengeance to the wicked."³

In "Paradise Regained" the Son of God as Christ speaks the well-known lines concerning mankind,

"And what the people but a herd confused
A miscellaneous rabble, who extol
Things vulgar, and, well-weighed, scarce worth the
praise?"⁴

In "Samson Agonistes" God is suggested as good, but distant, "the Interminable", and beyond man's power to comprehend.

Examining more closely the opinions concerning God and man revealed in the three poems, we find that Milton's general idea of God is that of an invisible Being, infinitely good, and manifesting Himself in the outward glory

- (1) Paradise Lost, XII, 106-110.
 (2) ibid. XII, 235-6.
 (3) ibid. XII, 540-1.
 (4) Paradise Regained, III, 49-51.

of the world, merciful to the repentant, but severe to the persistently wicked whom He punishes in hell for all eternity. His chief abode is distant in heaven, and there He dwells, sending down His spirit upon the few who turn to Him, but casting off the sinners who need Him most. His Son also is merciful to those who repent, but as severe as His Father to the wicked, and without sympathy for the ignorant and foolish.

Through the poems, too, there echoes the belief that mankind as a whole are heading for destruction, that only a few men are worth saving, and that while there is one virtuous woman here and there, all the rest are to man "A cleaving mischief"¹, "Adverse and turbulent"².

His conception of a God who can be so severe, of a Son of God who is so exclusive, and his attitude of dissatisfaction and condemnation towards his fellow men hardly seem to be in accord with the exquisite beauty of many lines of the poetry. They suggest that there may have been something unsatisfying in the life-experience of a poet who can give expression to such beauty, yet be to many so unsatisfying in his interpretation of God and so severe in judging man.

The interest which the problem of this discordance aroused led on to a study of some of the influential factors

(1) Samson Agonistes, 1039.

(2) ibid. 1040.

of Milton's life-experience to see how his imagination worked upon them to produce his mature attitude to God and thence to life itself. This was undertaken in the belief that man's attitude to God is the supreme factor in his life, and therefore the most far reaching influence upon all that he thinks and does.

After the development of this mature attitude to God had been traced, its bearings upon the rest of his life were considered, especially upon his attitude to his fellow men and women.

This was followed by a return to the poems and a more detailed study of the portrayal of the chief characters and their attributes, with the purpose of seeing more exactly how the working of his imagination reflected his life-experience in them. In the course of this more detailed study one or two interesting results of his attitude were traced, and these will be illustrated in some of the later chapters¹.

It is not possible, however, to proceed to a study of the working of Milton's imagination upon his life-experience without some guiding principle as to the meaning of the word imagination. The purpose of the next few pages therefore is to suggest in what senses the word is to be interpreted throughout the course of the study, and what

(1) The views concerning God and man expressed so generally through the poems were felt to be those of Milton's personal experience, and not dramatic expressions for the time being. To corroborate this, careful search was made into his Treatise of Christian Doctrine and confirmation found there for each one, that they were what Milton himself came to feel and believe as his life developed.

particular aspect of it will be considered.

He is a rash man who tries to define imagination, for it is a power which passes beyond the limits of our present understanding. Both poets and psychologists are still doing their best to comprehend it, but up till now the poets have been the more successful. The psychologists are finding out a little day by day concerning its manner of working upon man's gathered and stored experience of life, but they cannot yet definitely say what it is. Some of the poets, however, have described it from their own experience and without pretending fully to understand it have suggested its essential characteristics.

No poet has come nearer to interpreting it than Wordsworth, but it is impossible completely to grasp or explain what he means without reading the whole of Book IV of his "Excursion", in which he reveals what imagination means to him. In Book XIV of the "Prelude", however, he defines it more shortly as,

"but another name for absolute power
And clearest insight, amplitude of mind
And reason in her most exalted mood."¹

yet this definition requires a great part of his "Prelude" as its commentary before the would-be learner really grasps what he is trying to convey.

Coleridge also, in his "Biographia Literaria" essays to define imagination. He divides it into two kinds,

(1) Prelude, XIV, lines 188-191.

'primary imagination' and 'secondary imagination'. Of the former he says "The primary imagination I hold to be the living power and prime Agent of all human perception, and as a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I am."¹ He compares with it the working of the 'secondary imagination', a form of it, "co-existing with the conscious will, yet still as identical with the primary in the kind of its agency, and differing only in degree, and in the mode of its operation."²

Wordsworth and Coleridge both reveal why man finds the defining of imagination so difficult, for they both connect it with the absolute, the eternal, the Infinite. Through it the Infinite God comes into contact with finite man, and by means of it man may have experiences which give him glimpses as 'through a glass darkly' of mysteries which defy his unaided reasoning powers, and are more than he can ever describe or fully define through the medium of words.

The distinction which Coleridge makes between primary and secondary imagination suggests one of the chief underlying ideas of this study. The 'secondary imagination' man may direct with his conscious will, while the 'primary imagination' requires that man should surrender his will to its power. The former he may command but for the latter he has to sue, and although of the one he may be the master,

(1) Biog. Lit. Ch.XIII.

(2) ibid.

of the other he must be the servant. He must wait upon a power greater than himself, must yield himself to it with conscious willing surrender, and express himself as it bids. For this reason the working of the primary imagination within man is often termed inspiration, to show that the power of it comes from a source greater than himself.

Imagination, 'primary' or 'secondary' works upon recollections of past experience, of sensations, feelings and thoughts and the inward reactions in which they result. By its power these are re-grouped and combined in some mysterious way peculiar to the personality of the individual, and then expressed through some form of imagery in the course of sharing an experience with others. The recollections or mental images arising from one experience may associate themselves with images arising from a multitude of other experiences. By means of them the literary man may either present directly in words a particular experience he wishes to share, as when he describes a fire he has seen, or he may represent it in a different setting, as when he includes the description in a novel he is writing, but disguised by a difference of place and time. He may, however, forget the experience which originally gave rise to the particular recollections of which he is making use, and in expressing himself may attribute them to an experience quite different.

That part of man's being which holds all that he has forgotten has recently been much discussed, and is still much more talked about than understood. In his book "The Road to Xanadu" Professor Lowes calls this deep, unconscious part of man's memory "The Well" and his work gives some idea of the number of "forgotten recollections" it may hold, and of the way in which they may reappear transposed, re-adapted and unrecognised, when they are the material out of which a poet's imagination is moulding the expression in words of some experience he wishes to share with his fellow men.

But this deep hidden supply is only fully at the poet's service when he is surrendered to the power of his primary imagination. When he is using his secondary, self-directed power, he is confined to selecting from his consciously remembered supply of images and recollections. For instance, he may desire to summon up the image of an oak-tree which he has seen in Spain, and compare it mentally with one he has seen in England. If, however, he has forgotten what the Spanish tree looks like, all his efforts to summon up that image of what he knows he has once seen, may be in vain. He can direct the working of his imagination to a certain extent, but he cannot command the full extent of his memory. Much of man's reasoning is done in this self-directed, consciously selective way.

But when man is surrendered to inspiration, under the power of his primary imagination, the deep supply of his unconscious memory seems to open at its command. It works upon these deep-hidden recollections, transposes them, disguises them often beyond the powers of recognition belonging to his conscious self. It also fuses those it selects into an organic whole, and makes them serve the purpose of expressing the experience which, as a poet, he may feel impelled to share with his fellows. Thus, the man under the power of his primary imagination is enabled to express himself more fully than the one who is working by means of his self-directed conscious power alone. He may even express more of himself than he knows. By surrendering himself to this great power, he does not lose his personality, he expresses it more fully, and all the work he so produces is highly peculiar to himself, and fully stamped with his individuality. By surrendering himself to his primary imagination, he is enabled to assert himself more completely.

It is possible for a philosopher always to work by means of his secondary imagination, which may often be identified with his self-directed reasoning power. The poet, however, must surrender himself to his primary imagination or be no poet, though there will often be passages in his poems, intermittently, which are the outcome of his secondary power, and not always easy to distinguish from those which are the product of his primary.

The ideas concerning the imagination which are important for this study are, first, that through the primary imagination, a Power greater than man works upon his recollections and experiences, and directs his self expression; secondly, that man has to surrender himself completely to the power of his primary imagination in order to express himself fully and individually by the help of it; thirdly, that his primary imagination makes use of a wealth of "forgotten recollections" which are in the depth of his unconscious memory; and finally, that there is a secondary, self-directed conscious form of the imagination which man may use, but by which he cannot obtain command over the full wealth of memories stored in the deep and unconscious part of his being.

It is not surprising that in the presence of the primary imagination, man stands reverent and humble, and to the working of Milton's primary imagination upon his life experience, as it is reflected in the portrayal of the chief characters in his poems, attention is here chiefly directed. Therefore, it may be as well to add that in connecting primary imagination with life-experience, and with unconscious as well as conscious recollections, there is assumed, though not necessarily comprehended, a unity of being between God and man, the Infinite and the finite, which enables the human and the divine to be expressed together in any of man's creative efforts.

There are also certain ideas concerning God and life which are fundamental to the point of view adopted in this study. For this reason, they will be stated as simply as possible in the last part of this chapter, and though they may not gain the approval of all who read them, they are being put down in the faith that they will be read with patience and with that generous judgment which is the mark of the liberal human spirit.

The first idea is that the relationship of man to God can be very like that of man to the working of his 'secondary' or 'primary' imagination. 'Out of the experiences of his life man may form certain ideas concerning God, shape them with his conscious reasoning power, and then having formed them, model his life upon them as far as he can. He may formulate the laws by which he believes his God to rule, then pray to God, offer his plans to God, ask God to bless them, and so attempt to carry on his life according to the principles he has himself consciously approved or created. He may also attempt to interpret or define God to others out of his self-consciously created ideas.

But there is another kind of relationship with God. As man develops and consciously forms his ideas concerning Him, he may be led to the belief that his self-directed thinking powers do not give him sufficient knowledge of God, that the best way of learning of God, is not by

asserting himself in His presence, but by waiting upon Him, surrendering himself to Him and listening for God rather than offering Him his own ideas. Then, in a manner at which he cannot cease to marvel, he may find that God speaks directly to him, controls him, guides him, strengthens him, and continually interprets life to him. By his surrender, God, the Infinite, is made able to work within him and through him in his life, just as the poet by surrender enables the power of his primary imagination to work within him and through him in creating his poem. The poet under inspiration expresses his experience in his poem, the self-surrendered man of God through God's inspiration becomes able to express his experience in his life. He will only achieve his purpose step by step, because, for a long time, self rebels obstinately against surrender, but he makes it the goal and ideal of his service in life. Man appreciates, rather than understands the truth, that when a poet surrenders himself most completely to his primary imagination he is then enabled to express himself most fully in his poem. By self-surrender he arrives at his fullest powers of self-assertion, because the inspiring power that rises within him enables him to express the Infinite through the fullest possible expression of himself. In the same way, the man who tries to surrender himself most completely to his God, seems to be enabled to express himself most fully

in his life work. He believes that he receives the fullest experience of Life, and is enabled to give fullest expression to that experience, and to himself by means of it.

Between the man who moulds his life upon a self-conscious created Idea of God, and the one who achieves most fully the surrender of himself to the control of the God whom by faith he recognises as a direct, living Power, there are many grades of believers, surrendering a smaller or greater part of their wills to the direction of a present living God.

Fundamental to this study is the faith that the ideal way of life is that of complete surrender to the direction of a living God, day by day, hour by hour, and the belief that only by that surrender can man come to the fullest self-expression and self-assertion in his life. Coupled with this, is a conviction that the greatest poets (of whom many probably are not yet born) will be those who, in addition to individual talents of the highest order, surrender themselves in their lives most completely to the direction of their God, for they will achieve the fullest self-expression in life, and will, therefore, have the fullest experience to provide recollections and imagery out of which their primary imagination can shape symbols of self-expression in their poems. Milton himself drew near to a vision of this ideal when he said that the man who would be a great poet must make his life a true poem.

This belief in the experience and effect of self-surrender to an invisible God may be paralleled in the visible world by man's manner of reacting to the beauty of Nature. It seems as if he must become receptive in order fully to experience that beauty and later to express it and share it in some way with his fellows, by means of words, if he be a poet or of some other form of literary bent. If he approaches one of Nature's manifestations, such as a beautiful sunset, intent on applying to it various self-made laws concerning beauty, he is likely not to appreciate it as he would if he surrendered himself entirely to experiencing that beauty. In a receptive, surrendered mood, where self is only asserted in that surrender, he seems to gather into himself a host of impressions from which images, memories and recollections will be stored in his mind, ready at the call of his imagination when later he wants to share his experience in some way with others.

With these ideas concerning God and beauty and surrender, may be associated one or two more opinions of importance in the development of this study, and concerning the ways in which man may have experience of God.

One is the belief that man can experience and appreciate God in His outward manifestation of Himself in the beauty of Nature; that he may look upon the glories of the outward world, the sun and the sea, the hills, the meadows and the flowers, and in experiencing their beauty, may

become alive to the living presence of a common Creator.

Another is the belief that man can experience God inwardly as an infinitely loving Personality, and that as this infinitely loving Personality, He is best interpreted to man by the Christ, not only historically, but eternally in daily, intimate, living, loving communion with himself.

The important belief in this connection is that full and satisfying self-expression in life only comes to that man who, in addition to becoming receptive to and appreciative of God's outward glory in nature, is led to surrender himself most fully to the guidance of a living Christ, who interprets to him God Himself as an infinitely loving Personality; and conversely that full and satisfying self-expression in life is not likely to come to the man who is not led, consciously or unconsciously, to surrender himself to the guidance and will of a Christ who interprets God the Father as Infinite Love. Such a one may be expected to show much dissatisfaction with life, and to express that dissatisfaction either in connection with God as he conceives Him, or with man and woman as they appear to him, or with his nation and environment generally. This last assertion is made in the belief that in all human nature there are certain urges, great needs and desires, whose purposes are to direct man towards the conscious recognition

of an invisible, eternal, loving God who is the Centre and Source, and at the same time one with His visible, transitory inhabited universe.

One of these urges is here believed to be a deep-seated love for visible, natural beauty and an inborn sensitiveness to it, not completely eradicated by the most extensive neglect or abuse. Another is believed to be an equally deep-seated desire for an ideal, loving, strengthening personal fellowship with some one who will help to interpret life satisfactorily, and will enable him to express himself fully in his life.

In keeping with these opinions is the belief that as soon as a man becomes conscious of a vision of great natural beauty he is drawn to it, becomes receptive to it, and gives himself up to the experience of it; also that as soon as he beholds a vision of some one who appears to him the ideal of loving, strengthening companionship, he is drawn to that one and becomes possessed of a desire to surrender himself to his control. Normally, surrender of self is the hardest task which man can be set, nor will he ever start out to achieve it except at the call of some ideal which draws him irresistibly. Therefore, man will only be drawn to the task of surrendering himself completely to the control of God when he awakens to an irresistible vision of the living beauty of His personality. The belief upon which many of

the following conclusions are based is that in the Christ, as He interprets a God of infinite love, man may be led to discover such a vision, and in comparison may find himself restricted, self-centred, weak and sinful. This discovery may urge him to set out upon the task of surrendering himself more and more to the control and guidance of that Christ, especially as he gradually realises that in his own strength he cannot attain to that beauty of personality which he so much appreciates and would make his own. The effect of such a surrender in the life of any man will be that step by step he learns more from God Himself of the infinite depth and extent of His love to mankind. Through it he will be taught to go out in God's strength, ready, if necessary, to lay down his life for the most sinful, as he increasingly realises that the Christ in other men is still laying down His life for him. In such a life in the love and service of God and his fellows, man will find complete and satisfying self-expression.

For this study special emphasis is laid upon the belief that before man can begin to make this full surrender he must have a vision of God irresistibly attractive, infinitely beautiful, infinitely loving, infinitely satisfying, able to give him the highest, completest form of pleasure through His inspiring, strengthening fellowship. Without such a vision of God he will neither be willing nor able to yield the whole of himself to His control.

If God is presented first of all as a God of Justice, of severity and retribution, a God removed from close intercourse with man, He will not appeal sufficiently to that inborn yearning which goes out towards a Being, able to give intimate fellowship, and infinitely loving and lovable, rather than to one rigidly just in dispensing rewards and punishments according to human standards. To state this idea more psychologically, if God is conceived of as quick to inflict pain, first to be feared and obeyed, and afterwards to be loved, He will not spontaneously attract that eager desire in man, which makes him turn away from all experience which seems to offer pain and discomfort, towards that which seems to offer him the highest pleasure and happiness.

There seem to be many who believe in God, but yet have not had that vision of Him which leads them to give themselves up fully to His control. It follows from preceding opinions, that such will lack a full experience of the personality of God, because they do not make themselves sufficiently receptive of His influence, and as a result, they may be compelled to depend more upon their self-directed reasoning power for their beliefs concerning Him, or upon some external authority, such as the creeds of certain sects, the principles of certain schools of philosophy, or upon the Bible itself.

At the same time, their conception of God may not prove fully satisfying because it does not lead to a full experience of God Himself and His fellowship. In their life, that dissatisfaction may find expression, perhaps in some form of unconscious rebellion against their own conception of God, perhaps in their general attitude towards their environment, perhaps in some work of art through which they manage to escape from the restrictions they have themselves helped to impose.

In the course of this study, it will be suggested how, during the development of his life, Milton caught the vision of God's external beauty in His created world, became receptive to it, experienced it, and was able, by the power of his primary imagination, to express it in his poetry; also how he failed to catch such a glimpse of God's living Personality as would draw him to yield himself fully to Him; how, therefore, his direct experience of God's personality was incomplete, and how he was led to depend chiefly upon his self-directed reasoning powers in interpreting God to himself, with the result that his own conception of God did not satisfy his full personality, which rebels through the medium of his poetry. This is revealed in the course of his three great poems, and nowhere more than in the portrayal of the chief characters as they reflect the working of his primary imagination upon the

many recollections of his life-experience, and especially upon his mature attitude to God.

The latter part of this study will attempt to trace in more detail, some of the results of his appreciation of God's external beauty, but limited experience of His personality, as they are reflected in the portrayal of the characters themselves, in their outward attributes, and in their personal qualities. That stage, however, cannot be reached without some idea of Milton's personal reaction to the chief events of his life, to which the next two chapters will be devoted.

Chapter II.

INFLUENTIAL FACTORS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF MILTON'S MATURE ATTITUDE TO LIFE, AS RECORDED BY HIS EARLIEST BIOGRAPHERS.

Milton's life may be studied directly from the records of his biographers and from autobiographical passages in his works, or indirectly from the way in which he reflects himself generally in those works. To understand how he developed his mature attitude to God and life, one must make use of all three methods, and although the third way of approach does not always give results that can be definitely proved, it may do much towards interpreting him to the sympathetic understanding.

This chapter contains those records from his biographers which are felt to have had a strong influence on his later life. In the following chapter, these facts are associated with such autobiographical references as seem to indicate Milton's own personal reaction to them. This association is combined with an effort to interpret the stages in his subjective development which led to his mature attitude to God and to life. The final purpose of this interpretation

will be developed in later chapters, in the course of the attempt to study how his imagination reflects his life experience in the portrayal of the chief characters in his three poems.

The biographers depended upon are the anonymous biographer whose record was found in 1889 in a volume of Anthony Wood's papers in the Bodleian Library; John Aubrey, who collected facts for a biography which was later written by Anthony Wood; and Edward Phillips, Milton's nephew, whose biography of him was printed in 1694. These biographers do not always agree in details, but in the general trend of their remarks they corroborate each other. In addition to these, use is made of one or two remarks gleaned by Jonathan Richardson from Milton's surviving relatives, and of a law document which has been preserved. Reference has also been made to Masson's larger biographer for certain general facts concerning the people among whom Milton lived and the atmosphere which surrounded his daily life.

Milton was born early on a December morning in 1608 in Bread Street, into a home of comfort and culture, to parents who were of earnest though not narrow Protestant faith, and who surrounded him with all the interest and care which a comfortable Christian home can give.

Besides surrounding him with such a home atmosphere, his parents handed on to him various hereditary

characteristics, among which were handsome features, with possibly a weakness of the eyes, an excellent ear for music, a highly sensitive nature, and a group of characteristics which may be best summed up in the phrase "an inherited seriousness of disposition".

Many statements bear witness to his mental ability, his seriousness of disposition, and willingness to work. Aubrey says: "When he was very young he studied very hard, and sat up very late", also "He had a very good memory, but I believe that his excellent method of thinking and disposing did much to help his memory". The anonymous biographer speaks of "the pregnancy of his parts, and his indefatigable industry", and how in his school days he "wrote several grave and religious poems, and paraphrased some of David's Psalms". Phillips also speaks of "his own happy genius, prompt wit and apprehension, and insuperable industry; for he generally sat up half the night, as well in voluntary improvements of his own choice, as the exact perfecting of his school exercises".

These qualities are not surprising in a son whose father was "an honest, worthy and substantial citizen of London"¹, who met with "success suitable to his industry and prudent conduct of his affairs"², and whose mother was "a woman of incomparable virtue and goodness"; also "a prudent, virtuous wife"³.

(1) Phillips.
 (2) ibid.
 (3) Anonymous.

There is no direct external proof that the form of Christianity which surrounded him in his home was in any way severe, but the fact that Milton's father had been cast out of home in youth for becoming a Protestant suggests that that father might have inherited some stern views concerning God which he would be likely to pass on to his son.

In his early days at home, Milton had for his tutor Thomas Young, described by Masson as a Puritan "bred to hardy literature among the sea-breezes of St Andrews". When he went to St Paul's School he was under the famous Dr Gill, who according to Aubrey, "had his moods and humours, as particularly his whipping fits", and "demonstrated the articles of the Apostles' Creed on the principles of pure reason". During this time his father, already recognising his unusual talents, allowed him at the age of twelve, to sit up past midnight at study.

At Christ's College, Cambridge, he was under the supervision of Dr T. Bainbrigge, reputed 'a severe governor'¹. His first tutor, William Chappell, is reported by Thomas Fuller to have been "remarkable for the strictness of his conversation"² and from his work, 'The Art of Preaching', Masson judges him to have been "a man of dry and meagre nature"³. These men would not be without their influence upon a lad who was naturally of a serious disposition.

(1) Masson. Vol I ch. IV . p100.
 (2) ibid. " " p104
 (3) ibid. " " p106

Milton worked hard at the university, and apart from minor hostilities of attitude, was well respected there, and, says the anonymous biographer, "for his diligent study, his performance of public exercises, and for choice verses, written on the occasions usually solemnized by the universities, as well for his virtuous and sober life, he was in high esteem with the best of his time".

