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SCOTTISH THEOLOGICAL LEARNING IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

I SHOULD like in this article to make some inquiry into the state of theological learning in Scotland in the seventeenth century, the sources from which it was drawn, and the methods that were employed in its acquisition. Fortunately we have to deal with a century which has a certain very definite unity of its own, for Scots changed remarkably little in this hundred years. They were sometimes Presbyterian and sometimes Episcopalian. Now they followed Knox's Liturgy and now the Westminster Directory. The relations of Church and State varied. But the people and the Church continued to be Scottish. Even in the Episcopal periods there was never any suggestion of the Church of England about a Scottish service or a Scottish bishop, and all the while (with an occasional exception to prove the rule) clergy and people remained unshakably Calvinist.

Throughout the century Scottish culture was scarcely impressive. Brilliant writers and thinkers were not plentiful. Neither was the country ever during this period long blessed with that peace that makes calm reflection natural and easy. Immediately practical issues and somewhat petty disputes occupied men's minds and absorbed their energies; and while the voice of conscience spoke without ceasing, and the fear of the Lord was in most hearts, vision was limited and life a little thing. Imagination and originality were not characteristic of the time, but it was erudite and serious and stolidly conservative.

Not everyone was a theologian, but practically everybody was interested in theology. The mass of the people had no acquaintance with letters, and their mental and spiritual nourishment came to them almost entirely from the pulpit, with its "painful" sermons, reverently prepared, strongly biblical, strictly doctrinal, logical, systematic and comprehensive, with the catechetical instruction begun in their childhood and revised before each Communion, and with the most popular of the metrical psalms printed clear upon every memory.

There were laymen who read religious books. Jaffray of Kingswells, an intelligent gentleman with genuine, if somewhat

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eccentric, religious interests, well-known to Cromwell, studied Thomas Goodwin and John Owen and no doubt many another. Alexander Brodie of Brodie, mentions in his diary a very miscellaneous collection of books he read—classics and histories chiefly, but also Musculus and Gualther, David Dickson and Samuel Rutherford, Thomas Edwards, Richard Baxter, Jeremy Taylor, Samuel Hudson of New England, the sermons of Christopher Love, John Gilpin on the Quakers, and even the Koran. Towards the end of the century Lord Forbes of Pitsligo, Lord Deskford and others were devouring the mystical literature of all lands.

The ministers, however, naturally set the theological standard, and it is with them that we shall concern ourselves.

I

By no means every parish—in spite of James Kirkton—had its school in the seventeenth century. Forbes of Corse has pathetic information to give about the state of things at least in certain highland districts. Nevertheless Presbyteries did their best to stimulate the backward generosity of heritors, and the General Assembly (as in 1645) laid down careful regulations which helped to make a sound and solid education possible. The masters were most often young men desirous of entering the ministry or men who had prepared for the Church, but had not obtained a charge. The Schoolmaster was appointed by the session, and supervised by them and by the Presbytery. He was generally session-clerk and precentor and would be reader in the Episcopal periods. He often took part in the Presbytery exercises, and as a licentiate he would preach in vacant churches, or in the absence of the minister. He had to instruct the children in scripture knowledge, in Catechism, and in the singing of the Psalms. Altogether school and schoolmaster were very closely associated with the Church. Interest in theology characterised most of the teachers under whose influence the children came, and so theology (apart from home influences) early took its place in the schoolboy's mind.

Many who became ministers were sons of the Manse, brought up in the atmosphere of a theological study, accustomed to devout exercises and strict attendance upon ordinances. We are told by one how, as a boy, he was allowed by his father to stay in the room when other ministers or scholars were present, and was

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afterwards examined upon his impressions of what had been discussed and encouraged to take an interest in such matters. It was to the Manse at Ormiston that William Carstares was sent for his schooling. Other future ministers were privately educated by tutors who acted as secretary and chaplain in the house, for quite a number of those who gave themselves to the ministry in the seventeenth century were sons of lairds, and had in their homes as a constant companion one who was interested in theology. Such was the fortune for example of Robert Boyd of Trochrig, John Forbes of Corse, James Fraser of Brea.