After taking his Master's degree in 1632 he retired for five years to his parents' home at Horton, a quiet country district "near Colebrook in Berkshire"¹. Here he gave himself "to the diligent reading of the best classic authors, both divine and human, sometimes repairing to London, from which he was not far distant, for learning music and the mathematics"². For the whole of this period he was able to pursue his own interests undisturbed, and had with him still the affectionate, devoted attention of his parents.

But the calm of this life was interrupted by his mother's death in 1638, after which he travelled through France to Italy, where he visited the chief towns, and returned by way of Geneva and Switzerland to England, after an absence of just over a year. On his journey he was treated by all with the highest respect, and, according to his anonymous biographer, in Rome "as in all places, he spent his time in the choicest company".

(1) Phillips.

(2) Anonymous biographer.

On his return from Italy, Milton was just over thirty years of age, with the most plastic years of his life behind him, yet much of the experience still to come to him was likely to have a strong influence upon the development of his mature attitudes and opinions. Out of it may be singled certain events of particular importance in this respect, and they may be grouped as those arising out of his domestic and personal life, and those arising out of his public service.

None can deny the far-reaching effect that the state of marriage has upon those who enter into it, and though apparently Milton planned and carried out his marriage within one month, one may well believe that its effects upon him were life long. "After a month's stay, home he returns a married man, that went out a bachelor." (Phillips). His bride was the Royalist maiden, Mary Powell; "she that was very young, and had been bred in a family of plenty and freedom" (anonymous biographer). Instead of appreciating his gifts and his company, as so far, all his relatives had done, she "found it very solutary" (Aubrey) without her gayer companions, with the result that after "she had for a month or thereabout led a philosophical life (Phillips) she left her husband and went home to her mother. Later on, the reversal of her family's fortunes encouraged her to return, and in spite of the pamphlets on Divorce written in the meantime, Milton took her back, partly through the pleading of

her friends, and partly owing to "his own generous nature, more inclinable to reconciliation than to perseverance in anger and revenge" (Phillips). However, he did not forgive her until she appeared completely repentant and subdued, "making submission and begging pardon on her knees before him" (Phillips). By Mary he had one son who died an infant, and three daughters, Anne the cripple, Mary "more like her mother", Deborah "very like her father" (Aubrey). When his wife Mary died in 1652, he remained unmarried for a time, and then married Katherine Woodcock, "a gentle person, a peaceful and agreeable humour" (Aubrey). When, after about a year, she also died, he again remained a widower until about 1663, when he married Elizabeth Minshull "recommended to him by his old friend Dr Paget in Coleman Street" (Phillips).

There are no external records of his life with Katherine Woodcock, but concerning that with Elizabeth Minshull there is preserved for legal purposes the record of the incident in which she so pleased him with his dinner and received the comment, "God have mercy, Betty, I see thou wilt perform according to thy promise in providing me such dishes as I think fit whilst I live, and when I die thou knowest I have left thee all."¹

(1) Sworn testimony of Milton's servant, Todd (1809 ed: vol.1, p.165).

The same record reports the remark of his daughter Mary on the mention of his third marriage, "that was no news to hear of his wedding, but if she could hear of his death, that was something". It also tells how "that all his said children did combine together and counsel his maid servant to cheat him, the deceased, in her marketings, and that his said children had made away some of his books and would have sold the rest of his books to the dunghill women".

These statements are suggestive of the domestic atmosphere in which Milton must have lived until his daughters were sent out to learn embroidery. They also explain the remarks reported in Christopher Milton's testimony, when he witnessed that his brother John willed all to his wife Elizabeth, condemning his "unkind children" by his wife Mary, saying "they having been very undutiful to me"¹. On his daughters' side, however, must be quoted the remarks of Edward Phillips concerning the irksome duty Mary and Deborah had to perform in reading to their father in languages they did not understand, "all which sorts of books to be confined to read, without understanding one word, must needs be a trial of patience almost beyond endurance; yet it was endured by both for a long time".

(1) Christopher Milton's Testimony. Todd (1809 ed.) vol.1, pp.165 ff.

Milton's blindness, which became total about the year 1652, had been coming on for years, according to the anonymous biographer, "from a weakness, which his hard nightly study in his youth had first occasioned". Other reports concerning his later physical health, however, suggest that generally he was well, except for gout which visited him "spring and fall" (Aubrey) in his later days. Concerning the gout the anonymous biographer states that "though he had been long troubled with that disease, inso-much that his knuckles were all callous, yet was he not ever observed to be very impatient", and it was "the gout struck in" (Aubrey) that caused his death, but without pain.

Extending round and beyond his domestic and personal life was the wider environment arising from his public service, which brought to bear upon him influences of a combined personal, religious and political nature.

The success of his first group of pamphlets, concerning church management (1641-1642) made him highly respected in the small but influential educated public circle. He scandalised the Presbyterians with his Divorce pamphlets, 1643, just at the time when the Independents were increasing in power, and after having been summoned before the House of Lords, only to be dismissed, his opinions on liberty brought him steadily more into sympathy with the Independents. This was especially so after, during the course of

his pamphlet "The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates", 1649, he had charged the Presbyterians with being back-sliders in their opposition to the death of the King, Charles I. All this time, in favour with the rising power, he was treated with courtesy and respect, and during the Protectorate "He was, without any seeking of his, by the means of a private acquaintance, who was a member of the new Council of State, chosen Latin Secretary." (anonymous biographer). In this post he increased his reputation for "his abilities and the acuteness of his parts, which had lain hid in his privacy, were soon taken notice of" (anonymous biographer).

The execution of the King in 1649 met with his approval and for some time the course of public events satisfied him, enabling him to bear even his blindness almost with equanimity, as he believed he had sacrificed his eye-sight for his country's good. He "to whom the love of truth and his country was dearer than all things, would not for any danger decline their defence" (anonymous biographer). After Salmasius was discomfited, Milton was blind, but famous through Europe, so much so that distinguished foreigners visiting England wished above all to visit "Oliver Protector and Mr John Milton".

Events so far had a favourable influence upon the development of Milton's mature attitudes and opinions, but the swing of the pendulum back to the Restoration had the

converse effect. External reports concerning this effect, however, are few. He was fortunate in escaping so lightly from the hands of the Royalists, and yet more fortunate in having his interests already partly diverted into a new channel. Since the defeat of Morus in 1655 he had had the help of Andrew Marvell in his Latin Secretaryship, and had had enough leisure from public duties to think about his projected poem.

Even in his retired life in his last house in Artillery Walk he still maintained the respect of the cultured world, and still had many visitors from among the nobility and eminent persons, "nor were the visits of foreigners ever more frequent than in this place, almost to his dying day" (Phillips). Even by the party in power he "was so far from being reckoned disaffected, that he was visited at his house on Bunhill by a chief officer of the State, and desired to employ his pen on their behalf. And when the subject of divorce was under consideration with the Lords, upon the account of the Lord Ross, he was consulted by an eminent member of that house" (anonymous biographer).

These were some of the public events which were likely to have a strong influence upon the development of his mature attitude to life.

But, beyond the circle of his domestic experiences, and the wider one of public events directly affecting him,

lay the whole atmosphere of the period in which he lived. This atmosphere must have had considerable influence on the development of his personal opinions, and no part of it more than the general attitude towards God and religion during that time. For this reason the present chapter is concluded with a brief survey of that attitude as it is reflected in the various sects and in the writings of some of the most representative authors.

During Milton's childhood, and youth, the chief religious parties in conflict were the Roman Catholics, the Established Church of England, and the Presbyterians. Under Archbishop Laud, part of the Established Church reverted in sympathy towards the Catholics, with their love of forms and ceremonies, but there still remained within it a large body of capable men holding moderate views. At the other extreme were some of the Presbyterians and Independents, influenced by the principles of Calvin, and desirous to abandon all outward show. Charles I favoured the High Church party, but the House of Commons were more in sympathy with the Calvinists, who yearly increased in numbers. Gradually, however, the group known as Independents or Secretarians, drew away from the Presbyterians, and by insisting on the execution of Charles I became completely separated in sympathy from them. Among the Independent sects were the Brownists, various groups of Anabaptists, and later the Quakers.

Controversy raged fiercely between the sects and parties chiefly upon such matters as authority versus direct inspiration, but in spite of the intense hostility between many of them, the ideas which they held concerning God Himself were remarkably alike. Among all of them was spread the opinion that God was a being greatly to be feared as well as to be loved. This opinion was due in part to the strongly ingrained belief in the doctrine of Adam's original sin, and the Fall of Man, one of the chief legacies of the Catholic Church to those sects who began to break away from it when the Bible was being more freely circulated. This doctrine emphasised that God's wrath for Adam's sin was still to be encountered by Adam's descendants, and must be appeased before He would look upon man with favour or love. A belief in God's love as His supreme quality was quietly growing at the same time, and is celebrated by some of the poets, such as Richard Crashaw, Giles Fletcher and George Herbert, and preached by divines like Jeremy Taylor and Thomas Fuller in their best moods, but it was overshadowed for many by the fear of His wrath, and even those who held some of the moderate views did not doubt that God would punish a great part of mankind in hell throughout eternity. Hardly anywhere was there developed the belief that as the Saviour of Mankind the Christ went out after the lost sheep till He found them. The usual belief was that Christ would

redeem those who repented and assist His Father in abandoning the unregenerate to eternal damnation.

Seventeenth century writers make many illuminating statements concerning this topic, and not least among them those considered to belong to the moderate party of the Established Church. Robert Burton, Richard Baxter, Jeremy Taylor and Thomas Fuller are among those divines who held some of the widest beliefs in God's mercy and love to the repentant sinners, but even they painted a lurid picture of what God would do to the wicked.

Robert Burton, however, in his "Anatomy of Melancholy" published in 1621, condemns "those thundering ministers" and says "a most frequent cause they are of this malady" that is, religious melancholy, which torments many with "the enormity of their offences, the intolerable burden of their sins, God's heavy wrath and displeasure so deeply apprehended that they count themselves reprobates, quite forsaken of God, already damned, past all hope of grace, incapable of mercy, diaboli mancipia, slaves of sin, and their offences so great they cannot be forgiven"¹.

Richard Baxter, on the other hand, in his "Everlasting Rest", published 1651, believes that one of his privileges as a repentant sinner, redeemed and safe in heaven will be "To look down upon Hell, and see the vast difference that

(1) Anatomy of Melancholy, ~~Vol. III, p. 456.~~
Part III. Sec. IV. p 456.

free grace hath made betwixt us and them!"¹ He continues - "These should have been my hideous cries, my doleful groans, my easeless pains, my endless torment; those unquenchable flames I should have lain in; that never-dying worm should have fed upon me - but this it is that Christ hath brought me to."²

Jeremy Taylor, with his faith in God's mercy to the last moment, yet meditates sadly on the fact "that so many millions of sons and daughters are born to enter into the possession of devils to eternal ages"³. It is he, too, who described God as "the great eye of the world, always watching over our actions, and ^{with an} ever-open ^{ear} ~~each~~ to hear all our words, and an unwearied arm ever lifted up to crush a sinner into ruin"⁴.

Thomas Fuller was a divine who believed in taking "the middle and moderate way betwixt all extremes"⁵ but even he admits belief in while troubled over the question of how "Infants, who never committed actual sin, are subject to death, and what is more, to damnation itself"⁶.

If such were the views of the moderate party, one may conceive what many of the Puritan extremists must have preached and believed, and one illustration from John

-
- (1) Everlasting Rest, Chap.VII. §II p113.
 (2) ibid.
 (3) Holy Dying, Chap.IV. Ch. I. Sec IV. p40.
 (4) Holy Living, Sec.8. Ch. I. Sec III. p35
 (5) Sermon - Truth Maintained, 1643.
 (6) Fuller, Sermons, 1648, The Just Man's Funeral.

Bunyan's "Grace Abounding" will be enough. He describes his childish fears at the ideas of God's wrath and Hell, which he had been taught, "Also, I should at these years be greatly afflicted and troubled with the thoughts of the Day of Judgment, and that both night and day, and should tremble at the thoughts of the fearful torments of Hell-fire; still fearing that it would be my lot to be found at last among these Devils and Hellish Fiends who are there bound down with the Chains and Bonds of Darkness unto the judgment of the great day."¹

With such sermons being preached, and such ideas being taught, it is not surprising that many folk of the seventeenth century grew up in the fear of God more than with a faith in His universal love for man. Nor would they be lightly drawn to look upon such a God as a Being who would give them His inward intimate fellowship in their daily tasks in life. They were rather likely to consider Him as dwelling aloft and remote in heaven, sending down from a distance His Holy Spirit to guide those striving to serve Him on the earth. Such opinions may be illustrated by words from the writers already quoted, as when Jeremy Taylor terms God "the great eye of the world, always watching over our actions"², or when John Bunyan says "I was as though I

(1) Grace Abounding, Preface. Page 8.
 (2) Holy Living, Chapter I. Sec. III

had seen the Lord Jesus look down from Heaven through the Tiles upon me, and direct these words unto me"¹.

Together with the idea of God resulting from belief in the doctrine of the Fall, may be mentioned the attitude to woman which came with it. Augustine, who was responsible for the systematic shaping of the doctrine, says of Satan tempting Eve, "he began to speak deceitfully unto the woman, beginning at the meaner part of mankind, to invade the whole by degrees"². The idea that woman was inferior in intellect, and should be kept well subdued because of Eve's trespass, persisted among many of the Puritans during the seventeenth century, although among others, and especially among some of the Roman Catholics, woman's reputation was considered to have been restored by the Virgin Mary.

Sir Thomas Browne

~~Richard Baxter~~ writes concerning woman, "Man is the whole world, and the breath of God; woman the rib and the crooked piece of man"³. Jeremy Taylor thinks woman "of a more pliant and easy spirit, and weaker understanding"⁴, and exhorts her to learn of her husband, to pray often and to speak little. Thomas Fuller, however, and John Bunyan both have a higher opinion of her - Fuller thinks that man and woman should pray for each other, "to assist themselves mutually against their sundry weaknesses, and infirmities"⁵.

-
- (1) Grace Abounding, p.74.
 (2) City of God, Bk XII, ~~Ch.ii.~~ Ch XI.
 (3) Everlasting Rest, p.114. *Religio Medici*. Part II. p114.
 (4) Holy Living, Ch.II. *Sec.iii.* p 97.
 (5) Fuller Sermons, Comment. on Ruth. 1631.

Bunyan says in the second part of the Pilgrim's Progress, "For, as death and the curse came into the world by a woman, so, also did life and health" and also "Women, therefore, are highly favoured, and show by these things that they are sharers with us in the grace of life"¹.

Another part of the doctrine of the Fall of Man which influenced the general seventeenth century attitude to God and man was the belief that as a result of Adam's sin, man's passions were likely to rise in revolt against his reason, which was held as his highest faculty, as Thomas Aquinas says in his "Summa Theologica". "Now, just as the ship is entrusted to the captain that he may steer its course, so man is given over to his will and reason"². Therefore, many of the more intellectual classes exalted man's reasoning powers above all others, a view which rapidly gained ground later under the influence of Hobbes and Descartes.

The chief methods by which the seventeenth century expected to learn the will of God, were by the revelation of the Holy Spirit within men's hearts, by the study of the Bible, and by the light which either the Holy Spirit or their reasoning powers shed upon it. All, except perhaps some of the Quakers, looked upon the Bible as an unquestionable authority, but many passages in it produced difficulties, and it was for the interpretation of such passages that

(1) Pilgrim's Progress, Collins, pp.276-7.

(2) Summa Theologica, Part II, vol. I.
Part II, First Part, First Number,
Question 2, p. 25.

need was felt for the help of either the Holy Spirit or the reasoning powers of the best trained minds.

The guidance of God's Holy Spirit, the living revelation of God within the human heart, has always been a subject of deep interest to man, but one which he approaches with diffidence. It takes great faith to depend hour by hour upon such guidance, and there is always a fear that some other inward voice will be mistaken for God's and lead into error.

In the seventeenth century diffidence and doubt concerning a direct revelation of God were very strong. It was not easy to turn away from the organised authority of the Roman Church to a complete dependence upon the voice of God within. A tangible support for faith was needed in the transition period, and in nearly every direction the Bible supplied it. At the same time, all Protestants, in theory at least, acknowledged the superiority of the Spirit over the Bible as a guide. Few, however, risked depending completely on God's Spirit within them.

There was reason, however, for this diffidence. Certain sects of Anabaptists, purporting to be surrendered to the guidance of the Spirit, mistook the voice of their own selfish passions within them for the voice of God, and were guilty of such fanatical deeds that they not only called down the scorn of the reasonable and intellectual upon

themselves, but also upon the others whose claim to direct revelation from God was worthy of respect. These sects incurred such hostility that they were considered as bad as Roman Catholics by many of those of moderate opinions, who not only challenged the claim to the direct and independent revelation of God's spirit within man, but also the possibility of divine aid by revelation in interpreting the Scriptures. Thomas Fuller states his opinion in well-known words: "And it seems to me all one in effect whether men piece the Scriptures with old Traditions or new Revelations, and thus the Papist and Anabaptist are agreed, like men in a circle going so far from each other with their faces till their backs meet together.... The best is, we have no need to trust either whilst we have God's Word alone sufficient to rely on."¹

Jeremy Taylor also commands sinners in his "Holy Dying" "to add nothing to St John's last book, i.e., to pretend to no new revelations". Of all the sects the Quakers were probably those who purely and honestly tried to surrender their lives to the direct and daily guidance of the living Spirit of God within them.

Calvin himself had declared that no one could correctly interpret the Scriptures without the inward testimony of the Spirit of God, and that the testimony of the Spirit

(1) Fuller Sermons, p. 591. "Truth Maintained."
(Vol I. p 391)

was superior to reason¹, but many of his followers neglected the Spirit for the letter, and many more of them, would-be interpreters of the Scriptures, paid little heed either to the Spirit or to their own powers of reasoning.

The value of reason in interpreting the Scriptures had been emphasized by Hooker at the opening of the century. In his "Ecclesiastical Polity" he explains why he considers ~~a~~ that reasoning powers are needed to assist the revelations of the Holy Spirit. He says: "even to our own selves it needth caution and explication how the testimony of the Spirit may be discerned, by what means it may be known; lest man think that the Spirit of God doth testify those things which the Spirit of error suggesteth"², and "Wherefore albeit the Spirit lead us into all truth and direct us in all goodness, yet because these workings of the Spirit in us are so privy and secret, we therefore stand on a plainer ground, when we gather by reason from the quality of things believed or done, that the Spirit of God hath directed us in both, than if we settle ourselves to believe or to do any certain particular thing, as being moved thereto by the Spirit"³.

Hooker therefore advocates that co-operation within man between God's Holy Spirit and his own reasoning power, which is probably the ideal, wherever there is a unity of

(1) Institutes, Book I, Chap.VII.

(2) Ecclesiastical Polity, Book III, ~~p.322~~ (1611. p.322. Everyman)

(3) ibid., p.322.

purpose between the will of God and the will of the reasoner. But unless the finite human will is always attentive to know the divine will, there is the danger that reasoning power will be developed along self-restricted lines, and that the voice of God's Holy Spirit will be neglected or forgotten.

Among those who might be said to belong to the moderate party and who depended upon their reasoning power for interpreting the Scriptures during the seventeenth century, was Sir Thomas Browne, who gives his opinion in the following words, also well-known: "In brief, where the Scripture is silent, the Church is my text; where there is a joint silence of both, I borrow not the rules of my religion from Rome or Geneva, but the dictates of my own reason"¹.

The respect for reasoning power shown by members of the Church dated back to the opinions of Aquinas and Augustine, and the theory already mentioned which developed through their doctrine of the Fall, that reason was man's supreme faculty, and the one by which he must strive to keep his rebel passions in control. Where this reasoning power failed to solve the problems set it, orthodox churchmen fell back upon faith and Sir Thomas Browne declares the strength of his faith boldly: "This I think is no vulgar part of faith, to believe a thing not only above, but contrary to reason, and against the arguments of our proper

(1) Religio Medici, p. 15. Part I. p 15.

senses"¹. Here he speaks as an extremist, but he illustrates the way in which the difficulties offered by many passages of Scripture were faced by those who accepted without qualification their literal authority.

Space does not admit a more detailed account of the seventeenth century attitude to God than this, but one important suggestion for ensuing chapters is that during Milton's youth and early manhood he was more likely to hear of God as a Being to be worshipped with awe, and revered from a safe distance, than as a Personality infinitely loving and willing to be infinitely loved in intimate fellowship within him. Another is that possessing a highly intellectual, university-trained mind, he would naturally come into contact with those who held the highest respect for the reasoning faculty, and would come to place great confidence in his own reasoning powers, looking with little sympathy upon those who claimed "divine incitations" as motives for deeds which were often of questionable wisdom and morality. He would also have been made thoroughly familiar with the doctrine of the Fall, with its attendant belief concerning Adam's original sin and its consequences, the rebellion of passion against reason, the weakness of woman, and the vision of a fiery, ever-burning hell for those who refused to repent and be converted. The interaction of these tendencies and

(1) Religio Medici, p. 25. Part I. p 23.

opinions upon the development of his general attitude to God and life, will be considered in the course of the next chapter.

Chapter III.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF MILTON'S MATURE ATTITUDE TO GOD AND LIFE.

Milton was born with gifts which soon manifested themselves, and he was, from his early years, brought up as a child of unusual promise. He would not have been human had he not been tempted to think highly of himself and his own powers, and to find it difficult to cultivate the virtue of humility.

He was encouraged by parents and teachers to develop these gifts, and although from an early age he showed a desire to use them in the service of God, his upbringing was likely to make it difficult for him to do so whenever that service demanded that he should lay aside self and the desire for his own glory for the sake of God's.

His parents did not neglect his religious education, and he says himself "that care was ever had of me, with my earliest capacity, not to be negligently trained in the precepts of the Christian religion"¹. He does not anywhere tell what conception of God was given to him, but at the

(1) Apology for Smectymnus. Prose Works ed. C. Symonds
Vol I p 225.

age of fifteen he translated a Hebrew psalm (No.136), and its mood does not suggest that he thought that God was a being only to be feared, for it begins:

"Let us with a gladsome mind
Praise the Lord, for He is kind;
For His mercies aye endure,
Ever faithful, ever sure."

At the same time, it contains such stanzas as:

"In bloody battle He brought down
Kings of prowess and renown."¹

and

"Let us therefore warble forth
His mighty majesty and worth."²

That His mansion hath on high
Above the reach of mortal eye."³

These show him believing that God was merciful, but also naturally accepting ideas concerning God's wrath to His enemies, His supreme majesty, and His distant abode in heaven.

At seventeen he wrote his first original lines about God in the poem "On the death of a fair infant dying of a cough." (1625)

"But oh, why didst thou not stay here below
To bless us with thy heaven-loved innocence,
To slake His wrath whom sin hath made our foe,
To turn swift-rushing black Perdition hence,
Or drive away the slaughtering Pestilence
To stand 'twixt us and our deserved smart?"⁴

-
- (1) Stanza 16.
 - (2) Stanza 23.
 - (3) Stanza 24.
 - (4) Stanza X.

And in 1629, at the age of twenty-one, he wrote the poem "Upon the Circumcision", of which the second stanza is:

"O more exceeding love, or law more just!
 Just law indeed, but more exceeding love!
 For we by rightful doom remediless
 Were lost in death, till He that dwelt above
 High throned in secret bliss, for us frail dust
 Emptied His glory, ev'n to nakedness;
 And that great covenant which we still transgress
 Entirely satisfied,
 And the full wrath beside
 Of vengeful justice bore for our excess,
 And seals obedience first, with wondering smart,
 This day, but O ere long,
 Huge pangs and strong
 Will pierce more near His heart."

These extracts show that in theory at least he had accepted the current seventeenth century doctrines, that God though good, was wrathful towards man because of his sin of disobedience, and was only appeased by Christ's sacrifice of Himself upon the Cross. At the same time he attached more weight to man's personal sin than to any hereditary blight for he could think of an infant as innocent, and he also had a noble conception of God's mercy to the repentant, and of Christ's love in dying to redeem mankind. Nevertheless, he was led to think of God as a Being who first of all exacted obedience, and not as a Being infinitely loving, caring for the sinful until the end, and offering intimate fellowship with man. Therefore, one may suggest that in his youth God was not presented to him as so supreme in His beauty and love, so irresistible in His

personal appeal, that He could draw his proud genius towards the effort of fully renouncing his own will for God's.

The previous chapter shows that while at School and at College Milton was in contact with stern teachers who placed great confidence in the powers of reasoning. The method of his education also developed his reasoning powers in full, as may be seen from the kinds of arguments he had to offer in his College exercises. His natural reasoning powers were such that he could afford to be scornful of those possessed by most of his contemporaries at Cambridge. "Among us, as far as I know, there are only two or three who, without any acquaintance with criticism or philosophy, do not instantly engage with raw and untutored judgments in the study of theology, and of this they acquire only a slender smattering, not more than sufficient to enable them to patch together a sermon, with scraps pilfered, with little discrimination, from this author and from that."¹

He also witnesses to the severity of treatment he at one time received. "How ill that place suits the votaries of Apollo! Nor am I in the humour still to bear the threats of a harsh master, and other things not to be submitted to by my genius."² This quotation illustrates, too, the consciousness of special ability which he possessed and

(1) Letter to Alex. Gill, July 2, 1628.

(2) Elegy I. Masson's trans.

reflects the attitude of a young man who would not find it easy to be humble. During his later time at the University, however, as has been stated in the preceding chapter, his superiors, as well as his fellows recognised his genius and treated him with the respect which he felt he deserved.

There were combined within him when he left the University, a proud consciousness of genius, well-developed reasoning powers, and a desire to serve God. In a letter to an unknown friend he explains that his retirement to Horton is for the purpose of making himself "more fit" for that service. In it he also speaks of "this my tardy moving according to the precept of my conscience, which I firmly trust is not without God", and in the sonnet accompanying, declares that, though not yet sure what his life work will be, he is looking forward with trust and patience:

"To that same lot, however mean or high
Toward which Time leads me, and the will of Heaven."

No words could more plainly show that to do God's will was one of his conscious aims in life.

But he had another purpose in mind during the period of self-conscious preparation, and a few years later, in 1637, he states it in answer to a letter from his friend Diodati: "Do you ask what I am meditating? By the help of Heaven, an immortality of fame. But what am I doing? I am letting my wings grow and preparing to fly; but my Pegasus

has not yet feathers enough to soar aloft in the fields of air."¹

The desire to achieve immortality as a poet reveals itself at least as strongly as the desire to serve God, and the thought of glory for himself at least as great a stimulus to his efforts as the thought of glory for God. His assertion, with its universal human desire to be immortally admired, proves that a desire for self was present in all his youthful efforts.

Consciousness of a poet's genius, well-developed reasoning powers, a desire to serve God and a desire to achieve immortal fame for himself, make a combination of factors likely to bring vigorous experience of life to their owner, and also likely to bring him the added experience of conflict within.

With his consciousness of genius may be associated the love of beauty which, during this period, he also enthusiastically declared in the same letter to his friend Diodati "for whatever the Deity may have bestowed upon me in other respects, He has certainly inspired me, if any ever were inspired, with a passion for the good and fair. Nor did Ceres, according to the fable, ever seek her daughter Proserpine with such unceasing solicitude, as I have sought this perfect model of the beautiful in all the forms and appearances of things I am wont day and night to

(1) Latin letter to C.Diodati, London, Sept.23, 1637.

continue my search, and I follow in the way in which you go before. Hence I feel an irresistible impulse to cultivate the friendship of him, who, despising the prejudices and false conceptions of the vulgar, dares to think, speak and be that which the highest wisdom has in every age taught to be the best."

Besides his sensitive love for all kinds of beauty, this passage reveals a tendency to consider himself superior to the less cultured, and an irresistible desire to draw to himself the fellowship of a someone full of the highest qualities of personality. His love for beauty found one of its visible objects in the outward glory of God, as manifested in nature, and was already fully expressed in his early poems:

"Right against the eastern gate
Where the great sun begins his state
Robed in flames and amber light
The clouds in thousand liveries dight."¹

His desire for the noblest fellowship, however, perhaps for reasons already suggested, did not turn naturally to God Himself, and in his letter "the Deity" sounds a somewhat impersonal being who is conceived of as sending inspiration from a distance.

He tried first to satisfy this desire among the poets of olden times, first among "the smooth elegiac poets" whose works he easily imitated, then among the more chaste

(1) L'Allegro, lines 59-62.

yet "famous renowners of Beatrice and Laura, who never write but honour of them to whom they devote their verse, displaying sublime and pure thought without transgression"¹. But this fellowship of the poets of the past was not enough; he needed some one more immediately alive to him, and partly by means of the poets, partly through experience from his own daily life, he was attracted towards woman. Already in his first elegy he had shown how susceptible he was to her beauty, in lines which do not merely reflect Ovid:

"Et decus eximium frontis, tremulosque capillos
Aurea quae fallax retia tendit Amore;
Pellacesque genas, ad quas hyacinthina sordet
Purpura, et ipse tui floris, Adoni, rubor."²

"Bright locks, Love's golden snare; these falling low
Those playing wanton o'er the graceful brow;
Cheeks, too, more winning sweet than after shower
Adonis turned to Flora's fav'rite flower."³

His idealisation of woman is suggested in the character of the Lady in "Comus" in whom outward beauty is combined with inward spiritual grace.

In due time, his reading of poetry led him on to philosophy, to the study of Plato and Xenophon, from whose "divine volumes" he learned what were to him the highest ideas of love, "how the first and chiefest office of love ends in the soul, producing those two happy twins of her divine generation, knowledge and virtue"⁴. It is significant that he discovered his highest ideals of love in Plato and

(1) Apology for Smectymnuus. Prose Works. (ed. C. Symonds) Vol. I. p 224
 (2) Elegy I, lines 62-5.
 (3) Cowper
 (4) Apology for Smectymnuus. " " " " " " p 225

Xenophon and not in the God whom he had been brought up to worship, especially as Plato, in his "Symposium" teaches the love of the beautiful idea, but gives no life or personality to that idea, comparable to the Christian revelation of God as a Personality, infinitely beautiful, infinitely loving and Himself the Centre of Life. Yet, by his love for beauty and his desire for special intimate fellowship he revealed that he was ready for a vision of the Christ, of God as Infinite Love revealed within himself. Had it come, he might have been led to realise his own imperfections, to confess himself a sinner, and to start out with joy on the task of surrendering the whole of his own self-will to the will of God. In return, he might have gained a fuller experience of God's intimate fellowship, which would have inspired him to express himself in greater love and humbler service for mankind. But it did not come, and such a work as "Comus" reflects his sense of self-sufficiency, his confidence in his own virtue, and an absence of any idea of himself as a sinner

At the end of his period at Horton, however, his desire for fellowship was definitely turned in the direction of woman, following an earlier, though restrained impulse to marry, "the desire of house and family of his own, to which nothing is esteemed more helpful than the early entering into creditable employment, and nothing hindering than this

affected solitariness"¹. The outcome of this desire was his marriage with Mary Powell in June, 1643. There is no external record of the impulses which prompted him to be so hasty in carrying out this marriage, but there seems no reason to doubt his assertions in the course of his Divorce pamphlets that he had suffered "the pining of a sad spirit wedded to loneliness"², that he had longed for a companion "to rid away solitariness"³ "~~to take away man's solitariness on earth~~", and that the lack of sympathy which followed, between his wife and himself, did not "help to remove, but help to increase that same God-forbidden loneliness".⁴

He had not had much youthful experience of woman, and had idealised her out of his reading, with the result that he expected a great deal from her, probably that same sweet, austere purity, gentleness and meekness which he always pictured in the good women of his poems, such as the Lady in "Comus", Eve when sinless, and Mary the Mother of Jesus in "Paradise Regained". But if these characteristics had appeared to him to be in Mary when she was at a distance, he must have been sadly disillusioned when she came into close contact with him. She was probably the first human being to thwart him within the intimate circle of home; she was also very young, and had been accustomed to a life of gaiety and freedom from restraint. She lacked the temperament, the upbringing and the experience to be able to offer him in any

-
- (1) Letter to his unknown friend.
 (2) Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce . Bk I ch III (Symmons . Vol I p 351)
 (3) *ibid* " ch II (" " " 350)
 (4) *ibid* " ch IV (" " ")

measure the fellowship for which he longed. Therefore, she failed him "to the eternal disturbance and languishing of him who complains"¹, and caused him to write the words which reveal so much of himself: "What an injury is it after wedlock not to be beloved!"²

He would have liked a woman's love and attention devoted to him, ^{and} with her sympathetic interest and help in the fulfilment of his life-work, but these things were not to be. He did not, however, attribute any cause to himself for Mary's desertion, nor did he take her back until she had been down on her knees in penitence before him. In his Divorce pamphlets, he considered that to endure such a marriage would be beyond his powers, that the thought of doing so was enough to destroy his faith in God, filling him with fear "lest the soul of a Christian, which is inestimable, should be over-tempted and cast away"³. In all, he was concerned with what he himself could not endure; he was neither prepared to accept such a marriage at the hands of God, nor to give up any part of himself in sympathy for his unfortunate young wife.

Had Mary been a little older, with more insight and understanding, she might have done much with him. She might have given him the best of human fellowship, and at that impressionable period of his life, might have led him out of

(1) Doc. and Disc. of Divorce, ^{Book I ch. III (Symmons Vol I. p 351.)}
 Ch. XV, p. 24.
 (2) ibid. Book II ch. XV (" Vol II. p 36)
 (3) ibid. Book I ch. XIV (" Vol I p 376)

himself and his preoccupation with his own development. If she herself had had before her the ideal of service to an infinitely loving God, she might have been able to lead him to the fuller vision of God's living Personality, to a more receptive attitude in His presence, and a more complete sacrifice of self for God, and for others. If Mary Powell had been more like such a woman, perhaps, as Dorothy Wordsworth, there is no saying what her influence upon his life might have been.

As it was, Milton had enough appreciation of woman's possible qualities, to feel deeply what he had been denied, and his marriage convinced him of the difference between what she might be and what she often was. It also apparently seems to have brought home to him by bitter experience some of the current seventeenth century convictions, such as that woman should be kept subordinate and obedient to man, and that Eve's trespass was still being repeated by her daughters.

Had she lived longer, his second wife might have redeemed woman in his sight, and his sonnet shows how he thought of her "vested all in white, pure as her mind", her face radiant with love, sweetness and goodness. But her brief influence was more than counteracted by that of his daughters, who were also Mary's daughters. Mary herself never seems to have regained Milton's full confidence or sympathy and the estrangement was repeated in the attitude

between him and her daughters. They offered him little affection; he may have given them little, and would himself have needed tactful handling by any daughter. Had one of them cared for him sufficiently, she might have changed the whole of his final outlook upon woman and the rest of life. But this did not happen, nor did the ministering of his third wife heal the breach, and as a result, woman stands by him condemned to all the ages "a thorn intestine"¹, "a cleaving mischief"

"Favoured of heav'n who finds
 One virtuous, rarely found,
 That in domestic good combines!
 Happy that house! his way to peace is smooth."²

Another result of his first marriage seems to have been that the conviction was brought home to him that reason should at all times be in control of man's actions. His impulses had led him towards disaster, teaching him by experience the truth of Augustine's doctrine that through Adam's sin, man's passions were likely to rebel against his reason, especially when associated with woman. Following upon his university training, this experience would increase his respect for reasoning powers, and lead him in the conduct of life to rely more upon his own.

Therefore his marriage experience, instead of leading him, as it might have done, to a fuller understanding of God as an infinitely loving Personality, in immediate

(1) Samson Agonistes, line 1039.
 (2) ibid., lines 1046-9.

communion with man, led him to depend more upon his own reasoning powers on all occasions. This seems to have increased in him the tendency already formed of trying to conceive of God by means of those reasoning powers, and these through his self-centred upbringing were likely to be restricted within the bonds of self, creating out of his own reaction to experience ideas and rules of life to which he tried to make himself conform.

He seems early to have begun modelling himself upon the idea of God which he gradually created out of himself, for, if it is true as Aubrey reports, that his young wife "oftentimes heard his nephews beaten and cry" he evidently punished his pupils as he believed God punished sinners. He likewise forgave as he believed God forgave the repentant, and took back his young wife when she humbled herself before him.

When woman failed to satisfy his aspirations towards ideals of fellowship and service, he turned to his country, and poured forth all his enthusiasm into a dream of a free and virtuous commonwealth, built upon unity in church and state, and representing a courageous, intelligent nation. Then he gave hours of his time to writing the pamphlets which he believed would be of service in bringing about this ideal. "Areopagitica" shows his confidence in the "Lords and Commons of England" and their "faithful

guidance", "undaunted wisdom", and "indefatigable virtues", while "The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates" contains his famous reference "to the present parliament and army, in the glorious way wherein justice and victory hath set them" and to their proceedings "which hitherto appear equal to what hath been done, in any age or nation heretofore justly or magnanimously."

For some years, his abundant energies found an outlet in this service, and in the course of these writings he is as conscious of his own virtue, and as hostile to his enemies as ever he could have imagined God Himself to be. He also comforted himself that he had sacrificed his eyesight in the service of God and his country, as he persevered in his "Defence of the English People Against Salmasius", but those who read the pamphlet are led to wonder whether a less conscious desire to defeat his enemy was not at least as strong a motive in him as his desire to serve God.

He naturally refutes the charge that his blindness is a judgment from God because of his sins, and feels that he can sincerely say "that I am not depressed by any sense of the divine displeasure; that, on the other hand, in the most momentous periods I have had full experience of the divine favour and protection"¹. He follows this with the emphatic statement "in short, I am unwilling to exchange

(1) Second Defence. (Trans. R. Fellows. Symmons Vol VI p 384).

my consciousness of rectitude with that of any other person"¹. At the same time, he asserts that during his blindness he feels confident that God is near him and that in his darkness "the light of the divine presence more clearly shines"².

He seems to have felt God near him at this time more than any other, yet he maintains a sense of his own virtue before Him. One cannot help feeling that if his conception of God's Personality had been a nobler one, he would have seen how far he fell short of his Ideal, and would have felt humbler in His presence. This might have led him to love and depend upon God in a way which would have brought about the full and free surrender of the whole of himself into His service.

The nation, however, for whom he had laboured so hard, failed him as women had done, and he was again disillusioned of his ideals. The last sentence of his "Ready and Easy Way to establish a Free Commonwealth" reflects his emotions as he strives in vain "to exhort this torrent also of the people, not to be so impetuous, but to keep their due channel", and "to stay these ruinous proceedings, justly and timely fearing to what a precipice of destruction the deluge of this epidemic madness would hurry us through the general defection of a misguided and abused multitude".

(1) Second Defence. Symmons Vol VI . p 384.
 (2) ibid. " " p 385.

The coming of the Restoration, and the apparent failure of the efforts which had entailed the loss of his sight might well have driven him to despair. It took from him his faith in the English people and in any humanity as a whole. He had at no time had much respect for the 'vulgar', the ordinary folk, and now he retained faith only in a very few, condemning the rest of mankind as foolish and sinful. Had he been led to feel less righteous himself, he might have had more sympathy with the sins of the "misguided and abused multitude" and through that greater sympathy might have found fuller self-expression in serving them, and more satisfaction in life itself.

He did not give himself up to despair, however, because by 1660 he was already returning to his first youthful dream of immortality as a poet, and had been working for some time upon "Paradise Lost". In the poetry which he loved with all his heart, he was able to express his full personality in a way denied him in connection with his nation or woman, or God as he conceived Him to be.

During the same time, he was probably also gathering together his ideas for his "Treatise on Christian Doctrine" and it is of great interest to compare his various attitudes as expressed in the two works. Especially interesting are his references in both to God's Holy Spirit, for from them one can gather some important facts concerning his attitude to God as a poet and his attitude to God as a thinking man during these mature years of his life.

In the invocation to Book I of "Paradise Lost" he calls upon his Heavenly Muse to inspire him as she inspired Moses to write the first books of the Bible. He also calls upon God's Holy Spirit to instruct him how to "justify the ways of God to men". In the opening lines of "Paradise Regained" however, he identifies his Heavenly Muse with God's Holy Spirit:

"Thou Spirit, who ledst this glorious Eremite
 Into the desert, His victorious field,
 Against the spiritual foe, and broughtst Him thence
 By proof the undoubted Son of God, inspire,
 As thou are wont, my prompted song, else mute."

In the invocation to Book III of "Paradise Lost" he admits that in all he has written so far he has been "Taught by the heavenly Muse"¹ and in that to Book IX he addresses that Muse as:

"My celestial patroness, who deigns
 Her nightly visitation unimplored,
 And dictates to me slumb'ring, or inspires
 Easy my unpremeditated verse."²

In the same passage he also declares how confident he feels in composing his verse, not because of his own strength, but because of hers "who bring it nightly to mine ear"³. Therefore, he is not afraid of the evil times, of Britain's climate or of his own advancing age, discouragements which might put out the flame of his genius if its fire came from him alone.

(1) Paradise Lost, III, 19.

(2) ibid. IX, 21-24.

(3) ibid. IX, 47.

As a poet he admits his helplessness without his Muse, and also identifies her with God's Holy Spirit. He confesses how he depends upon her, gives himself up completely into her power, and by waiting upon her is enabled by her to express himself in his poetry. In yet another passage addressing her, he testifies to the fellowship and companionship she brings to him in his later days.

"In darkness, and with dangers compass round,
And solitude."¹

"yet not alone, while thou
Visitst my slumbers nightly, or when morn
Purples the east. Still govern thou my song,
Urania, and fit audience find, though few."²

Thus as a poet he confesses that God's Holy Spirit in the guise of his Heavenly Muse controls his creative power, and admits his need of yielding himself up completely to a power greater than himself, without whom he is nothing.

In his "Treatise on Christian Doctrine", on the other hand, he devotes a brief and disappointing chapter to God's Holy Spirit, in which he is chiefly concerned with proving that "he must evidently be considered as inferior to both Father and Son"³ and that "the Spirit of God being actually and numerically distinct from God Himself, cannot possibly be essentially one God with Him whose Spirit he is, except on certain strange and absurd hypotheses, etc."⁴ These words he could never have written had he yielded himself up

(1) Paradise Lost, VII, 27-8.

(2) ibid., VII, 28-31.

(3) Treatise on Christian Doctrine, Ch. IV. Bk I. ch VI. p 212

(4) ibid

Trans. C. Sumner.

(Boston. 1825)

to a full conscious experience of the presence and fellowship within him of that living Holy Spirit. If Milton's chapter on the Holy Spirit is compared with such another as that of Calvin in his "Institutes" the impression is confirmed that he could not have given himself up to a full experience of the living presence of God in his daily life in the same way as he gave himself up to God to be inspired as a poet. The suggestion developed here is that this was partly because he came to depend too much on his self-directed "secondary imagination", his limited reasoning power, for his understanding of God, and that this in turn was due to the fact that he did not humble himself sufficiently to become fully receptive to God's direct influence. Had he been granted a fuller vision of the quality of God's Personality, he probably would so have humbled himself with far reaching results both upon his life and upon his art.

There are two further characteristics in his "Treatise of Christian Doctrine" which confirm the view that he relied a great deal on his self-directed reasoning power for his opinions about God. The first is that he depends to such an extent upon the authority of the Scriptures, so much so that he declares that Christian Doctrine, which he defines as "that divine revelation disclosed to all ages by Christ (though he was not known under that name in the beginning)"¹

(1) Treatise of Christian Doctrine, Book I, Ch. I.

is "to be obtained from the Holy Scriptures alone, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit"¹. A little later, he adds that no one "can have right thoughts of God with nature or reason alone as his guide, independent of the word or message of God"². (By which he means the Scriptures.) These passages reveal his belief that the Scriptures were the main authority from which man could learn of God and His Son, and that the Holy Spirit was only of value in interpreting them. In the method by which he proceeds, and the multitudes of texts with which he supports each statement, he also consistently suggests that what he calls the guidance of the Holy Spirit is often the guidance of his own reasoning power. With a more direct revelation of God through the living Spirit of Christ, he would not be expected to give such primary importance to the written authority of the Scriptures.

Another confirmation of the view that he relied to a large extent upon his own self-directed reasoning power for his knowledge of God, arises from the nature which he attributes to God Himself, and the manner in which he believes that man, imitating God, as he understood Him, can treat his enemies. He declares that hatred is, in some cases a religious duty; as when we hate the enemies of God, or the Church,³ and also that if "there be any whom we know certainly

(1) Treatise of Christian Doctrine, Book I, Ch.I. p12.

(2) ibid. Ch.II. Book I chII. p19.

(3) ibid Book II ch XI. p 377.

to be past remedy, we are not to pray for them"¹ and again that "We are even commanded to call down curses publicly on the enemies of God and the Church; as also on false brethren, and on such as are guilty of any grievous offence against God, or even against ourselves. The same may be lawfully done in private prayer, after the example of some of the holiest of men."²

After reading these words, one understands the spirit of his pamphlets against Salmasius and Morus; and together they form a convincing testimony that he had never come into full fellowship with a living Christ, who, in revealing God's love for all mankind, leads his followers to love and forgive their enemies, and to learn how great is His patience to other sinners like themselves. Milton had reasoned out God's attitude to His "enemies" and to "sinners" from his own self-centred human attitude.