It seems worth noting how in those different ways Theology and the calling of the ministry were more clearly present in the experience of boys in those days than they are now, when schools and schoolmasters have ceased to have the old religious associations and when lairds' "servants" are no longer licentiates of the Church.

The method by which the scholars were later to attack their theological studies was naturally to some extent determined by the type of schooling provided for them in their early days. They would at first in most cases attend village schools where they would learn something of reading, writing and arithmetic. Very often we find singing specially mentioned. Sir John Clerk of Penicuik, complains that his writing was spoiled by having to take down the sermons in Church. He also refers to the too severe discipline in school as "a bad custom of these times." Very soon pupils turned to Latin, and later even conversation was in that tongue. We find that candidates for teaching posts even in small country schools—for example at Rathven in 1623—were tested as to their ability to teach Latin. In the Grammar Schools this was more to be expected, though it is a little surprising to find the Presbytery at Banff requiring candidates to discuss passages of a latin author so as to show "thair analysis both logicall and rhetoricall and poeticall." There were famous Grammar Schools at Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, Stirling and many other places, to which boys came from a distance—thus John Livingstone went to Stirling. The type of education provided was much what we trace from the regulations governing the High School of Edinburgh from 1644. During a five years' course instruction was given, beginning with the rudiments from Despauter (interpolated), then the Syntax of Erasmus and some Corderius and Cicero; then more Cicero and some Terence

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and Ovid. There followed Buchanan's Psalms and Virgil and Horace, while in the final year study concentrated upon rhetoric. Facility of expression in Latin prose and verse was expected.

II

The school course prepared directly for the University where Latin was taken for granted, and attention turned to Greek which formed the basis of the philosophical studies. Hebrew was also studied. The students were mere boys, for it was customary to enter College at the age of 13, 14 or 15. Gilbert Burnet—rather a precocious child—graduated at 14. For such mere boys Hebrew was simpler than it is to men who have years previously (as at present) ceased linguistic study, and perhaps this accounts partly for the particular interest we find taken in Hebrew—and in the Old Testament—by the ministers of the seventeenth century.

Rhetoric and Logic and the Art of Disputation and a little Mathematics soon called for attention, to be followed by more Aristotle—Metaphysics, Ethics, Politics, Pneumatics, perhaps even a little Anatomy as that could be learned from mere lectures, and in the fourth and final year, Physics and Geography and Astronomy as these were then understood. In the course of the century little change of method or subject was introduced, though new influences crept in and the names of Descartes, Gassendi, Boyle and Hobbes appear in the dictates.

The students were much occupied in taking down and copying out and closely studying the latin lectures. Divinity students had to submit to the Presbyteries their versions of the professor's dictates and sustain examination upon them. There were further the Disputations, private and public,—the elaborate logical defence of theses, after the method of all mediaeval academic discussions. As a mental discipline this practice certainly had some justification, for it tended to develop orderly thinking, logical accuracy, quick judgment, clear expression, fluent utterance, clever criticism, ingenious argument. It was, however, intellectual duelling, and as a method of discussion it produced, and could produce, only the kind of peace which duelling produces. Sympathetic appreciation of an opponent's position was not thought of; and so there was little possibility of the conversion which may result from friendly investigation based

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on a common desire to learn. It also tended seriously to pedantry and to the merely academic, and from this point of view received merciless criticism from Erasmus and John Milton and more indirectly in the *Litterae Obscurorum Virorum.*

The use to which the method might be put is exemplified by John Menzies's public controversies with the Jesuit Dempster in Aberdeen, and the public debates of the Marischal College students with the Quakers in 1675. Academic disputation was not only the basis of theological literature and influential in ecclesiastical politics, but it affected the sermon of the period, dictating the logical arrangement, the formality, the division and sub-division, the objections and replies to objections which characterised those exhaustive and argumentative compositions upon the "ordinary."