Enough has now been said to justify a conviction that while as a poet Milton gave himself up to the power of his "primary imagination" and to the Spirit of God as his Heavenly Muse, confessing his helplessness alone, in his daily life he did not give himself up to God in any such way, but came to depend chiefly upon his "secondary imagination", his self-directed reasoning power, for the conception of God upon which he consciously tried to model his own character.

(1) Treatise of Christian Doctrine, ~~Part I, Ch. XI.~~
 (2) ibid. ~~Part II, Ch. III.~~ Bk II Ch IV. p 256.

This was why he came to look upon God as a Being often ruling by law which demands obedience rather than by love which transcends the law, a Being whose love is confined to the few repentant and denied to the many persistent sinners, among whom he never dreamt of including himself.

As was hinted earlier one of the suggestions to be developed in the following chapters, is that the idea of God upon which he consciously tried to model himself did not satisfy his full personality, part of which rises in unconscious, unconfessed rebellion against the dogmatic narrow-sympathied autocrat whom, as his life developed, his self-directed reasoning power attempted to circumscribe and define as God.

Another suggestion developed will be that of how, in his poetry under the power of his "primary imagination" he expressed his dreams and visions of those ideals which he had longed for, but failed to realise in life.

Yet another will be that of how the working of his imagination reflects his resulting dissatisfaction with life and his fellows in the course of the portrayal of his chief characters, especially in its effect upon their personalities. This will be shown in contrast to that joy which he experienced in the external glories of the world and which is reflected in the ~~wonderful~~ descriptions surrounding those characters and their deeds.

But first of all, attention will be given to his portrayal of the characters of God and the Son of God, and how his imagination reflects some of his many experiences and reactions in them.

P A R T II.

THE PORTRAYAL OF THE CHIEF CHARACTERS.

P A R T I I .

THE PORTRAYAL OF THE CHIEF CHARACTERS.

Introductory.

The ensuing chapters require one or two introductory remarks concerning the manner in which the imagination expresses itself in poetry. It is not to be expected that any poet could create the whole of a long poem under the power of his primary imagination. There must of necessity be parts for which he relies only upon his secondary, self-directed powers. These may form useful links revealing by contrast the greater beauty of those parts which owe their quality to direct inspiration. Once more a remark from Coleridge will apply, when he says that, though a long poem cannot be all poetry, the other parts must be in keeping with the poetry¹.

The working of the imagination is always associated with emotion. When the recollections out of which it

(1) Biographia Literaria, Ch.XIV.

creates its symbols of expression are themselves associated with strong emotion the result will appear in the poem in vivid visual imagery, often accompanied with eloquent melody of versification. The intenser the emotion associated with the original experiences the more likely is the poet to become surrendered to his "primary imagination", absorbed in the relief and joy of self-expression, and unconscious of himself and his immediate surroundings. It also seems that the deeper the emotion affecting the expression, and the more vivid the visualisation, the more is the poet's "primary imagination" likely to make use of "forgotten recollections" and unconscious experiences as means to that expression. These may appear transposed and reassociated in ways often unrecognisable to the poet himself, especially if they arise from experiences which, undisguised, he would not readmit freely into his conscious life. On the other hand, the "secondary imagination" is always more on man's conscious level, and is not always either associated directly with strong emotion or expressed in vivid imagery. It may find expression through a series of ~~highly~~ abstract terms, at which times it is leading its owner out of the realm of poetry into that of metaphysics and philosophy. There is no definite dividing line between the two types of imagination, and often it is impossible to distinguish the one from the other, especially if the "primary imagination" happens to be working upon

recollections of reasoned experience.

In the course of the study of the presentation of Milton's characters special attention will be paid to those regions of his experience which are reflected in the poems by means of vivid imagery and melody, and those reflected through words less picturesque and suggestive. The purpose of this will be to illustrate how the quality of his experience in life directly affects the quality of his poetry as it is created from it by means of his "primary" and sometimes his "secondary" imagination.

The study of the portrayal of the characters will proceed in order through the poems as it shows them in their different roles and aspects, and attention will be drawn to points of special interest in connection with the ideas suggested in previous chapters, as well as to any others by the way which throw interesting light on Milton's personality. Some of the suggestions will be little more than hints undeveloped here owing to lack of time and space, but offering fields for later efforts.

Chapter I.

THE PORTRAYAL OF GOD AND THE SON OF GOD.

Milton prefaces his introduction of God and His Son as characters with the warning explanation that he is about to speak

"Of things invisible to mortal sight"¹.

At the same time it is natural that his portrayal should represent what he thinks they might be like if they were visible, and in doing this he reflects clearly his own human attitude and opinions concerning them.

The four lines introducing God the Father are characteristic:-

"Now had the Almighty Father from above,
From the pure empyrean where He sits
High throned above all height, bent down His eye,
His own works, and their works, at once to view."²

God appears at once before the recreating imagination of the reader, far-removed from mortal contact, looking down in superior majesty on all His works.

Near by Him is His Son;

"on His right
The radiant image of His glory sat,
His only Son,"³

-
- (1) Paradise Lost, III, 55.
(2) ibid., ¶56-59.
(3) ibid. III, 62-4.

who is further described:

"Beyond compare the Son of God was seen
Most glorious, in Him all His Father shone
Substantially expressed, and in His face
Divine compassion visibly appeared,
Love without end, and without measure grace."¹

The last lines suggest an attractive personality, and are more pleasing than such a phrase as "Substantially expressed". They also suggest the love which is connected with the Son of God, a love which later Milton qualifies:

"immortal love
To mortal men, above which only shone
Filial obedience."²

The description of Him, too, is added to by the Angels who celebrate Him as:

"Begotten Son, Divine Similitude,
In whose conspicuous countenance without cloud
Made visible, the Almighty Father shines."³

Both Father and Son reveal their characters chiefly through their speeches, and these show their attitude to each other, to Satan and to man. The Father at times treats the Son in a very condescending manner, explaining to Him such things as the theory of free-will and predestination, and His intentions towards man. He invests His Son with His full power, and is very concerned for that Son's good name.

"Nor shalt thou, by descending to assume
Man's nature, lessen or degrade thine own."⁴

-
- (1) Paradise Lost, III, 138-142.
(2) ibid, III, 267-9.
(3) ibid, III, 384-6.
(4) ibid, III, 303-4.

His orders are unquestioningly obeyed. He looks upon Satan as a formidable adversary, one whom no chains nor "bars of hell" can hold in check, while towards man He is indignant:

"so will fall
He and his faithless progeny. Whose fault?
Whose but his own? Ingrate! he had of me
All he could have. I made him just and right ¹
Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall."

He justifies Himself that by foreknowing man's fall, He did not necessarily predestinate or compel him to fall. Therefore, he judges that in spite of His mercy man must die, unless someone dies for him. He lets His Son die for man to appease His wrath, giving the impression that the Son's love for man is greater than His own.

The Son Himself rejoices that man may receive some grace, but He is in all things politely submissive to His Father, asking Him questions and anxious for the good name of both:

"or wilt thou thyself
Abolish thy creation, and unmake
For him, what for thy glory thou hast made?
So should thy goodness and thy greatness both ²
Be questioned and blasphemed without defence."

and

"Thou wilt not leave me in the loathsome grave
His prey, nor suffer my unspotted soul ³
For ever with corruption there to dwell."

-
- (1) Paradise Lost, III, 95-99,
(2) ibid, III, 162-6.
(3) ibid, III, 247-9.

He also rejoices that His Father will approve of Him, when He has triumphed over His enemies:

"Thou at the sight
Pleased, out of heaven shalt look down and smile."¹

Already the portrayal of Father and Son reflects some of Milton's chief theological attitudes towards them in his life, in the ease with which he pictures God the Father distant in Heaven, and the emphasis he lays upon the subordination of the Son; but his portrayal of that Son reflects an attitude to man more loving and more merciful than the reader of either "Paradise Regained" or of certain parts of his theological treatise would be led to expect.

Already, too, the most noticeable feature about the characters of both Father and Son is the number of traits reflecting the personality of Milton himself. Apart from the views they hold concerning man and life, they have certain personal traits which reflect him, such as the Father's condescending mood to His Son, the concern of both for their reputation, the Son's self-conscious righteousness reflected in such words as "my unspotted soul", the Father's indignation towards man for his ingratitude, and the Son's complacent anticipation of his own coming glory, and His Father's approval. Milton's imagination is portraying them out of himself just as by his imagination he has created his ideas of them out of his self-conscious experience.

(1) Paradise Lost, III, 256-7.

Although it is not possible definitely to decide where he is under the power of his primary imagination in portraying them, and where he is using his secondary power, there are already in Book III certain passages where the poetic imagery becomes particularly vivid, and there are worthy of notice as indicating particular intensity of experience behind them.

The first is the famous passage celebrating God as the "Fountain of light",

"Author of all being,
Fountain of light, thy self invisible
Amidst the glorious brightness where Thou sittest
Throned inaccessible, but when thou shadest
The full blaze of thy beams, and through a cloud
Drawn round about thee like a radiant shrine,
Dark with excessive bright thy skirts appear."¹

In these lines, Milton's imagination is reflecting his appreciative, receptive experience of the outward glory of God, and associated with it probably, his appreciative reading of Dante's great description of God as a centre of light². The vivid imagery results from the emotion accompanying the recollected experience, and is of particular interest when it is remembered that at the time of composing these lines so brilliant with light, Milton himself was blind.

A second vivid description celebrates the Son's triumph over His Father's enemies:

(1) Paradise Lost, II, 374-380.

(2) Paradise ref. Canto XXXIII

"Thou that day
 Thy Father's dreadful thunder didst not spare
 Nor stop thy flaming chariot wheels that shook
 Heav'ns everlasting frame, while o'er the necks
 Thou drov'st of warring angels disarrayed."

Milton's imagination is portraying the Son's manifested glory and also his anger. What he considered righteous anger was an emotion of which he himself had full experience in his attitude towards his enemies, and recollections of his own feelings result in vivid imagery as they are projected out of himself upon the Son of God. The vivid imagery is accompanied here as often by corresponding eloquence of sound. Such passages are instinctively recognised as resulting from the power of Milton's primary imagination, and a study of them might be indefinitely prolonged, especially in connection with the types of metaphors and imagery it leads him to use, but such questions, great though their interest is, must be left to other times and larger works.

There are, however, one or two lines and phrases which suggest that his imagination was not working upon direct or vivid experience when he wrote them. Such epithets describing the Son of God as "My sole complacence"¹ and "Divine Similitude"² betray reasoned theory rather than direct experience as the origin from which they are produced. They form the first of the examples, later to be

(1) Paradise Lost, III, 276.

(2) ibid. III, 384.

added to, which reflect Milton not always depending upon experience as he portrays his Son of God, who sometimes seems to possess suggestive personality but often does not.

As the study of the characters of God and the Son proceeds, so it reveals the tremendous difficulties with which Milton was faced in attempting to portray them dramatically, and all the resources of his imaginative power are called into play. The supreme difficulty is that of making God a definite partaker in the action and yet keeping to the fore the idea of His immensity and infinitude. Milton escapes from it as much as he can by making the Son carry out most of the visible actions, but, in spite of his efforts, in the middle books of "Paradise Lost" the difficulty is continually presenting itself.

Apart from his own personal experience, there are three groups of literary recollections of which his imagination makes use in portraying God the Father; the idea of God as light suggested by Dante and certain parts of the Bible, the general Old Testament idea of God as hidden by the clouds surrounding his Holy Mount, and very occasionally the idea of Zeus, King of the Gods, as suggested in the "Iliad". With these recollections he has to combine the idea of an invisible, infinite, omniscient deity, and at the same time give Him enough personality to make Him convincing as an actor. For the Son of God, however, his

imagination has no such literary sources to work upon; it has, instead, his own theological conception of God the Father becoming manifest in the creation of the world, a conception which for him transcended that of the Christ, who represented God's Son incarnate in man at a particular period.

His lofty idea of God's infinitude defied dramatic presentation, and often by its presence made the more concrete portrayal appear crude and insufficient, as may be seen in such a passage as that in which God hangs out in Heaven His golden scales, as Zeus does in the "Iliad"¹. It is of the greatest interest to follow the working of Milton's imagination as he faces some of these difficulties, and to see how it reflects his experience of God and life in the course of his attempt.

In Books V and VI God and His Son are still portrayed partly by means of certain outward manifestations, and partly through their speeches. God the Father remains "heav'n's high King"², speaking "as from a flaming mount"³ watching ever "with unsleeping eyes"⁴ and is also

"the eternal Eye whose sight discerns
Abstrusest thoughts."⁵

Later He is "the Sov'reign Voice"⁶, as well as "the

- (1) Iliad, XXII.
 (2) Paradise Lost, V, 220.
 (3) ibid., V, 598.
 (4) ibid., V, 647.
 (5) ibid., V, 711-12.
 (6) ibid., VI, 56.

Almighty Father" and looks down upon the battle in heaven from His high abode:

"where He sits
Shrined in His sanctuary of heav'n secure,
Consulting on the sum of things."¹

While He also manifests Himself by means of light:

"He said, and on His Son with rays direct
Shone full."²

The difficulty of this external portrayal of God the Father is lessened for Milton by the natural ease with which he is able to think of God as remote and continually he gives the impression that though in theory he holds that God is everywhere, in his experience he feels that God is chiefly away up in Heaven. With a more inward intuitional knowledge of God, he might have found it impossible to portray Him externally as a dramatic being as he does. The whole of this portrayal reflects through the working of his imagination how much his idea of Him was like that of the Old Testament, "the Eternal eye", to be approached with awe upon His Holy Mount, and how much in many respects it resembled the general seventeenth century idea as also expressed by such a man as Jeremy Taylor.

God's personal character, as reflected by His speeches, is still very like Milton's own, associated with his own theological ideas of God, reasoned from his experience.

(1) Paradise Lost, VI, 671-3.

(2) Ibid. VI, 719-20.

God in Book V is generous to the faithful, an "all bounteous King"¹ but like Milton the Schoolmaster, anticipates the excuses for sins which may be made by His erring children and sends Raphael to warn Adam:

"Lest wilfully transgressing, he pretend
Surprisal, unadmonished, unforwarned."²

In all his doings, He is an autocrat whose will is unquestioned.

"And by my Self have sworn to him shall bow
All knees in heav'n."³

In spite of His omnipotence, however, He has to be ever alert and watchful against Satan, and well-prepared to fight:

"lest unawares we lose
This our high place, our Sanctuary, our hill."⁴

His chief charge against that rebel is that he has refused to be ruled by His law of reason, and He sends the faithful Abdiel back with all His hosts:

"to subdue
By force, who reason for their law refuse."⁵

In attributing to God these characteristics, Milton's imagination is working upon his experience of his own personality, together with his own reasoned opinions. He reflects clearly his belief at this stage of his life that

(1) Paradise Lost, V, 640.

(2) ibid. 244-5.

(3) ibid. V, 607-8.

(4) ibid. V, 731-2.

(5) ibid. VI, 40-41.

God is a God of law and command, and a God for whom reason is the supreme faculty. Through these beliefs and the one expressed earlier¹, that the Son's love to man is only surpassed by His obedience to His Father, he manages to convey the idea of a God who puts law and obedience first in His Kingdom, and offers His love only as a result of these.

The Son Himself in Book V is represented as speaking to His Father

"with calm aspect and clear
Lightning divine, ineffable, serene."²

This intense but calm intellectual activity suggests Him always controlled by "right reason" as Milton himself would be. He reflects Milton too, in His opinion that His Father may justly deride His enemies, making sport of their hopeless effort at rebellion, also in His self-complacency at the result of His approaching victory -

"Matter to me of glory whom their hate
Illustrates."³

The Son also possesses that courtesy of manner used by Milton to his friends:

"So said He, o'er His sceptre bowing rose
From the right hand of glory where He sat."⁴

Towards His Father's enemies He shows the righteous anger Milton himself approved of and put into practice against his own:

-
- (1) Paradise Lost, V, ~~733-4~~. III. 267-9.
 (2) ibid. V 733-4
 (3) ibid. V, 738-9.
 (4) ibid. VI, 746-7.

"So spake the Son, and into terror changed
His count'nance, too severe to be behold,
And full of wrath bent on His enemies."¹

There are several lines and epithets describing the Son, however, which resemble earlier ones in failing to suggest personality in connection with Him. Among these are the ones in which the Father addresses Him:

"So in whose face, invisible is beheld
Visibly, what by Deity I am,
And in whose hand what by decree I do,
Second Omnipotence."²

and those presenting His reply:

"He all His Father full exprest
Ineffably into His face received
And thus the filial Godhead answering spake."³

Such epithets as "Second Omnipotence" and "Filial Godhead" suggest the presence of Milton's secondary imagination, or at least his primary imagination working upon reasoned theological ideas rather than upon any intimate experience of a living Son of God. They combine with what personal characteristics He does possess to show that as a character He is created by Milton's imagination partly out of reasoned theology, and partly out of himself, out of his own human nature. These epithets also reveal how the poetic imagery suffers when Milton is compelled to create out of reasoned ideas rather than out of full-first-hand experience. This often occurs when the Son is represented in relation to His Father, a relationship which to Milton

(1) Paradise Lost, VI, 824-6.
(2) ibid. VI, 681-4.
(3) ibid. VI, 720-2.

was a theological one; but, whenever the Son either meditates upon or goes forth against His Father's enemies, there are so many recollections of personal experience for his imagination to work upon and attribute to Him that the poetic imagery becomes vivid and suggestive.

The passages describing the Son's attack on Satan's host are too famous and too long to quote in detail, but they offer a wonderful illustration of the effect of a strong underlying emotion upon the quality of the imagery in poetry. In Milton's mind, recollections from all parts of the Bible, with others from his wide classical reading become fused and associated into one united whole under the creative power of his primary imagination, emotionally affected by his personal experience, consisting in this particular instance of righteous wrath against his foes, a strong desire for vengeance, and an appreciative love of the outward majesty and glory of his warlike Son of God.

"at his right hand Victory
Sate eagle-winged, beside Him hung His bow
And quiver with three-bolted thunder stored,
And from about Him fierce effusion rolled
Of smoke^(a) and bickering flame, and sparkles dire^(b)
He onward came, far off His coming shone."¹

(a) Ps. 18, v.8, 50, v.3.

(b) Jude 14.

This passage with its recollection of Psalms and the Book of Jude follows immediately upon the famous one inspired by Ezekiel I, describing "The chariot of paternal Deity"² with

(1) Paradise Lost, VI, 726-8.

(2) ibid. VI, 750.

the Son's armour "Of radiant Urim"¹, a recollection from the Book of Exodus², while its reference to the three-bolted thunder harks back to Zeus, and Mount Olympus.

The passage describing the Son hurling His enemies out of Heaven leaves the reader almost breathless with imaginative exertion, and the vivid imagery and swift fierce melody of the lines are not to be surpassed or forgotten:

"and every eye
Glared lightning, and shot forth pernicious fire
Among the accursed, that withered all their strength
And of their wonted vigour left them drained
Exhausted, spiritless, afflicted, fall'n."³

A tremendous picture arises as the Son does His mighty work and sends his foes:

"thunder-struck, pursued
With terrors and with furies to the bounds
And crystal wall of heaven."⁴

With strong sympathetic emotion, Milton pictures the Son of God trampling on His enemies, just as he would probably like to trample on those whom he considered God's enemies and his own; he no doubt found joy and relief through the medium of his poem in sharing in a vengeance which so far had been denied him in real life. If only he had consciously experienced as much of the meaning of God's love as he had of his own anger which he so freely attributes to God, what a poet he might have been! The

(1) Paradise Lost, VI, 761.
 (2) Exodus, 27, 2.
 (3) Paradise Lost, VI, 847-851.
 (4) ibid. VI, 858-60.

world is the poorer because no one succeeded in teaching John Milton the full meaning of that Infinite Love. One can imagine not only his life, but his poetry transfigured with a radiance, which would have brought to him the unbounded love of that great host of critics all down the ages who have looked upon him with respect and reverence, but also often with puzzled disappointment as

"that noble poet, who, for
some cause to be discovered, could not submit
himself to life."¹

Book VII reflects Milton's imagination once more wrestling with the difficulty of his double conception of God, omnipresent, yet chiefly localised in heaven. It also continues to illustrate the contrast in his manner of suggesting God's outward glory and of suggesting the Son's personality as He manifests that glory.

No lines could more fully express his appreciation of God's majesty in His universe than those in which He sends forth His Son on His great mission:

"My overshadowing Spirit and might with thee
I send along; ride forth and bid the deep
Within appointed bounds be heav'n and earth;
Boundless the deep, because I am who fill
Infinite."²

These are equalled by those suggesting the glory of the Son Himself:

"Meanwhile the Son
On His great expedition now appeared
Girt with omnipotence, with radiance crowned
Of Majesty divine."³

-
- (1) Middleton Murray, Keats and Shakespeare, p.99.
(2) Paradise Lost, VII, 165-9.
(3) ibid. VII, 192-5.

Milton's primary imagination is working upon his full receptive experience of that outward visible majesty.

A little later occur the lines:

"Silence, ye troubled waves, and, thou Deep, peace,
Said then the Omnific Word; 'your discord end'."

Appreciative experience, perhaps through reading as much as seeing, lies behind the picture of the Deep and its troubled waves, but reasoned theology behind "Omnific Word" and such corresponding epithets as "Filial Power" and "Filial Godhead". Apart from his own character, reasoned theology is all that his imagination is offered to work upon in its task of attributing personality to his Son of God.

It may be of interest by contrast here to call attention to Milton's peculiar power of visualizing abstract terms when emotional experience is fully affecting his creative power, as in the line:

"Girt with omnipotence, with radiance crowned
Of majesty divine."¹

The suggestive power of such lines depends upon the skilful intricate blending of the concrete with the abstract as if at times his power over visual imagery is at one with his abstract reasoning power, his primary and secondary imagination uniting in a mutual creative effort.

God and the Son are portrayed again as dramatic characters in Books X and XI of "Paradise Lost", where

(1) Paradise Lost, VII, 194-5.

they deal with guilty man. God the Father remains far above, and addresses all "From His transcendant seat the saints among"¹. At first His mood towards mankind is suggested by His surroundings:

"when the most high
Eternal Father from His secret cloud
Amidst, in thunder, uttered thus His voice."²

However, He is inclined to pity man because he is repentant and He therefore sends down His Son as Judge. Later the quality of His pity is expressed in suggestive lines, as He bids Michael soften the unavoidable severity of Adam's punishment with promises for the future:

"If patiently thy bidding they obey
Dismiss them not disconsolate; reveal
To Adam what shall come in future days,
As I shall thee enlighten; intermix
My cov'nant in the woman's seed renewed;
So send them forth, though sorrowing, yet in peace."³

The Son, too, is full of pity for Adam and Eve repentant and seems to have more personality here than in any other part of the poem, as He clothes them and returns to His Father to plead for them "mixing intercession sweet"⁴,

"See, father, what first fruits on earth are sprung
From thy implanted grace in man, these sighs
And prayers, which in this golden censer mixed,
With incense, I thy Priest before thee bring."⁵

"Now, therefore bend Thine ear
To supplication, hear his sighs though mute
Unskilful with what words to pray."⁶

-
- (1) Paradise Lost, X, 614.
 (2) ibid., X, 31-3.
 (3) ibid., X, 112-117.
 (4) ibid., X, 228.
 (5) ibid., XI, 22-5.
 (6) ibid., XI, 30-32.

The remarkable part about these passages, so full of tender emotion, expressed in such eloquence of imagery and melody, is that there are so few evidences of Milton's ~~ever~~ expressing such an emotion in his life, which from outward records and many of his writings, seems to have consisted chiefly of moods of sternness and severity mingled with clear, hard, logical reasoning. There are, however, lines in his earlier poems which betray the presence of these gentler impulses in his inner personality, such lines as:

"Soft silken primrose fading timelessly"¹

or

"He must not float upon his watery bier
Unwept, and welter to the parching wind,
Without the meed of some melodious tear."²

These impulses are always reflected in his poems by means of suggestive melody, and even while giving the highest pleasure through the beauty of their poetic expression, leave also a feeling of regret that a poet with such a wealth of tenderness within him should not have been enabled to express it fully in and throughout his life. Milton had to pay a great price for never approaching the discovery of the infinite extent of God's love and mercy to all mankind, and for never being drawn to humble himself before Him sufficiently to learn.

These conclude the direct appearances of God and His Son as characters in "Paradise Lost", and though there are

(1) Death of a Fair Infant, Stz I, line 2.
(2) Lycidas, lines 12-14.

many more indirect references reflecting particularly the personality and opinions of God the Father, these do not need special mention except where they directly concern the other characters, for they all corroborate what has already been illustrated.

As a poetic character God is often portrayed with majesty and beauty in His outward manifestations, the Son likewise, especially when His task is to express the glory or the wrath of His Father, but as personalities, they are much less satisfying. Often Milton's imagination seems to have created them out of theological conceptions, while such personal characteristics as they possess are Milton's own, projected out of himself, perhaps unconsciously, on to them. Correspondingly, the poetry decreases in beauty when it is based upon reasoned theology, and increases when it arises from the working of his imagination upon vivid, emotionally affected personal experience.

Among points of special interest are the noble quality of the divine pity for repentant man, the fact that Milton projects so much of himself into the characters of both God and His Son, and the fact that God the Father is pictured as an autocrat, exacting unquestioning obedience from all, even from His Son, requiring all to be ruled by their "right reason" and so much exalting His law above His love, that both Satan and man are punished, not because they fall short in their love to Him, but because they disobey His arbitrary

decrees. Such is God, as He is created perhaps by Milton's primary imagination, out of impressions chiefly formed by his self-directed reasoning powers, the God whom consciously setting out to serve, he believed he fully did serve, and the God whose ways he would justify to men and also probably to himself.

In "Paradise Regained" God the Father plays little part as a character, but the Son of God reappears in a more restricted capacity, and the opening lines are typical of Milton's attitude towards Him in His special role of Saviour of mankind.

"I, who erewhile the happy garden sung
By one man's disobedience lost, now sing
Recovered Paradise to all mankind
By one Man's firm obedience fully tried
Through all temptation."¹

Just as in God the Father he portrays a Being who rules first of all by law and reason, so in Christ he portrays a Son of God who saves mankind by obedience and example, rather than by love and sacrifice of self. And it is in the portrayal of Christ in "Paradise Regained" that Milton chiefly disappoints many of those who are ready to love his poetry most. His imagination, primary or secondary (and in this poem the distinction is very difficult to make), can only portray out of what he has experienced, and since there never came to him the full vision of the living Christ as

(1) Paradise Regained, 1-5.

the revelation in man of that love of God which sacrifices itself to redeem the most unregenerate sinners, with the cry of "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do", he was not only unable to express such a love in his life, but he could gain no full idea of the meaning of the Cross of Calvary. Therefore, to him Christ's intellectual victory over Satan, and His obedience to His Father, came to represent the highest ideals of conduct which his own reasoning powers, working upon his personal experience, could lead him to conceive.

From the beginning of "Paradise Regained" the character of Christ is notorious as a replica of Milton's own, partly as he is, partly as he would like to be at the period when he is writing. Thus the Saviour appears marked by self-restraint and a calm, stern demeanour, with His reason in measured control of all His thoughts:

"To whom our Saviour sternly thus replied"¹

"To whom our Saviour with unaltered brow"²

He has also come to Milton's conclusions on many matters, such as the best way of reforming the world:

"By winning words to conquer willing hearts
And make persuasion do the work of fear."³

and the best way of dealing with the unwilling:

"The stubborn only to subdue"⁴.

(1) Paradise Regained, I, 406.

(2) ibid. I, 493.

(3) ibid. I, 222-3.

(4) ibid. I, 226.

As a child He has had Milton's seriousness of disposition, Milton's studiousness at the age of twelve, Milton's memories of being then "admired by all".¹ He possesses also a dignity such as Milton himself strove for, with the consciousness of guidance and approval from God's Holy Spirit.

"To whom the Son of God: "Who brought me hither
Will bring me hence; no other guide I seek".²

His conception of God the Father's dealings with the wicked is Milton's:

"For God hath justly given the nations up
To thy delusions; justly, since they fell
Idolatrous."³

The Saviour patiently endures Satan's insistent temptations just as Milton patiently endured the sufferings of his later days, and his opinions reflect some of Milton's maturest ones, with his desire

"to guide nations in the way of truth
By saving doctrine."⁴

This desire aptly fits in with the mind of a Christ who looks upon the Holy Spirit first of all as God's "Spirit of Truth" -

"And send His Spirit of Truth henceforth to dwell
In pious hearts, an inward oracle
To all truth requisite for man to know."⁵

and a poet who says not that God is Love, but that "God himself is truth, in propagating which, as men display a

-
- (1) Paradise Regained, I, 214.
 (2) ibid. I, 335-6.
 (3) ibid. I, 442-4.
 (4) ibid. II, 473-4.
 (5) ibid. I, 462-4.

greater integrity and zeal, they approach nearer to the similitude of God and possess a greater portion of His love."¹

In all Christ's speeches Milton's imagination is working upon his own reasoned convictions, but convictions to which at the time of composing the poem he is holding with all the intensity of his intellectual, conscious nature. Therefore, they are often associated with strong emotions, associated with the experience which has wrought those convictions, and these are reflected in recurring outbursts of imagery and a continued, though strongly-controlled music of rhythm in the lines:

"I can at will, doubt not, as soon as thou,
 Command a table in this wilderness,
 And call swift flights of angels ministrant
 Arrayed in glory, on my cup to attend:
 Why shouldst thou then obtrude this diligence
 In vain, where no acceptance it can find?
 And with my hunger what hast thou to do?"²

Primary imagination and secondary imagination seem to be at work together in the best of them which may be looked upon as truly reflecting "reason in her most exalted mood".

Throughout Book III of "Paradise Regained", Christ continues to answer Satan with the quiet self-confidence of the perfectly-virtuous man, able to rely upon his reasoning powers, in manner calm and unmoved. He also echoes Milton's life-long faith in God's goodness, a faith which to his

(1) Second Defence of the English People 1654.
 (2) Paradise Regained, II, 385-389.

honour he kept through all his days of trial and adversity:

"since His Word all things produced
Though chiefly not for glory as prime end
But to show forth His goodness, and impart
His good communicable to every soul
Freely."¹

These lines, however, contrast strongly with his
Christ's well-known words against the common people:

"And what the people but a herd confused
A miscellaneous rabble who extol
Things vulgar, and, well-weighted, scarce worth the
praise?"²

and with his words of anger against mankind as a whole:

"Turned recreant to God, ingrate and false"³.

These ~~as~~ clearly reflect Milton's own superior and un-
sympathetic attitude to the ignorant and sinful, ^{while} ~~as~~ other
lines reflect his conscious approval of the few he considers
just, with his unacknowledged but obvious confidence that
he is among them, and will one day be glorified with them
in heaven.

"This is true glory and renown, when God
Looking on the earth, with approbation marks
The just man, and divulges him through heaven
To all His angels, who with true applause
Recount his praises."⁴

He also reflects Milton's faith:

"That who advance His glory, not their own,
Them He himself to glory will advance."⁵

and the hope which supports him in enduring his many tribula-
tions with patience:

-
- (1) Paradise Regained, III, 122-6.
(2) ibid. III, 49-51.
(3) ibid. III, 138.
(4) ibid. III, 60-64.
(5) ibid. III, 143-4.

"who best
 Can suffer, best can do; best reign who first
 Well hath obeyed; just trial, ere I merit
 My exaltation without change or end."¹

These words from his Christ betray Milton's own still un-surrendered thirst for glory and universal admiration; they suggest - and who dare cast a stone at him here - that a considerable part of his ultimate purpose in advancing God's glory is the attaining of glory for himself, and are a reflection through the working of his imagination of the fact that he has not yet broken out of the prison of self which enclosed so much of him all his life. Therefore, these passages reflect his belief that happiness in heaven will consist in merited exaltation of self, a desire for which he makes one of the essential qualities of the Christ whose character his imagination has shaped upon the pattern of himself, instead of interpreting the living Christ as the pattern upon which he himself is gradually to be shaped.

Book IV reflects one or two additional Miltonic traits in the character of Christ, who now changes from His calm manner towards Satan:

"Who thus our Saviour answered with disdain"²

and in this mood says:

"I never liked thy talk, thy offers less;
 Now both abhor, since thou hast dared to utter
 The Abominable terms"³

in true Miltonic fashion.

(1) Paradise Regained, III, 194-6.

(2) ibid. IV, 170.

(3) ibid. IV, 171-3.

Yet in this Book also Milton's imagination reflects a consciousness of weakness not apparent in earlier days, for when Christ condemns all Greek philosophy He includes the Stoic with his "Philosophic pride"¹, and his virtuous man "perfect in himself"² and all such men who err:

"And in themselves seek virtue, and to themselves
All glory arrogate, to God give none."³

This opinion differs from that of the Milton whose Adam is "Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall"⁴, and the Milton who wrote "Comus". It prepares the way for the Milton of "Samson Agonistes" with his:

"O ever-failing trust
In mortal strength!"⁵

and reflects how, during the many troubles of his later years his own self-sufficiency was sorely put to the test, and gradually failed him. With a vision of the unattainable loveliness of the real Christ before him, that illusion of self-sufficiency might have disappeared many years earlier, leaving in its stead the consciousness of a living Presence, with results beyond conception upon his imaginative power, had he ever been led to attempt the portrayal of that Christ in a poem.

The final characteristics attributed to Christ in Book IV are so well-known that a brief mention of them will be

- (1) Paradise Regained, IV, 300.
 (2) ibid. IV, 302.
 (3) ibid. IV, 314-15.
 (4) Paradise Lost, III, 99.
 (5) Samson Agonistes, lines 348-9.

sufficient. The Saviour at the age of thirty has that knowledge which as a tireless reader Milton himself had gained by the age of sixty, and that scorn for books which seems to have been Milton's final attitude matured by long experience. He has also Milton's belief in being guided by:

"Light from above, from the fountain of light"¹

and his contempt for reading unless it is subjected to:

"A spirit and judgment equal or superior"².

These opinions, as here expressed, seem to corroborate the view that Milton came to associate "Light from above" very closely with his own powers of judgment, "equal or superior".

In Book IV also, Christ expresses even more clearly His lack of sympathy with the worst of sinners:

"What wise and valiant man would seek to free
These thus degenerate, by themselves enslaved,
Or could of inward slaves make outward free?"³

The whole attitude of Christ in this book seems to reflect Milton's imagination working through a cloud which, settling on his mind at the time of the Restoration, not only obscured for him the better nature of his own people, but also seemed to extend its influence over all peoples and all ages, except the few who accepted the teachings of the Jewish Scriptures as he himself interpreted them:

(1) Paradise Regained, IV, 289.

(2) ibid. IV, 324.

(3) ibid. IV, 143-5.

"Where God is praised aright, and godlike men,
The Holiest of Holies, and His saints"¹.

The final characteristic revealed by Christ corresponds with the first, for to the end He is calmly patient, just as Milton, by the help of his God, had schooled himself to be:

"ill wast thou shrouded then,
O patient Son of God, yet only stood'st
Unshaken."²

Such is the Son of God, "our Saviour meek", as Milton portrays Him in "Paradise Regained", and there can be no doubt that His character reflects in all its details Milton's own conscious reasoning self, with his conscious attitudes towards his past life and experience. The Saviour's noblest attribute is His patient fortitude through all His trials, His most ignoble His scorn for His weaker brethren, and both of these are Milton's own. His supreme quality is His calm, unassailable, reasoning power, which rebuffs the insistently repeated attacks of Satan as a solid rock resists the surging waves.

Thus the two poems reflect a God who rules by law, and decree, a Son who saves by obedience and loyalty to reason. But it has been suggested earlier - and it is no new or original idea - that complete and free surrender, which alone means full obedience, can be made by man only to that which

(1) Paradise Regained, IV, 348-9.

(2) ibid. IV, 419-21.

irresistibly attracts his love. Man may consciously attempt to obey the law, without a corresponding love for its Maker, and he may think he is doing so, but, if, through that attempted obedience, he fails to satisfy his own deepest yearnings and desires, which may remain in his unconscious being, uninterpreted even to himself, there is likely to be a rebellion, none the less there because it may be unperceived.

Milton nowhere portrays in God or the Son of God the fullness of love, for the "love without end" ascribed to the Son of God in "Paradise Lost" is contradicted by His attitude to the "Miscellaneous rabble" in "Paradise Regained". But he does connect with them rule by law and obedience, according to the dictates of reason, and consciously justifies their ways, believing that with his own full approval, he conforms to them. Since he did not conceive infinite love to be the supreme attribute of God, so he did not give Him his own unrestricted love; only a part of it together with his conscious, reasoned duty. But his attempt to reduce his fuller nature to such an obedience proved in vain, and within his unconscious being there did arise a great rebellion. In life, this rebellion was probably never received into consciousness, for he was alert and watchful through long years of trained obedience to his own reasoned will. Under the cover of his art, however, that watchfulness was relaxed, as in surrendering himself to his

Heavenly Muse under the power of his primary imagination, he yielded to it the control of the depths of that unconscious being. His Muse, to relieve him from the burden of restraint which he was bearing without realising it, set free his own fuller rebel self, who escapes into his poems disguised and unrecognised as that mighty leader of all rebels, the great arch-fiend and Prince of Darkness, Satan, the study of whose portrayal will be the subject of the next chapter.

P A R T II.

Chapter II.

THE PORTRAYAL OF SATAN

It is a remarkable and interesting fact that Satan has so large a place in "Paradise Lost" and "Paradise Regained", and so small a place in Milton's "Treatise of Christian Doctrine" where he is granted only a passing reference as the prince of devils "the author of all wickedness and the opponent of all good"¹. If the Treatise represents Milton in his conscious reasoning moments, and "Paradise Lost" in his inspired imaginative ones, as we have presumed they do, the inference is that the Satan who dominates his poetic imagination was given little place in his daily conscious life.

This fact supports the view that by the working of Milton's primary imagination Satan was created out of his deeper unconscious being, and represents the rebellion of a great part of himself against a God whom he was consciously trying to obey, but whom he did not fully love.

The aim of this chapter is to trace how Milton's imagination in portraying Satan reflects that rebellious

(1) Treatise of Christian Doctrine, ^{BKI} Ch. IX.

and dissatisfied self, and how the emotions associated with its recollections affect the quality of the verse in which he is described.

In the course of the poems, Satan appears in various capacities. He is first the chief of the rebels in Hell, then a great traveller and explorer, after that a general conducting a battle campaign in heaven, and finally the guileful tempter of Eve in "Paradise Lost", and of Christ in "Paradise Regained".

The first two books of "Paradise Lost" present Satan as the great rebel leader of the host of fallen angels, suffering with them in Hell for his sins of pride and disobedience. He has three outstanding personal characteristics, pride still undiminished, an unquenchable desire for independence, and a grim determination in his fight against God. His pride is kingly, and makes him "conscious of highest worth"¹. It is accompanied by "dauntless courage" and gives rise to his longings to be independent: "He trusted to have equalled the Most High"; He will not humble himself before God, and refuses:

"to bow and sue for grace
With suppliant knee, and deify His power."²

He would much rather 'reign in Hell' than 'serve in Heaven', and feels that:

(1) Paradise Lost, II, 428.

(2) ibid, I, 111-112.

"To reign is worth ambition, though in Hell"¹

Nor will he accept defeat at God's hands, for he is convinced that "to be weak is miserable"² and therefore determines to prove to God by foul means if not by fair, that,

"who overcomes
By force, hath overcome but half his foe."³

He perseveres in his determination and in Hell, tormented in mind and body, "racked with deep despair"⁴, continues his rebellion with unabated vigour.

"For who can think submission? War then, war
Open or understood, must be resolved."⁵

And it is Satan the 'author of all evil' who speaks the immortal lines:

"What though the field be lost?
All is not lost; th'unconquerable will,
And study of revenge, immortal hate
And courage never to submit or yield,"⁶

It is not difficult to recognise Milton himself behind these Satanic traits, with his own haughty pride, his love of freedom and independence, and his determined opposition against his enemies. The attitude reflected has often been paralleled to his attitude against Charles II, but it seems to come from greater depths than this and to express exactly his own unconscious attitude to the conception of God which

- (1) Paradise Lost, I, 262.
 (2) ibid., I, 156.
 (3) ibid., I, 648-9.
 (4) ibid., I, 126.
 (5) ibid., I, 661-2.
 (6) ibid., I, 105-8.

he had created by means of his own reasoning powers, and consciously believed he was obeying.

So Milton's rebel self appears in Satan, rationalised, safely concealed from his conscious understanding in the enemy of God severely punished in Hell. The concealment is made more secure by means of other recollections of which his primary imagination makes use in creating Satan in his various roles. He is a great leader in battle, a qualification never possessed by Milton himself. With the rebels in martial array before him he stands "their dread commander", and while his heart "distends with pride"¹

"He through the armed files
Darts his experienced eye"².

Later, he presides over his great assembly:

"High on a throne of royal state"³.

Sometimes, therefore, he seems to suggest memories of Cromwell with his warlike genius; Cromwell in turn seems to be associated with reading-recollections of Caesar and Alexander the Great, while in his great council Satan is very like Agammemnon, king of kings, and is also at one point termed "their great Sultan"⁴. He is, therefore, a complex poetic figure, but through the organic power of the primary imagination he has a personality and a unity of his own in which Milton himself is both characteristically revealed and yet safely and securely hidden.

(1) Paradise Lost, I, 589.

(2) ibid. I, 567-8.

(3) ibid. II, 1.

(4) ibid. I, 348.

As this mighty rebel schemes in Hell, undeterred by a God who has given orders:

"to subdue
By force, who reason for their law refuse"¹,

we can understand that Omnipotent Monarch's watchful anxiety lest He should lose His throne in Heaven, and Milton's own anxiety to justify his God's ways not only to man but to himself.

The underlying experience associated with these rebellious emotions enables Milton's primary imagination to portray Satan by means of abundant suggestive imagery, so that he continually visualizes him and all connected with him. Modern psychological research suggests that the more vivid the imagery employed, the more unconscious of himself and absorbed by inspiration is the poet, and as a result, the more is his unconscious self at its mercy. If this is so, Satan has certainly come out of the depths of Milton's being.

In the descriptions of him, one set of vivid images is closely associated with numbers of others, and recollections from all his wide reading are abundantly made use of. For instance, Satan on the burning lake is likened to the Titans, Briareus or Typhon, or to Leviathan:

"which God of all His works
Created hugest that swim th' ocean stream"²

and the picture of this great sea-creature:

(1) Paradise Lost, VI, 40-41.

(2) ibid. I, 201-2.

"haply slumb'ring on the Norway foam"¹

calls up in turn that of the mariners taking shelter under his lee, thinking him an island which will protect them from the darkness of the storm.

As has earlier been remarked, Milton's use of imagery is a study in itself. Not only his personal experience from his own daily life, but recollections of all his tremendous reading, of England as he saw her in his earlier days, and of his brief travels, all combine to provide the wealth of memories upon which his imagination draws, undiminished by his blindness or his age. Thus Satan's shield is like the moon as gazed at by Galileo, his spear is greater than the tallest pine from Norwegian hillsides; he himself with glory tarnished is compared with the sun shining through the mist or eclipsed by the moon:

"as when the sun new-risen
Looks through the horizontal misty air,
Shorn of his beams; or, from behind the moon,
In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds
On half the nations."²

It is no wonder if, like Satan himself, the student of Milton's imagination is "racked with deep despair" as well as filled with reverence as he contemplates the inexhaustible nature of the task before him, and the gift of genius which may belong to man.

Satan's second part is that of a great and adventurous traveller. His journey from Hell to the outskirts of

(1) Paradise Lost, I, 203.

(2) Paradise Lost, I, 594-8.

Heaven forms one of the boldest poetic flights in "Paradise Lost". The imaginative vision can hardly keep pace with him as he makes his way through the "unfounded deep"¹ and the "dark illimitable ocean"², across the "wild abyss"³, up through "the hollow dark"⁴, and into the "universal hubbub wild"⁵ of the realm of Chaos, until at last he reaches "the nearest coast of darkness"⁶, "Bordering on light"⁷.

Milton can be felt identifying himself with him not only in the boldness, fearlessness and determined perseverance which he shows in the face of tremendous odds, but also in his joy in his escape from darkness into light. For Milton himself, the escape is from his own unsatisfying reason-ruled life into a fuller, more spacious existence in his art. Disappointed with the world, he leaves it under cover of Satan, and expresses through him unfulfilled dreams of freedom, travel, and adventure; nor must it be forgotten that he who pictured this vast and glorious expedition was blind and hardly able alone to leave his own front door.

The working of Milton's imagination seems particularly affected by his blindness in the portrayal of Satan on his

-
- (1) Paradise Lost, II, 829.
 (2) ibid. II, 891.
 (3) ibid. II, 917.
 (4) ibid. II, 953.
 (5) ibid. II, 951.
 (6) ibid. II, 958.
 (7) ibid. II, 959.

journey; he travels a long way through the dark; the objects he meets have no defined shape, and they seem to be in that confusion which anyone with good sight may experience on going in the dark through any large, strange place. Satan's first impressions come to him through the ear:

"a universal hubbub wild,
Of stunning sounds and voices all confused
Borne through the hollow dark."¹

All this stage of his journey seems to be described with a suggestiveness reinforced from the experience of a blind man. So Milton's primary imagination turns even his great trial into material out of which it creates an immortal poetic picture.

The descriptions are different, however, when Satan gets into the light, for there he can see 'far and wide'. Looking down upon our world he is compared to a scout at dawn, looking out upon a foreign land, or on:

"some renowned metropolis
With glistering spires, and pinnacles adorned
Which now the rising sun gilds with his beams"².

Coming towards that world he is compared to a vulture who flies:

"toward the springs
Of Ganges or Hydaspes, Indian streams;
But in his way lights on the barren plains
Of Sericana, where Chinesis drive
With sails and wind their cany waggons light."³

He gazes down in wonder and admiration upon the universe

- (1) Paradise Lost, II, 951-3.
 (2) ibid. III, 549-551.
 (3) ibid. III, 435-9.

spread out before him; and then, "through the pure marble air"¹, and "Amongst innumerable stars"² makes his way towards the earth.

In these passages Milton's fuller self appears to be making an escape from double bondage; he escapes from the prison of his blindness into a world of glorious imaginative vision, and from the prison of his present unsatisfactory surroundings to a refuge among distant peoples and places far away. He shares with all dissatisfied humanity the tendency to idealise the distant - the Utopias and Earthly Paradises and El Dorados beyond the Mountains of the Moon - in contrast to the familiar and the close at hand. No parts of "Paradise Lost" reflect more clearly than these the results of that mood of dissatisfaction with the near and present which is often the starting point of a poet's dream.

One wonders, too, whether it is the special sensitiveness granted to a blind man which causes Milton to express so suggestively how Satan appreciates the "gentle gales"³ of Paradise, and the "Native perfumes"⁴ borne on their "odiferous wings"⁵, so that his experience may be compared with that of travellers "Beyond the Cape of Hope"⁶ who feel

(1) Paradise Lost, III, 564.

(2) ibid. III, 565.

(3) ibid. IV, 156.

(4) ibid. IV, 158.

(5) ibid. IV, 157.

(6) ibid. IV, 160.

blown towards them:

"Sabean odours from the spicy shore
Of Araby the Blest."¹

Satan gets into Paradise over the wall, like a wolf,
or a thief, who, kept out by the rich burgher's "substantial
doors"

"In at the window climbs, or o'er the tiles",²

and Milton's comment on his mode of entry is:

"So clomb this first grand thief into God's fold;
So since into his Church lewd hirelings climb."³

The vivid pictures carry with them an undercurrent reflect-
ing his dissatisfaction with the life round about him, and
contrast with his idealised references to distant peoples
and far-off lands, like Seleucia, Sericana and Telassar.

When Satan first arrives in Paradise, his peace of
mind is greatly disturbed, and among other things he wonders
why God has forbidden Adam and Eve to touch the Tree of
Knowledge:

"knowledge forbidden?
Suspicious, reasonless. Why should their Lord
Envy them that? can it be sin to know?
Can it be death? and do they only stand
By ignorance? is that their happy state,
The proof of their obedience and their faith?"⁴

No one was ever born with a keener desire to know than
Milton himself, and here he is, safely disguised in Satan,
questioning God's methods and puzzling over those matters

(1) Paradise Lost, IV, 162-3.

(2) ibid. IV, 186, 191.

(3) ibid. IV, 192-3.

(4) ibid. IV, 515-20.

likely to trouble a mind trained to accept the dogma connected with the doctrine of original sin.

Books V and VI of "Paradise Lost" portray Satan leading a third of the host of heaven in rebellion against God, and determined neither to accept reason for his law nor to be subdued by force. Consciously, Milton is fighting on the side of God, but his fuller unconscious being fights with Satan, and reveals its partiality in the zest with which that mighty rebel conducts his campaign. He still reflects the same traits of Milton's own character, the same haughty independence:

"Will ye submit your necks, and choose to bend
The supple knee?"¹

and the same thirst for power and freedom:

"Who can in reason then or right assume
Monarchy over such as live by right
His equals, if in power and splendour less,
In freedom equal?"²

To the end he holds out "still undismayed", and in his scorn for the obedient angels, voices Milton's own opinions of the changeable multitude:

"At first I thought that liberty and heav'n
To heav'nly souls had been all one; but now
I see that most through sloth had rather serve
Ministring spirits, trained up in feast and song."³

Milton's disguise from himself, however, is thorough, and recollections of other beings are still inextricably

(1) Paradise Lost, V, 787-8.

(2) ibid. V, 794-7.

(3) ibid. VI, 164-7.

woven with that of Satan by the working of his primary imagination. There is the military leader giving his orders:

"Vanguard, to right and left the front unfold"¹,
and a combination of Goliath with Achilles or Aeneas singly
challenging the foe:

"On the rough edge of battle ere it joined,
Satan with vast and haughty strides advanced,
Came towering, armed in adamant and gold."²

The vivid pictures, with their wealth of detailed imagery, reflect the strength of the sympathetic emotions associated with the memories and recollections upon which Milton's imagination is working. Recollections of Biblical and classical reading are continually blended into single incidents, as when Michael wounds Satan with a sword "from the armoury of God" and Satan is borne back to his chariot on the angels' shields, bleeding the celestial humour of the deities of the Iliad.

Yet, as soon as the Son of God advances in full power and glory to overthrow the rebels, Milton forgets Satan. He does not even mention him as he portrays the evil angels hurled from the walls of heaven. The description of the glory and the wrath of the Son of God has called forth all his poetic power, all his love of beauty, all the resources of imagery, gathered by his receptiveness to its external appeal; both conscious self and deeper self are brought into

(1) Paradise Lost, VI, 558.

(2) ibid. VI, 108-10.

unity in the effort of his imagination in creating that unequalled picture. In the presence of the glory and the beauty he so much loves all traces of rebellion disappear.

Satan's overthrow, however, is but a passing incident, and in Book IX he reappears complete with all enthusiasm, to tempt unlucky Eve. In this capacity he reveals several characteristic Miltonic attitudes towards woman and towards God.

He is so susceptible to Eve's beauty that for a while he forgets his own wickedness as he looks upon her:

"her heav'nly form
 Angelic, but more soft and feminine,
 Her graceful innocence, her every air
 Of gesture or least action, over-awed
 His malice, and with rapine sweet bereaved
 His fierceness of the fierce intent it brought."¹

Later, however, in spite of his momentary reverence, he seems to take the greatest delight in compassing her downfall, and approaches her with his serpent beauty, skilfully displayed, and all his wiles cunningly prepared:

"oft he bowed
 His turret crest, and sleek enamelled neck,
 Fawning, and licked the ground whereon she trod."²

There seems to be a great deal of Milton in Satan here, the Milton who was so susceptible to woman's beauty, who had been so unkindly used by her, and who felt as much delight as Satan himself in taking vengeance on her by plotting her undoing.

(1) Paradise Lost, IX, 457-462.

(2) ibid. IX, 524-6.

Hence the narrative is full of vigour, and abounding in suggestive imagery, as his imagination works upon recollected experience associated with enjoyment in portraying the incident. Attached to Satan, and therefore condemned, neither susceptibility nor satisfaction brought to Milton any conscious uneasiness.

Satan reveals Milton's experience of woman, also, in his well-chosen flattery:

"Fairest resemblance of thy Maker fair,
Thee all things living gaze on, all things thine
By gift, and thy celestial beauty adore
With ravishment beheld."¹

The questions with which he tempts her, however, are not only such as would trouble a woman. They are the ones which have already troubled himself and Milton behind him, but coming from Satan are unacknowledged by their original propounder:

"if what is evil
Be real, why not known, since easier shunned?"²

"and wherein lies
The offence, that man should thus attain to know?
What can your knowledge hurt Him, or this tree
Impart against His will if all be His?"³

The vivid imagery which betrays Milton's joy in recounting the incident appears in the description of the serpent which houses Satan, and in the sustained and beautiful similes associated with that description.

- (1) Paradise Lost, IX, 538-541.
 (2) ibid. IX, 698-9.
 (3) ibid. IX, 725-728.

Never has there lived a serpent so dangerous or so beautiful, as that which, while concealing Milton's Satan also conceals the greater part of himself:

"on his rear
Circular base of rising folds, that towered
Fold above fold, a surging maze, his head
Crested aloft, and carbuncle his eyes;
With burnished neck of verdant gold, erect
Amidst his circling spires, that on the grass
Floated redundant."¹

In creating the picture Milton's imagination is working upon varied recollections from his reading, from Virgil particularly, and, affected by the associated emotion, these call up recollections of many other serpents, but none lovelier than this.

"not those that in Illyria changed
Hermione and Cadmus, or the God
In Epidaurus; nor to which transformed
Ammonian Jove or Capitoline was seen."²

Space does not permit more than a mention of the beautiful similes associated with Satan in the course of his temptation of Eve. As he approaches her, there is the one of the ship and the skilful steersman; and as he leads her to the fatal tree the one of the Will-o-the-Wisp or "wand'ring fire", which:

"Hovering and blazing with delusive light
Misleads th' amazed night-wanderer from his way
To bogs and mires."³

While as he rears himself to persuade her there is the famous one comparing him to "some orator renown'd"⁴ in the days of old.

(1) Paradise Lost, IX, 497-503.

(2) ibid. IX, 505-8.

(3) ibid. IX, 639-41. (4) ibid. IX, 670.

Milton's similes also are a study in themselves, and his nature ones raise the question as to how far in creating them his imagination works upon recollections from his reading, and how far upon memories of what he has actually seen in England. His direct appreciation of the outward beauty of nature seems often to be underestimated, but neither time nor space permit the substantiating of this claim at present.

To return to Satan himself; however far Milton is to be identified with him throughout his poem, he has no conscious intention of minimising his wickedness:

"Back to the thicket slunk
The guilty serpent"¹

Thus he is disposed of in quick and dramatic fashion. He is granted a safe journey back to hell through the darkness and the dismal noises; there he is allowed to give his followers a vigorous description of his journey, how he has:

"Voyaged the unreal, vast unbounded deep
Of horrible confusion"²

and in his last speech, still allowed some "permissive glory" or "false glitter". Even at this point he reveals one or two very Milton-like traits of character, in his contempt for Adam and Eve seduced "with an apple"³, and in his obstinate determination in the face of suffering:

"A world who would not purchase with a bruise
Or much more greivous pain?"⁴

His doom is severe, for, deprived of his splendour, changed

(1) Paradise Lost, IX, 784.

(2) ibid. X, 471-2.

(3) ibid. X, 487.

(4) ibid. X, 500-1.

into:

"A monstrous serpent on his belly prone"³

he is so degraded among his similarly transformed followers, that chewing "bitter ashes" he is lost among them. Thus Milton satisfied his conscious mind that Satan, glorious poetic figure as he is, is fully condemned, and because in ordinary life Milton's conscious will is uppermost, in his art also it is granted the victory.

Even yet, however, Satan is by no means beaten. He still possesses the "courage never to submit or yield" and in "Paradise Regained" he once more reappears to carry on his rebellious work, with as much of Milton in him as ever. The quality of the poetry surrounding him would suggest this, even did he not continue to reveal unmistakable traits of Milton's own character.

The transition from the enthusiastic rebel of "Paradise Lost" to the time-worn but persistent tempter of "Paradise Regained" is skilfully carried out, and prepares the way for the approaching intellectual combat. The Satan who addresses his forces "With looks aghast and sad"¹ comes towards Christ in a manner less regal, but far more subtle:

"an aged man in rural weeds
Following, as seemed, the quest of some strange ewe
Or withered sticks to gather."²

His external appearance may have been created partly out of

(1) *Paradise Regained*, I, 43.

(2) *Ibid.*, I, 314-316.

(3) *Paradise Lost*, X, 514.

recollections of Giles Fletcher's description of him¹; partly out of recollections of Spenser's Archimago; and part of his attitude may have been suggested by the Satan of the Book of Job, but his inmost nature is still that of Milton himself.

In "Paradise Lost" the Almighty has to be watchful against Satan, but in "Paradise Regained" Christ is imper-
turbed by any of his efforts. Reason appears more strongly than ever in control, and Satan is mercilessly defeated by each of Christ's answers. Yet in the first Book and in Satan's first speech to Christ there is an unmistakable suggestion that Milton's unconscious sympathy is with him as he complains of his lot among:

"Men to much misery and hardship born"².

This unconscious sympathy appears again in the same Book when Satan laments in a manner characteristic of Milton himself:

"Hard are the ways of truth, and rough to walk
Smooth on the tongue discoursed, pleasing to the ear,
And tuneable as sylvan pipe or song;"³

Such words as these prepare the way for a further discovery of Milton in Satan through the other Books of "Paradise Regained", in the course of which he sets himself fully to his task of tempting a Christ whose guiding light is reason, and whose purpose in life is obedience.

- (1) Christ's Victory and Triumph, stz. 68.
 (2) Paradise Regained, I, 341.
 (3) ibid. I, 478-480.

In Book II Satan offers Christ a sumptuous feast, and then advises him to amass riches, but, step by step, his defeat is so emphasised, that it seems as though Milton wishes to reassure himself of his own reason's firm control. Yet in this same Book, there are several indications that he has much in common with Satan.

Satan pours scorn on Belial's advice to tempt Christ with women, and appears to be indifferent to their charm, as he says:

"For beauty stands
In the admiration only of weak minds
Led captive."¹

At the same time, however, he manages to name a pleasing list of maidens of 'beauty rare', Calisto, Clymene, Daphne, Semele and others, picturing them waylaid,

"In wood or grove by mossy fountain side,
In valley or green meadow."²

He has a vision, too, of the loveliest one:

"As sitting queen adored on beauty's throne."³

The melody of the names and the imagery betray emotion, and suggest that in spite of his repudiation, Satan is susceptible to woman, and finds joy in referring to her. They also suggest that Milton is finding artistic joy in expressing his own susceptibility, which, concealed in Satan, can be safely disowned by his conscious self.

- (1) Paradise Lost, ^{Regained} II, 220-2.
 (2) ibid. II, 184-5.
 (3) ibid. II, 212.

No lines describing woman could be more lovely than those connected with the banquet offered to Christ:

"Under the trees now tripped, now solemn stood
Nymphs of Diana's train, and Naiades
With fruits and flowers from Amalthea's horn,
And ladies of the Hesperides, that seemed
Fairer than feigned of old, or fabled since
Of fairy damsels met in forest wide."¹

In reality, Milton loves her still, and by the beauty of the poetry surrounding her, betrays himself a rebel with Satan against a Christ whose reasoned opinion holds such things in contempt. The apparent scorn shown by both Christ and Satan are a reflection of Milton's own acquired experience, and not of his natural tendency.

The banquet also gives him an opportunity of describing many of those objects of sensuous beauty, for which he outwardly professed contempt. His imagination portrays them with enthusiasm as they appear, attributed to Satan, with their presence thus morally justified. Inspired by his love for their beauty he is enabled to picture them vividly with suggestive imagery, as they arise from many and varied recollections of past reading of Greek or Celtic legends. In addition to the visual imagery there is also imagery richly suggestive of sounds, scents and touch, perhaps rendered more appreciatively in compensation for his loss of sight.

"And all the while harmonious airs were heard
Of chiming strings or charming pipes, and winds
Of gentlest gale Arabian odours fanned
From their soft wings, and Flora's earliest smells."²

(1) Paradise Regained, II, 354-359.
(2) ibid. II, 362-5.

So Satan continues to be the defender and deliverer of that part of Milton's personality which met with little of his own conscious approval and had to be treated as his God treated the rebels who refused reason for their law. Milton, however, does not seem to have discovered in connection with his own nature, that the force used by his reasoning will only conquered half its foe.

Book III opens with Satan once again condemned, mute and at a loss for words, apparently

"confuted and convinced
Of his weak arguing and fallacious drift."¹

He offers Christ glory and when sternly rebuked by Christ is pictured:

"struck
With guilt of his own sin, for he himself
Insatiable of glory had lost all."²

Here Milton condemns in Satan that thirst for glory which is still his own, but now transferred to the next world.

Satan next advises Christ to learn the wisdom of monarchs and empires, and shows him a wonderful vision of the empire of the Parthians with all its military splendour. Christ and the conscious Milton have no use for such display, yet the clear, detailed imagery of the vision betrays behind it emotions of delight and appreciation which give the lie to any consciously asserted scorn.

Before Him Christ can see:

(1) Paradise Regained, III, 3-4.
(2) ibid. III, 146-8.

"Huge cities and high-towered, that well might seem
The seats of mightiest monarchs;"¹.

The warriors are clearly pictured:

"light armed troops
In coats of mail and military pride;
In mail their horses clad, yet fleet and strong,
Prancing their riders bore, the flower and choice
Of many provinces from bound to bound."²

The names of the places whence they come are suggested with
pleasure in their sound:

"From Arachosia, from Candaor east,
And Margiana to the Hyrcanian cliffs,³
Of Caucasus, and dark Iberian dales."³

and suggestive sound is remarkable in the well-known lines
concerning the Parthian warriors:

"and flying behind them shot
Sharp sleet of arrowy showers against the face
Of their pursuers."⁴

One group of imagery calls up other associated groups, and
he pictures a wider and wider expanse till once more the
utmost limits of recreating imaginative powers are reached.
Yet Christ scornfully calls it all:

"Much ostentation vain of fleshly arm
And fragile arms."⁵

As one of the tricks of Satan, the vision is condemned, but
every line betrays Milton's own poetic delight in it, and
illustrates how Satan leads Milton's unconscious rebellion
against the tyranny of his reasoning self, freeing him into
a poetic world where he lives first by love, and only

-
- (1) Paradise Regained, III, 262-3.
(2) ibid. III, 311-15.
(3) ibid. III, 316-18.
(4) ibid. III, 323-5.
(5) ibid. III, 387-88.

afterwards by law. In this world he uses those remarkable imaginative visualising powers which seem to have compensated for his blindness, out-distancing the imaginative vision of those who can see, as he conjures up "specious plain", "huge cities", or "barren desert, fountainless and dry". Here again his escape is not only from the realm of law to the realm of love, but also from blindness to fullness of sight, and from the near and unsatisfactory to a distant land of dreams, where he is free to associate visions of glorious activity with many other memories from his beloved but outwardly despised reading:

"Such forces met not, nor so wide a camp;
 When Agrican with all his northern powers
 Besieged Albracca, as romances tell,
 The city of Gallaphrone, from thence to win
 The fairest of her sex, Angelica,
 His daughter, sought by many prowest knights,
 Both Paynim and the peers of Charlemain."¹

At the opening of Book IV, Satan is once more pictured as guilty and "Discovered in his fraud"², but he returns to the attack with a perseverance which does him credit, and is suggestive of Milton himself. Nevertheless, he is given no conscious quarter, and acts "for very spite"³, as "the Tempter impudent"⁴, and "the fiend with fear abashed"⁵.

His part in Book IV corresponds with that in Book III, and reveals Milton's imagination making use of him in the

(1) Paradise Regained, III, 337-343.

(2) ibid. IV, 3.

(3) ibid. IV, 12.

(4) ibid. ¶154.

(5) ibid. IV, 195.

same way. He lays before Christ visions of Rome and of Athens, the one tempting Him by worldly magnificence, the other by specious wisdom. All is outwardly condemned by Christ, yet pictured with a delight which betrays itself in the suggestive imagery; this again arises from recollections of Roman splendour and Greek wisdom gathered from that very reading, which in the conscious guise of his Christ, he so contemptuously casts aside.

In a picture as expansive as the preceding one of the Parthians, Rome stands out clearly to the imaginative eye:

"With gilded battlements conspicuous far,
Turrets, and terraces, and glittering spires."¹

The roads approaching it bear on them many travellers,
"embassies from regions far remote"², and these show again Milton's joy in referring to distant lands and peoples.

"From India and the golden Chersonese,
And utmost Indian isle Taprobane
Dusk faces with white silken turbans wreathed."³

Athens is pictured in equally suggestive fashion, and only from love could Milton describe as he has done Plato's "Olive grove of Academe"⁴ with its charm of sounds and scent.

"Where the attic bird
Trills her thick-warbled notes the summer long.
There flowry hill Hymettus with the sound
Of bees' industrious murmur oft invites
To studious musing; there Ilissus rolls
His whispering stream."⁵

(1) Paradise Regained, IV, 53-4.

(2) ibid. IV, 67.

(3) ibid. IV, 74-76.

(4) ibid. IV, 244.

(5) ibid. IV, 245-50.

Satan is finally banished without mercy, but not until he has voiced what look suspiciously like some of Milton's own heretical opinions concerning the divinity of Christ, while his fall from the pinnacle of the temple calls up in Milton's mind two more imaginative associations from the reading Christ has so despised, that of the fall of Antaeus, the giant, when hurled down by Hercules, and that of the fall of the Sphinx who:

"Cast herself headlong from th'Ismenian steep"¹

So up till the last mention of his name, Satan is providing Milton with an outlet through self-expression for his deeper-lying love of all that he had brought himself consciously to despise and condemn.

Thus, through "Paradise Lost" and "Paradise Regained" God and the Son of God represent Milton's conscious self, subjected by his own will to an ever-increasing tyranny of reason, a tyranny accompanied by a narrowing sympathy towards his fellow-men. On the other hand, Satan represents Milton's fuller, deeper self, so constituted that it cannot yield obedience except through the power of love. Therefore, Satan conducts Milton's unconscious rebellion against the God he does not love, and effects for him an escape from the cold intellectual reasoning of his Christ into a land of dreams where he can live by love through his self-surrendered devotion to his Heavenly Muse.

(1) Paradise Regained, IV, 576.

Hence, Satan has surrounding him a great part of the best poetry in "Paradise Lost" and almost all the poetry in "Paradise Regained". Ostensibly, the Prince of Wickedness, he has so many admirable-seeming qualities, that he leads many to agree with Shelley who, in his introduction to "Prometheus Unbound" writes concerning him:

"The character of Satan engenders in the mind a pernicious casuistry which leads us to weigh his faults with his wrongs, and to excuse the former because the latter exceed all measure."

These words apply equally to that rebel self in Milton which never bowed in submission to God as he conceived Him; for, if he had once caught the vision of God's Personality as He really is, he might have been, for a time, among the rebels, but before long, would have brought Satan with him back to His footstool, and there both would have surrendered of their own free-will.

P A R T II.

CHAPTER III.

THE PORTRAYAL OF MAN AND WOMAN.

The present chapter will be confined to the portrayal of Milton's four chief human characters, Adam and Eve, and Samson and Dalila. They offer much scope for reflection, as through the working of his primary imagination they reflect his own personality and his attitudes to man, to woman and to God.

Adam and Eve are portrayed in three different degrees of existence; at first they are perfect, later guilty and sinful, and finally repentant and forgiven. In each of these degrees they reflect so much of Milton himself that while every detail seems equally interesting, it is difficult to select what is most important.

In the first Books of "Paradise Lost" his imagination leads him to portray man and woman, not as they are, but as he would like them to be. He is once more escaping from the world and from the life which so much dissatisfied him into another and a distant world of dreams. Even here, however, before long, there arises a division in himself,

not now between Satan and God, but between Adam, the man who should be ruled by reason, and Adam the man who will not be. Meanwhile, Eve enshrines some unknown, uncomprehended but dangerously alluring power, which, instead of becoming subject to the laws of reason, renders them of small account. Milton calls it 'charm'; it might be thought of as an imperfect, misplaced vision of that divine 'charm' which emanates only from the personality of God Himself, and which it is man's supreme privilege in life to discover.

In their perfect state Adam and Eve reflect their Maker:

"for in their looks divine
The image of their glorious Maker shone,
Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe."¹

Adam is dignified and strong; Eve is of gentler beauty, from the first subject to Adam, and therefore content to say to him:

"My author and disposer, what thou bidd'st
Unargued I obey, so God ordains;
God is thy law, thou mine; to know no more
Is woman's happiest knowledge and her praise."²

Out of what has been, Milton's imagination is creating pictures of what he would like to be; he reveals his high conception of human nature's origin and native dignity, and of the goodness of God expressed in mankind's

(1) Paradise Lost, IV, 291-3.

(2) ibid. IV, 635-8.

physical as well as spiritual life. He also reveals in a particularly emphatic manner his conviction that woman with her 'sweet attractive grace' should be subject to man, that man should rule her by the same kind of law as that by which God rules him. His emphasis on the point at once draws attention to the danger which unconsciously at least he recognises, that woman is born to rebel against that rule of law and reason, and that part of himself is only too anxious to rebel with her.

Adam, therefore, like Milton, would maintain for safety's sake a conscious sense of superiority over the 'weaker sex' and even when he smiles on her, it is "with superior love". In this he also reflects that self-centredness which Milton never fully lost, and therefore he cannot grant Eve any other interest in life but himself. He is prepared, however, to treat her as God treats him. This is Milton's ideal, and if Adam could live up to it, Eve would have no complaint to make, but Milton's Adam falls short, as every Adam must, and for the first but not the last time, Eve herself is the cause.

In Book IV of "Paradise Lost" Adam gives no direct sign that he fears Eve's power, but the danger is suggested when he admits that he loves her more than all the joys of Paradise. And as Milton's imagination pictures Eve, it reveals by its suggestive imagery that much of Milton himself is speaking in Adam. Without full appreciative emotion

it could not have pictured her as it has with her "un-adorned golden tresses"¹ which hang "as a veil down to the slender waist"²; nor would the associated image of Pandora in all her beauty have risen so readily, though later experience follows close upon innate susceptibility, when he cannot resist commenting on their likeness "In sad event"³ of the trouble they both brought to man.

In spite of his feeling of superiority, Adam at first treats Eve with respect, partly because of his high opinion of God's goodness:

"needs must the Power
That made us, and for us this ample world
Be infinitely good."⁴

And Milton's imagination reflects his own appreciation of that goodness in the description of all the external world round about Adam and Eve. Whether chiefly satisfied through his reading, or through what he had seen in earlier days, his former receptiveness to such outward beauty enabled him to surround his ideal human beings with poetic pictures which defy words of appreciation. Love of beauty, love of human beings at their best, and joy in being able to express that love, are some of the emotions associated with the recollections upon which his imagination is working as it creates such inimitable passages as the famous

-
- (1) Paradise Lost, IV, 305.
 (2) ibid. IV, 304.
 (3) ibid. IV, 716.
 (4) ibid. IV, 412-14.

one beginning "Now came still evening on"¹; or Eve's beautiful speech to Adam beginning "Sweet is the breath of Morn"²; or the description of their nuptial couch, with the many flowers which "Broidered the ground"³. There is revealed again the same appreciativeness of sounds and scent, in such lines as:

"Not distant far from thence a murmuring sound
Of waters issued from a cave."⁴

while besides the murmuring waters, he remembers the songs of birds and the fragrance of the earth, and all the way the melody of the lines forms an accompaniment which seems to increase in beauty, as it becomes more familiar:

"Now glowed the firmament
With living sapphires; Hesperus that led
The starry host rode brightest, till the moon,
Rising in clouded majesty, at length
Apparent queen unveiled her peerless light,⁵
And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw."⁵

Adam's speeches, too, are sometimes rich in metaphor and imagery:

"and the timely dew of sleep
Now falling with soft slumbrous weight inclines
Our eyelids."⁶

"how often from the steep
Of echoing hill or thicket have we heard
Celestial voices to the midnight air."⁷

So Milton's imagination reveals in his poetry what he

- (1) Paradise Lost, IV, 598.
- (2) ibid. IV, 641.
- (3) ibid. IV, 702.
- (4) ibid. IV, 453-4.
- (5) ibid. IV, 604-9.
- (6) ibid. IV, 613-15.
- (7) ibid. IV, 680-682.

has really loved, and when it is giving expression to that love it also reveals him as a poet, rarely to be equalled and never likely to be surpassed.

In Book V Adam reflects much of Milton himself, especially in his attitude to God and to woman. He has Milton's reverence for God's goodness and outward glory, but also his tendency to think of God as at a distance from man:

"These are thy glorious works, Parent of good!"¹

"who sitt'st above these heavens
To us invisible, or dimly seen
In these thy lowest works; yet these declare
The goodness beyond thought, and power divine."²

He is like Milton as after sitting in the door "Of his cool bower"³ he goes forth to meet Raphael:

"without more train
Accompanied than with his own complete
Perfections."⁴

In the presence of the angel he remembers his own dignity even while respectful:

"Nearer his presence, Adam, though not awed,
Yet with submiss approach and reverence meek
As to a superior nature, bowing low,
Thus said"⁵.

Adam, too, is still very much in love with Eve in spite of his superior manner. Milton pictures him irresistibly drawn to her, glorying in her beauty, and speaking gently to her:

-
- (1) Paradise Lost, V, 153.
 (2) ibid. V, 156-9.
 (3) ibid. V, 300.
 (4) ibid. V, 351-3.
 (5) ibid. V, 358-61.

"then with voice
 Mild as when Zephyrus or Flora breathes
 Her hand soft touching, whispered thus: 'Awake
 My fairest, my espoused, my latest found,
 Heavn's last best gift, my ever new delight.
 Awake, the morning shines, and the fresh field
 Calls us'."1

Nevertheless, Eve is made to begin her reply with:

"O sole in whom my thoughts find all repose"2

and she has also to do as she is commanded:

"But go with speed
 And what thy stores contain bring forth, and pour
 Abundance, fit to honour and receive
 Our heav'nly stranger."3

In a few minutes she prepares a repast which in real life would occupy the speediest housewife for hours.

Thus Eve is a model of all the domestic virtues, completely obedient to her husband, but possessing an indefinable quality of inward beauty which, in spite of himself, he cannot resist. She is woman portrayed by Milton's imagination out of some of his noblest dreams, but she is also woman from Milton's own point of view, existing only for his welfare, just as Adam is Milton himself with Milton's own consciousness of self idealised to perfection.

Books VII and VIII portray Adam possessing Milton's own thirst for knowledge as he proposes to Raphael

(1) Paradise Lost, V, 15-21.

(2) ibid. V, 28.

(3) ibid. V, 313-6.

scientific questions which Milton himself probably would like to ask, and to which even the angel can give no answer; he gives, instead, the practical advice that Adam must be content with such knowledge as suffices for the needs of daily life

These Books also portray him describing to Raphael his own first experiences of God and of Eve. He tells especially how he saw God, a "Presence Divine", approaching through the trees, how he fell at His feet adoring, and also how God accompanied His own mildness of manner with a stern threat concerning the Tree of Life.

"The day thou eat'st thereof, my sole command
Transgressed, inevitably thou shalt die."¹

He then reveals how, in spite of his humble adoration, he did not hesitate to "presume", and to complain politely but firmly that he had no companion:

"In solitude
What happiness? Who can enjoy alone,
Or all enjoying what contentment find?"²

God satisfies his need, not with Himself, but with woman:

"Thy likeness, thy fit help, thy other self
Thy wish exactly to thy heart's desire."³

Here in Adam, Milton's imagination reflects his own natural tendency to think of God as an external Being, a Deity ruling through glory, power and stern command, and

(1) Paradise Lost, VIII, 329-30.

(2) ibid. VIII, 364-6.

(3) ibid. VIII, 450-1.

not offering intimate fellowship, or in Himself fulfilling that 'wish exactly to his heart's desire'. His imagination reflects also his own inward sense of respectful but independent merit in the presence of that God.

Milton himself is also consistently reflected in Adam as he describes his first experience of Eve. Almost too familiar to quote are the lines telling how he was drawn to her, finding her:

"so lovely fair,
That what seemed fair in all the world, seemed now
Mean, or in her summed up, in her contained"¹

and those telling how she pleased him:

"Grace was in all her steps, heav'n in her eye,
In every gesture dignity and love"².

Her physical beauty is surpassed by an inward nobility which draws him in spite of himself to submit where he thinks he ought to rule, and an alarming situation results:

"Authority and reason on her wait,
As one intended first, not after made
Occasionally."³

This is what Adam feels, but it is contrasted disadvantageously with what he knows:

"For well I understand in the prime end
Of nature her th'inferior, in the mind
And inward faculties, which most excell."⁴

Raphael, in reproving him, reveals what, for Milton as well as for Adam, is the root of the trouble. For in

- (1) Paradise Lost, VIII, 471-3.
 (2) ibid. VIII, 488-9.
 (3) ibid. VIII, 554-6.
 (4) ibid. VIII, 540-2.

telling Adam to love Eve with moderation he explains how love

"hath his seat
In reason, and is judicious."¹

Adam finds his reasoning will almost powerless in the presence of this quality in Eve, which draws him to submit himself to her. And although, through his faith in the oneness of body and spirit, he instinctively recognises the call of the spiritual in the physical, he has to be warned sternly by Raphael that his reason should be in control of his loving-power as well as of his thinking-power, and that his passions are likely to rise in rebellion against it.

In Adam here is reflected Milton's own innate longing for the intimate fellowship of some ideal and irresistible personality, and with it also the impulse to surrender to the guidance and control of that personality; also his one-time attempt to discover what he wanted in woman, and his recognition of the danger of trusting to anyone so frail; but, there is no conception that God Himself may be the destined end of that same restless searching desire.

Adam also instinctively recognises how impossible it is to rely upon the control of reason in the presence of Eve herself, and tries in vain to strengthen his conscious will by reminding himself that he is born the superior in

(1) Paradise Lost, VIII, 590-1.

all wisdom and strength, and that woman is born to minister to him.

Thus in Adam Milton's imagination reflects the deeper instincts of his own spiritual-physical nature at war with a conscious reasoning self that knows not how or whither to direct them. His Heavenly Muse it is who finally leads them to their destiny in God, perhaps without his recognizing it, while guiding him to express them through the beauty of the poetry which glorifies His name.

Until the hour of her sin, Eve remains Milton's ideal woman, and is portrayed by means of suggestive imagery. She is gentle, grave and pure, addressing Adam "with sweet austere composure"¹, or "with accent sweet"². When she leaves him she goes:

"like a wood-nymph light
Oread or Dryad, or of Delia's train,"³

Later, with her gardening implements, Milton says of her:

"To Pales, or Pomona, thus adorned,
Likest she seemed."⁴

As soon as the working of his imagination is affected by his love of beauty, these chains of associations begin to rise, and show how real to him were the pictures which he must have conjured up before his inward eye in the course of his reading.

(1) Paradise Lost, IX, 272.

(2) ibid. IX, 321.

(3) ibid. IX, 386-7.

(4) ibid. IX, 393-4.

Adam's manner to Eve remains courteous, but superior, as he begs her not to go from his side. He admits that her companionship will strengthen him in the presence of a foe, but still requires that her first concern shall be her obedience:

"Would'st thou approve thy constancy, approve ¹
First thy obedience; the other who can know."

Unfortunately, however, Eve longs to be independent and gains her desire, but lives to repent it. Flattered by Satan, her 'weaker intellect' easily overlooks his false reasoning, and as he praises her 'celestial beauty', his words make their way not into her head, but into her heart.

One of the first results of her sin is that she wishes to be at least Adam's equal and speaks in words very like Satan's:

"And render me more equal, and perhaps
A thing not undesirable, sometime
Superior; for, inferior, who is free?"²

In this way, under the working of Milton's imagination, recollections of his own practical experience of woman betray themselves continually in contrast with his dreams, and woman's disobedience in real life he ~~can~~^{could} never forget.

Before he himself falls, Adam's attitude to Eve is generous. He does not directly blame her:

(1) Paradise Lost, IX, 367-8.

(2) ibid. IX, 823-5.

"some cursed fraud
Of enemy hath beguiled thee, yet unknown."¹

And he cannot bear the thought of being again alone in Paradise.

"How can I live without thee? how forego
Thy sweet converse and love so dearly joined,
To live again in these wild woods forlorn?"²

He even wishes to share in her punishment, but as soon as he also has been led to disobey:

"not deceived
But fondly overcome with female charm"³,

his mood changes. He then upbraids Eve, not without cause, and reveals a new and vigorous hostility to woman in general:

"Thus it shall befall
Him who to worth in woman over-trusting
Lets her will rule; restraint she will not brook
And left to herself, if evil thence ensue
She first his weak indulgence will accuse."⁴

Here again Milton's imagination is reflecting his acquired experience, and not his natural attitude.

Seeing that Adam expects so much from woman it is not surprising that she fails him, nor that he expresses so much bitterness against her in the reaction which comes with his disappointment. Adam's moods and attitudes towards Eve through the rest of the poem correspond so much with those arising from Milton's own experience that they bear

-
- (1) Paradise Lost, IX, 904-5.
 (2) ibid. IX, 908-10.
 (3) ibid. IX, 998-9.
 (4) ibid. IX, 1182-6.

witness to the far reaching influence that experience had upon his life and therefore upon the working of his imagination.

Adam's failure to be controlled by "sov'reign reason"¹ is attended with disastrous results upon both his spiritual and physical being. Rebellion and discord break loose in all directions, and the Son of God in judging him asks with some indignation, concerning Eve:

"Was she thy God, that her thou didst obey
Before His voice?"²

Perhaps neither He nor Milton realised how near these words came to the truth, nor how much more ready Adam was to hear the call of God through the charm of personality than through the rule of reason, intellect and law.

Adam, however, is brought to regret that his reason failed to rule, and to condemn Eve as the cause. Eloquent testimony to the quality and sincerity of both regret and condemnation appear in his soliloquy as he sits "hid in gloomiest shade"³ and "in a troubled sea of passion lost"⁴. The regret is associated with a puzzled attitude concerning God's way of punishing him and his offspring.

"Ah, why should all mankind
For one man's fault thus guiltless be condemned
If guiltless?"⁵

Although he answers his own question, he still feels the

- (1) Paradise Lost, IX, 1130.
 (2) ibid. X, 145-6.
 (3) ibid. X, 716.
 (4) ibid. X, 718.
 (5) ibid. X, 822-4.

extent of the punishment, in addition to the loss of Paradise, an unspeakable burden:

"To the loss of that
Sufficient penalty, why hast thou added
The sense of endless woes?"¹

Then there breaks from him the cry

"Inexplicable
Thy justice seems."²

These words appear to come from the depths of Milton's own being, and suggest that under cover of Adam his imagination is revealing how difficult he finds it to understand the ways of God as they appear to his reasoning mind.

Then there follows that outburst against Eve, beginning with "Out of my sight, thou serpent!"³ which the world has never forgotten, and half the world never forgiven. Woman is but a rib of man "Crooked by nature"⁴; wives to come, concerning whom Adam suddenly reveals a remarkable knowledge, will be the enemies of their husbands' peace and many an unhappy man will suffer, wedded

"To a fell adversary, his hate or shame;
Which infinite calamity shall cause
To human life, and household peace confound."⁵

No one knowing the details of Milton's own life, and also his way of projecting himself into each of his characters, can believe that these words are merely dramatic expressions

- (1) Paradise Lost, X, 752-4.
 (2) ibid. X, 754-5.
 (3) ibid. X, 867.
 (4) ibid. X, 885.
 (5) ibid. X, 906-8.

on the part of Adam. Behind him is the Milton who, expecting too much of woman, has suffered disillusionment at her hands, and his imagination is reflecting his acquired experience, associated with the more intense emotion because it has so contrasted with his dreams.

Yet Adam's original generous opinion returns when he forgives Eve repentant as he believes God forgives him. The correspondence between this part of the incident and Milton's own experience is too close to need comment.

"As one disarmed, his anger all he lost;
And thus with peaceful words upraised her soon."¹

Adam's susceptibility to the charm of the kneeling figure of Eve is portrayed vividly and sympathetically because it is Milton's own, so that while the warp of experience appears in Adam's outraged complaint, inborn nature re-appears in Adam's generous pardon. Nevertheless Eve is not forgiven until she does repent, with her renewed subjection sternly enforced by him and humbly accepted by herself.

"Thy suppliant
I beg, and clasp thy knees; bereave me not
Whereon I live, thy gentle looks, thy aid,
Thy counsel in this uttermost distress,
My only strength and stay; forlorn of thee,
Whither shall I betake me, where subsist?"²

Broken reed though he is, Adam remains Eve's "only strength and stay". To the last she is absorbed in him, making him the object of her life's devotion, and the end of all her needs:

(1) Paradise Lost, X, 945-6.
(2) ibid. X, 917-22.

"With thee to go
 Is to stay here; without thee here to stay
 Is to go hence unwilling; thou to me
 Art all things under heav'n, all places thou,
 Who for my wilful crime art banished hence."¹

It is impossible in passing not to refer to the effect which Milton's personal experience and sympathy have upon the verse in which he portrays Adam and Eve sinful but repentant. Just as there is a high degree of eloquence in the lines which describe God's pity for man, so there arises a similar eloquence in the description of the repentant pair.

Adam, overcome with shame, mourns in lines justly renowned:

"O fleeting joys
 Of Paradise, dear bought with lasting woes!
 Did I request thee, Maker, from my clay
 To mould me man? Did I solicit thee
 From darkness to promote me, or here place
 In this delicious garden?"²

Eve's feelings, too, are expressed in her words, as she wishes:

"that all
 The sentence, from thy head removed, may light
 On me, sole cause to thee of all this woe,
 Me, me only, just object of His ire."³

and as she asks:

"Why stand we longer shivering under fears,
 That show no end but death, and have the power
 Of many ways to die?"⁴

- (1) Paradise Lost, XII, 615-19.
 (2) ibid. X, 741-6.
 (3) ibid. X, 933-6.
 (4) ibid. X, 1003-5.

All the last part of Book X is famous for its poetic beauty, and it reflects Milton's own sympathetic emotion in portraying Adam and Eve before God:

"with tears
Watering the ground, and with their sighs the air
Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
Of sorrow unfeigned and humiliation meek."¹

In Books XI and XII, Adam's character is much developed as he learns from Michael more about God's ways of dealing with him and with future generations. He seems to be older than the sinless Adam of Books IV and V, and this suggests that here Milton's imagination is reflecting more of his mature experience, while in those earlier Books it is reflecting the experience of his younger days with their greater warmth of enthusiasm and their happier outlook. Experience spread over a long series of years is reflected in "Paradise Lost", and so the moods of youth and of maturity are both pictured in Adam in the course of the poem.

The truths which he learns from Michael are many and form an illustrative comment on Milton's own attitudes at that time. Adam learns that God will be present with him everywhere, surrounding him with His goodness and love, but he does not learn to look for God within him. He is taught, too, those convictions which Milton held in later life, when disillusioned by the world, convictions concerning the darkness of the approach of death, the feebleness of age,

(1) Paradise Lost, X, 1101-4.

the declining morality of the world, and the one hope in the redemption of the penitent. Christ will deliver these from sin and age and death into a future world, where they will ~~rule~~^{reign} with Him in glory. Upon this dream of the future, Milton himself is setting his hopes, and in expressing it in his poetry, finds again escape and relief from the dissatisfying world around him.

Adam had dreamed in vain that:

"peace would have crowned
With length of happy days the race of man."¹

but he now discovers that times of peace may do more harm than times of war; that a few men only will be saved, and the rest doomed eternally:

"the unfaithful herd,
The enemies of truth."²

It is at this stage, too, that he is warned by Michael:

"But the voice of God
To mortal ear is dreadful."³

And later in giving his own conclusions gathered from the vision and prophetic history, he says:

"Henceforth, I learn that to obey is best
And love with fear the only God, to walk
As in His presence, ever to observe
His providence, and on Him sole depend
Merciful over all His works, - "⁴

Here expressed through Michael and Adam is Milton's mature attitude towards God, as he understands Him. God

-
- (1) Paradise Lost, XI, 781-2.
 (2) ibid. XI, 481-2.
 (3) ibid. XII, 235-6.
 (4) ibid. XII, 561-5.

is good and merciful, but above and "over" all His works. His voice fills mankind with dread, and He is to be obeyed, and loved with fear, with a love earlier described by Raphael as being judicious and having his seat in reason¹. Thus obedience is put first, and fear along with love; so far Adam is brought, but no further; he is granted no vision of a greater love beyond, a love which, with reason attending, precedes and transfigures obedience, and casts out fear.

Finally, Adam is taught to be patient, as Milton has learnt to be:

"by things deemed weak
Subverting worldly strong, and worldly wise,
By simply meek;"²

So in Adam throughout the Books of "Paradise Lost" Milton's imagination reflects himself, what he would be, what he has experienced, and what he thinks; what he believes he loves, and, less consciously, what he really loves.

However, in portraying Adam and Eve, Milton has not reflected his final opinions, and it would not be fair to draw conclusions without turning to Samson and Dalila as they represent his second and last attempt at portraying man and woman in their attitude to God and to each other.

(1) Paradise Lost, VIII, 591.

(2) ibid. XII, 567-9.

Samson and Dalila have much in common with Adam and Eve. The chief differences are that they are older and experienced in a harsh world of strife, and that Dalila reflects only one particular aspect of Eve's nature. There is also a special sympathy between the character of Samson and that of Milton himself, a Milton who has suffered more and endured longer than the Milton who earlier created Adam.

Whereas Adam has to learn patience, Samson is patient, nor does he, like Adam, feel complete in his own perfections; he is helpless without God, and:

"Unless he feel within
Some source of consolation from above
Secret refreshings, that repair his strength
And fainting spirits unhold."¹

Yet God remains for him chiefly at a distance; is "unsearchable", "th'Interminable", sending strength "from above". He betrays a tendency to question God's ways, to wonder why that God who once had showed him so many signs of peculiar favour, is allowing his life to end in shame, and although he checks that tendency, he needs to be reassured by the Chorus:

"Just are the ways of God,
And justifiable to man."²

Milton's imagination seems to be reflecting an increasing consciousness of his own weakness, and with it a desire by no means subdued, to question God's dealings, as if there is still in him a dissatisfaction with God as he conceives

(1) Samson Agonistes, 663-6.

(2) ibid. 293-4.

Him to be. Nevertheless, as expressed through Samson, his faith is firm: "My trust is in the living God"¹.

Samson reflects, too, Milton's idea of God's methods with the sinful, as with religious fervour he brings destruction upon all the Philistine nobles:

"With God not parted from him, as was feared,
But favouring and assisting to the end."²

He has Milton's attitude to his nation, condemning them for choosing rather:

"Bondage with ease than strenuous liberty"³.

He likewise considers most men inconstant and ungrateful, deserting their fellows in adversity.

Milton was probably as securely concealed from himself in his Biblical hero Samson as he was in Satan, and he certainly would have repudiated any consciousness of sharing in his guilt. Yet so much of what Samson says comes from the depth of his own experience, that the strength of the accompanying emotion casts the shadow of his mood over the whole. This appears especially when he speaks of his blindness; and those who love his sonnet:

"When I consider how my light is spent
Ere half my days in this dark world and wide"⁴,

need also to know Samson's complaint as well as the invocation to Book III of "Paradise Lost", before they can

- (1) Samson Agonistes, 1140.
 (2) ibid. 1719-20.
 (3) ibid. 271.
 (4) Sonnet on his blindness.

appreciate the struggle within which must have preceded the attaining of that noble patience. Attributed to Samson, that struggle is revealed more freely than he would have suffered it to be by his own conscious confession, and thus the working of his imagination upon such memories brings him artistic relief through his poetry:

"As in the land of darkness, yet in light,
To live a life half-dead, a living death,
And buried; but, O yet more miserable!
Myself my sepulchre, a moving grave,
Buried, yet not exempt
By privilege of death and burial
From worst of other evils, pains and wrongs."¹
etc.

Finally, Milton himself is reflected in Samson's domestic relations; and first in his complaint against the way in which, blind as he is, he has been treated:

"I, dark in light, exposed
To daily fraud, contempt, abuse and wrong,
Within doors, or without, still as a fool
In power of others, never in my own."²

If his biographers and his own reported remarks are to be trusted, these lines suggest exactly Milton's own position in his home during some of his later years.

Samson is harsher to Dalila than, apart from his brief and merited resentment, Adam is to Eve. Samson has no mercy and no love left;

"My wife! my traitress! let her not come near me!"³

He turns a deaf ear to her pleading, and will take no risks,

(1) Samson Agonistes, 99-105.

(2) ibid. 75-78.

(3) ibid. 725.

for it is woman's way to repent, only to transgress again,
and he does not wish:

"to wear out miserable days
Entangled with a poisonous bosom snake."¹

Nor will he put himself again at the mercy of a woman's
tongue, that disturbing element in life which only fails:

"For want of words, no doubt, or lack of breath"².

He will not return to her care or influence:

"Nor think me so unwary or accurst
To bring my feet again into the snare,
Where once I have been caught."³

and the most hopeful words he can offer her are:

"At a distance I forgive thee".

Thus Samson's attitude to Dalila is immovable, im-
placable. The Bible story demands stern treatment for her
treachery is great, but there is little doubt that through
Samson, Milton's imagination is reflecting that hostility
towards woman which increased in him in his later years,
when he suffered as much at the hands of Mary's daughters
as ever he did from Mary herself.

Dalila is the type of woman Milton has learned to
hate, beautiful, fascinating, pleasure-loving, paying much
attention to outward show, "so bedecked, ornate and gay"
and as she approaches Samson:

(1) Samson Agonistes, 762-3.

(2) Ibid. 905.

(3) Ibid. 930-2.

"sailing
Like a stately ship
Of Tarsus, bound for the isles
Of Javan or Gadire."¹

Her arguments are as fallible as those of Eve, but she is more independent in her manner. She is created out of Milton's experience, and is a contrast to that other type of woman, "soft, modest, meek, demure", who, an ideal "rarely found", flits through his pages in the guise of Eve before she sinned, Mary the Mother of Jesus, or his own second wife, Catherine. Woman, as he had chiefly known her, had been Eve, the temptress, or Dalila 'the thorn intestine', and his indictment of her in "Samson Agonistes" marks a final reaction to a life-time of disappointing experience.

The intensity of the personal emotion expressed by means of the portrayal of Samson and Dalila, produces an atmosphere consistently reflected by the rugged yet eloquent verse. Metaphors are brief and more vigorous than frequent:

"From restless thoughts, that, like a deadly swarm
Of hornets armed."²

"Who, like a foolish pilot, have ship-wracked
My vessel trusted to me from above,
Gloriously rigged."³

"but cords to me were threads
Touched with the flame."⁴

-
- (1) Samson Agonistes, 713-16.
 (2) ibid. 19-20.
 (3) ibid. 198-200.
 (4) ibid. 261-2.

And these emotionally affected recollections enable Milton to compose his one dramatic speech which with its imagery and eloquence, is addressed by Samson to Dalila:

"Thy fair enchanted cup and warbling charms
 No more on me have power, their force is nulled;
 So much of adder's wisdom I have learnt,
 To fence my ears against thy sorceries.
 If in my flower of youth and strength, when all men
 Loved, honoured, feared me, thou alone could'st hate
 me,
 Thy husband, slight me, sell me, and forego me;
 How would'st thou use me now, blind, and thereby
 Deceivable, in most things as a child
 Helpless, thence easily contemned, and scorned,
 And last neglected?"¹

Even these lines betray by their imagery, the underlying attraction of her whose charms they spurn.

Thus, in the portrayal of Samson and Dalila, as well as in that of Adam and Eve, Milton's imagination continues to reflect himself and his own experience. Adam and Samson in their chief qualities are Milton himself, Eve and Dalila are woman from Milton's point of view. Adam and Samson reflect his attitude to God, especially in their belief in His majesty, goodness, and distance from themselves, and in what Adam learns concerning the way in which He is to be obeyed, feared, and loved. They also reflect his susceptibility to woman, to some intimate yet infinite quality which he looks for in her rather than in God, and afterwards his resentment towards her because she had given him so little where he had dreamt of receiving so much. Here and

(1) Samson Agonistes, 934-44.

there, too, they reflect him in their questioning of the ways of the God whom they are trying to serve. Hence, continually, much energy and eloquence of the verse is due to the emotional sympathy arising out of incidents closely paralleled in Milton's own life. In Adam and Samson Milton chose, perhaps unconsciously, heroes whose life stories had much in common with his own, and for this reason he can make them life-like in his poems, but he probably never realised in portraying them how much of himself he was confiding to a world who will continue to treasure them chiefly for what they reveal of him.

P A R T II.

Chapter IV.

RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS.

Only those who know Milton's works well can realise how the preceding chapters have failed to do him justice; and, as no human being is consistent in all that he says and does, so no one scheme of ideas can interpret all the moods and attitudes of a man such as he. Flashes of intuition lead him to belie some of his own reasoned statements, and the poet in him is greater than the philosopher. And, although the nature of this study makes it necessary to emphasise the restricted^{ing} scope of his conscious reasoning powers, as compared with his primary imagination, it carries with it also the wish to acknowledge the greatness of those powers, for there are no greater philosophers than the great poets, and Milton is one of the world's greatest.

Nevertheless, thought arises out of experience, and, if there be such a God as is here by faith and by experience believed, self-directed reasoning power must bow before inspiration, and the secondary imagination wait upon the

primary, in life as well as in art. Milton's later poems bear witness to the disturbance caused when that self-directed reasoning power exalts itself beyond its appointed bounds, and attempts to direct where its task is but to interpret. Thus God and the Son of God in "Paradise Lost" represent Milton's self-exalted conscious reasoning power, and Satan, the rebel, is by rights the conductor of a legitimate crusade in the cause of a greater, more spiritual, more understanding God; while man and woman reflect his finite self trying to escape into the Infinite, but prevented by the failure of human nature, and perhaps especially by the failure of woman to show him the way. His descriptions of the beauty of the visible world reveal what he can do when that escape of self is achieved by another means.

These suggestions might be followed up from many other points of view, from a study of the lesser characters or by means of the varying environments of Heaven, Hell, and Paradise.

The good angels in "Paradise Lost" especially reflect Milton's appreciation of God's outward glory; Uriel with his head circled with "beaming sunny rays"¹, Gabriel, the "winged warrior"², Raphael with his "feathered mail"³ of "downy gold" "And colours dipped in heaven", and Michael,

(1) Paradise Lost, IV, 625.

(2) ibid. IV, 576.

(3) ibid. V, 282-3.

"the prince of angels"¹, "solemn and sublime"². These angels also reflect much of Milton's own personality; Uriel stands in the sun "fixed in cogitation deep"³, Gabriel speaks to Satan "Disdainfully half-smiling"⁴; Raphael and Michael are the mouthpieces of Milton's own opinions, while no character reflects him more than the faithful Abdiel, deserting Satan's hosts:

"Long way through hostile scorn which he sustained
Superior"⁵,

and being received into heaven by God as Milton himself hopes one day to be, with the words:

"Servant of God, well done! Well hast thou fought
The better fight, who singly hast maintained
Against revolted multitudes the cause
Of truth, in word mightier than they in arms;
And for the testimony of truth hast borne
Universal reproach, far worse to bear
Than violence: for this was all thy care,
To stand approved in sight of God, though worlds
Judged thee perverse."⁶

The evil angels also voice some of Milton's most characteristic opinions, the rebellious ones well concealed. Nisroch, 'sore-toiled' and wounded in battle, complains:

"But pain is perfect misery, the worst
Of evils, and excessive overturns
All patience."⁷

Belial scoffs in "gamesome mood" at the angels overthrown

- (1) Paradise Lost, VI, 281.
 (2) ibid., XI, 236.
 (3) ibid., III, 629.
 (4) ibid., IV, 903.
 (5) ibid., V, 904-5.
 (6) ibid., VI, 29-37.
 (7) ibid., VI, 462-4.

by cannon balls, and in words described as "false and hollow" expresses some of Milton's noblest ideas:

"for who would lose,
Though full of pain, this intellectual being,
Those thoughts that wander through eternity."¹

"To suffer, as to do
Our strength is equal."²

Mammon has Milton's own love of independence:

"preferring
Hard liberty before the easy yoke
Of servile pomp."³

and Be-elzebub has that dignity which Milton himself so much loves,

"deep on his front engraven
Deliberation sat and public care;
And princely counsel in his face yet shone,
Majestic though in ruin."⁴

These evil angels are no unworthy followers of the Satan who has so much of Milton's own best self within him.

The good angels also prove a means of artistic escape into a happier world; they are free to range through infinite space, and they have marvellous sight. Uriel, angel of the sun,

"is held
The sharpest-sighted spirit of all in heaven,"⁵

Raphael, leaving the gates of heaven has a clear view of the universe spread out before him:-

- (1) Paradise Lost, II, 146-8.
 (2) ibid. II, 199-200.
 (3) ibid. II, 255-7.
 (4) ibid. II, 302-5.
 (5) ibid. III, 690-1.

"From hence no cloud or, to obstruct his sight,
 Star interposed, however small - he sees,
 Not unconform to other shining globes,
 Earth, and the garden of God, with cedars crowned
 Above all hills."¹

Michael, removing the guilt-laden film, and purging the nerve with "euphrasy and rue", instils into Adam's eyes drops which bring him also miraculous sight, enabling him to gaze upon distant lands whose names seem to have been fraught with dreams and visions, not so much for Adam as for Milton himself. What might there not be in Cambalu and Samarchand, Ecbatan, Bizance and Ophir, or Almansor and Angola!

Suggestions concerning Milton's imaginative appreciation of visible glory might be traced through his portrayal of Heaven, Hell and Paradise. His Heaven is a copy of earth as he likes it best, abounding in all his later scorned magnificence, beautified with pearl and rainbow; without night, yet able to hold Satan "far in the dark dislodged"; filled with sweet odours and music, and with multitudes of glorious angels. Opal and sapphire and "sparkling orient gem",² night lit up with golden lamps about the Mount of God, gates on golden hinges, incense from golden censers, a golden altar, a Son of God entering heaven along a path -

"whose dust is gold,
 And pavement stars"³,

-
- (1) Paradise Lost, V, 257-61.
 (2) ibid. III, 507.
 (3) ibid. VII, 577-8.

all reflect the love of glory and splendour hidden within the soberly black or grey clad Milton.

One might attempt to trace, too, how far his childhood's teaching is responsible for his picture of Hell with all its darkness and fire and pain, or how far it is influenced by his reading of the Bible, of Virgil and of Dante. Or again, what memories of his own land are combined with his reading in his picture of Paradise, with its roses and its goldfish, stags, peacocks and swans, its nightingale and its cockerel; its tiny creatures,

"In all the liveries decked of summer's pride"¹,
and after the Fall its sky weeping sad drops - rain. But these interesting questions, and many others must be left with that of the general influence of all his wide reading, as offering material for a longer and more detailed work.

Meanwhile, such a digression demands a speedy return to the concluding remarks concerning the portrayal of the characters, especially concerning the manner in which each of them reflects Milton's own personal traits, every one quickly distinguishable, however much it appears to be rationalised or concealed. In this he differs from such a poet as Shakespeare, whose characters seem to be too independent for his own opinions and individuality to be attached to any of them. Once more Coleridge may be said to

(1) Paradise Lost, VII, 478.

describe the situation, when in contrasting Shakespeare and Milton he says,

"While the former darts himself forth, and passes into all the forms of human character and passion, the one Proteus of the fire and the flood; the other attracts all forms and things to himself, into the unity of his own Ideal. All things and modes of action shape themselves anew in the being of Milton; while Shakespeare becomes all things, yet for ever remaining himself."¹

The earlier chapters of this study lead naturally to a suggested explanation, probably no new one, why Shakespeare can become all people, able to represent a world of differing men and women, and Milton must make all beings like himself, only able to represent those whose experience is akin to his own. It is that Shakespeare is a "twice-born" human soul; and that, although "twice-born" towards beauty and towards his Heavenly Muse, in his receptive love of them both, Milton, in all his greatness, remains a "once-born" towards God as he consciously conceives Him, and therefore towards his fellow-men, in manner to them self-assertive, often unsympathetic, and without a sense of humour. Shakespeare, whether consciously or unconsciously, did catch a vision of that Love which is the central quality of the Personality of God as we believe that man can know Him in Christ, and therefore in his famous sonnet can say of it, not that it has its seat in reason, but that,

"It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken."

(1) Biographia Literaria, Ch.XV.

For him Love shines into the known, the finite and the conscious, which alone is reason's domain, from the unknown and the Infinite, whose Being it is.

The barrier of self-directed reasoning power between Milton and his God is removed as soon as he gives himself up to his Heavenly Muse in his capacity of poet. Therefore he honours God and bears witness to Him not so much in reflecting conscious opinions concerning His Personality, as in expressing through the medium of poetry his joy in His outward glory. In this, as well as in his aspirations after what he never consciously discovered, he reveals his own noblest nature, born to live and love, to love with all his mind and soul and strength the God whom he would serve. When the direct way to Him was not made clear, that God sought him through the indirect, less-conscious medium of his Heavenly Muse, and so fulfilled his desire for service, that no one can come away from the study of his poetry without a greater love of the beautiful in God Himself, and a wider, clearer vision of all that is worth while in life.

It is in the nature of things that an attempt such as this should fail, yet bring with it ample compensation, enabled as it is by Milton himself to open 'magic casements' on to the Infinite of Life, which extends beyond any horizon attainable through human eyes, and shadows forth so much only dimly perceived, yet recognised as satisfying the

heart's desire. Then as the gaze is withdrawn to the Infinite within, there is revealed depth after depth of that Love by which alone interpreting can justly be done, and which causes every human effort at expressing it to be abandoned in despair. Thither Milton leads the student of his imagination.

Much time has been spent by the way, gazing into the fire or out over the gardens and chimney-tops; much time, too, with the world shut out, and the clock speeding round the hour, as the limits of understanding seem to be reached, until suddenly a new world of ideas has been revealed, with another and another beyond. Accompanying, and bringing no small consolation and encouragement, has been a mental picture, poetically if not historically correct, of Socrates, standing under a tree, finding life such a problem that he has to stay there, absorbed in meditation, from nine o'clock one morning till nine o'clock the next. If that ancient sage once had to think so deeply and so long, what wonder if twentieth-century Eve should have to think for a while, and even, like King Alfred, let cakes burn, while trying to comprehend and express what she knows, and knows that she knows, yet cannot get into any satisfactory or reasonably ordered arrangement of words.

Socrates and King Alfred and burnt cakes may have no logical affinity with this study of Milton's imagination;

but, as they have inextricably associated themselves therewith, they remain, a passing testimony to the effort by means of which it has progressed, and now draws to a welcome yet regretful conclusion, welcome because of the respite which it brings, regretful because it would be worthier of its noble subject and of Him whom it has dared openly to confess and to associate with itself. And, though expression may be poor, and thoughts incomplete, may there be no word unjustly written concerning a great poet, and no opinion put forward which might not be offered in his presence, where by faith we see him now, living, and loving God through a full vision of that Christ, whom even in his dimly-comprehending days he could speak of as Man's Redeemer,

"who shall quell
The adversary serpent, and bring back
Through the world's wilderness long-wandered man
Safe to eternal Paradise of rest."¹

(1) Paradise Lost, XII, 311-14.

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

Those books included here, and not mentioned by name in the course of the thesis have not always been studied in detail, but have had some influence on the development of the thought.

- POETICAL WORKS OF JOHN MILTON, ed. ~~B. Masson, 1874.~~ ^{L. Valentine. Frederick Warne & Co} London 1896
- MILTON'S PROSE WORKS, ed. ~~J. A. St John. (Bohn Library) 1848-53.~~ ^{C. Symmons .. London. (Seven vols) 1806}
- TREATISE OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE. trans. C. Sumner. (Boston) 1825

BIOGRAPHIES.

Of Education, Areopagitica, etc., with Early Biographies of Milton. Edited by Laura Lockwood. Boston, 1911.
Containing the recently discovered Anonymous Life, John Aubrey's Collections on Milton, and the biographies by Anthony Wood and Edward Phillips.

- THE LIFE OF MILTON. D. Masson. 1859-1894.
- MILTON. Mark Pattison. 1879.
- LIFE OF MILTON. Walter Raleigh. 1900.

CRITICISM.

- ADDISON, J. Spectator Essays
- ALDEN, Sampson, Studies in Milton. 1913.

BAILY, M.L.	Milton and Jakob Boehme.	1914.
HANFORD, J.H.	A Milton Handbook.	1927.
HORWOOD, A.	A Common-place Book of John Milton.	1876.
LARSON, M.	The Modernity of Milton.	1927.
LILJEGREN, S.B.	Studies in Milton.	1918.
SAURAT, D.	Blake and Milton.	1920.
	Milton, Man and Thinker.	1925.
VISIAK, E.H.	Milton Agonistes.	1923.
WARREN, W.	The Universe as Pictured in Milton's "Paradise Lost".	1915.

MYSTICISM, PHILOSOPHY and PSYCHOLOGY.

BOEHME, J.	Concerning the Three Principles of the Divine Essence.	
BROWNING, R.	The Ring and the Book.	
CARLYLE, T.	Essay on Characteristics. Sartor Resartus.	
CARRITT, E.F.	Theory of Beauty.	1914
COLERIDGE, S.T.	Biographia Literaria, Chs XIII and XIV.	
FREUD, S.	Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis.	1915, etc.
JAMES, W.	Varieties of Religious Experience.	1902.
LOWES, J. Livingstone,	The Road to Xanadu.	1927.
MURRY, Middleton,	Keats and Shakespeare.	1925

PLATO	Phaedrus, Symposium, trans. Jowett.	
PRESCOTT, A. F. C.	Poetic Mind.	1922
RIBOT.	Essay on the Creative Imagination.	1906.
SPURGEON, C.	Mysticism.	
THORBURN, J.	Art and the Unconscious.	1925
UNDERHILL, E.	Mysticism.	1916.
VARENDONCK.	The Psychology of Day- dreams	1921.
WORDSWORTH, W.	Prelude and Excursion.	

THEOLOGY.

AUGUSTINE.	Confessions.	
	City of God. trans. by J. Healey.	Dent 1903
AQUINAS, T.	Summa Theologica. ^{Parts} Vols I & II, trans. by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province.	1911-22
CALVIN, J.	Institutes. trans by H. Beveridge.	1863
HOOKE	Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity.	Everyman 1907

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY LITERATURE.

BAXTER, R.	Saints' Everlasting Rest. Ed. W. Young. Religious Tract Soc. London	1650. 1909
BROWNE, Sir T.	Religio Medici. Intro by C. Whibley. Blackie & Sons	1635-1637. 1926
BURTON, R.	Anatomy of Melancholy. Ed. by Rev. A. R. Shilleto	1621. 1923
BUNYAN, J.	Grace Abounding. Standard English Classics	1666. 1905 etc
	Pilgrim's Progress Collins	pub. 1678

FULLER, T.	Sermons. 1631 - 1649. "Collected Sermons" Ed. J.E. Bailey. 1891.	
HOBBS, T.	Leviathan.	1651.
TAYLOR, J.	Holy Living. } Ed. by E.A. London. Griffith, Farrer, Oxford & Welsh.	1650.
	Holy Dying. }	1651 1875
WALTON, I.	Compleat Angler.	1653.

Diaries of John Evelyn and of Samuel Pepys.

Poems of Giles and Phineas Fletcher, Donne, Herbert, Herrick,
Marvell, Lovelace, Suckling, Traherne, Vaughan, Cowley,
Waller, etc.