Throughout the four years course in Arts the students had been under the supervision of a Regent. He was a young man selected by examination from amongst the two or three most brilliant recent graduates. He had not the position of a modern professor. A few years later he would become minister of some parish. Meanwhile he gave dictates and conducted disputations on all the subjects required—Greek literature, logic, pneumatology, ethics, politics, mathematics, physics, cosmography, astronomy.

The Arts course was practically a study of Aristotle, and the letter of his works must have been singularly familiar to some of the more distinguished regents. They had many helps, commentaries such as those of Zabarella on the physical subjects, or Walaeus on the ethical, light upon the *Organon* from Porphyry's *Isagoge*, and later Burgersdyck's *Institutes*, and Heereboord's *Praxis*, various Epitomes and such curious works as *Index rerum omnium quae in Aristotelis operibus continentur absolutissimus* (1576), and *Aristotelis sententiae omnes undiquaque selectissimae* (1564). Theology was not neglected, for the students went regularly to church and to prayers, had weekly lectures on theological topics from the Principal, and were obliged to study works in Divinity such as Grotius's *de Veritate*, a commentary upon the Heidelberg Catechism, and *The Whole Duty of Man.*

The method of University study was pure scholasticism. There was no touch of criticism, no thought of departure from the beaten track; and this was natural, for the regents were generally only beginners, very dependent upon what they had

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been taught themselves within the last few years, and with little time to do more than elaborate the dictates of their own teacher. Indeed it seems that some regents did not trouble to elaborate these, but used them *simpliciter*. In 1690 it was charged against Mr. Andrew Massie, regent at King's College, Aberdeen, that he copied his lectures from those of John Strachan under whom he had been a student. The lectures on Ethics used at King's College in 1693 were identical with those dictated by Henry Scougal some twenty years earlier; and even these contain many passages taken verbatim and without acknowledgment from Henry More, Hugo Grotius and others.

Robert Leighton at Edinburgh University avoided "dictats," and gave instead eloquent lectures of his own calculated to stimulate thought and piety. He blamed the disputations for the sects and factions in the Church. Education, he felt, had been arranged "as if disputing was the end of learning, as fighting is the design of going to war; hence the youth, when they enter the school, begin disputing, which never ends but with their life." The methods adopted he believed were "more apt to inspire the mind with pride than to improve it." William Douglas, a professor of Divinity at Aberdeen a little earlier in the century, himself regarded as "a great disputer in the schools at graduations," wrote in deprecation of "exaggerated attacks" and realised the connection between this university teaching and the many "unnecessary religious dissensions" of his day. Students everywhere became restless under the traditional methods, and we find frequent complaint of poor attendance at classes. Bursars were asked to prove that they took down the dictates themselves. They were on occasions warned that they would not receive their bursaries unless they gave better attendance. Such regulations are an indication of what was happening. At Edinburgh towards the close of the century Professor Munro ceased to "dictate" and "catechised" instead. He agreed with the students that the time spent in taking down and transcribing lectures might be better occupied in reading published works. He said that he found them "better satisfied, much more edified and less wearied" under his treatment, and attending more regularly.

The Divinity course like that in Arts consisted of four sessions. At Glasgow in 1664 the regulation was that students go through the whole body of theology and the scriptures with frequent

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homilies and handling of controversies, and obtain some knowledge of the history of the Church, and know Hebrew and Greek and even a little Chaldaic and Syriac. Gilbert Burnet who was professor at Glasgow 1669-1674 tells us how he planned his work and on different days "made all the students in course explain a part of the body of Divinity in Latin with a thesis and answer all the arguments," "had a prelection in Latin in which I designed to go through a body of Divinity in ten or twelve years," gave an English commentary on a Gospel, expounded Hebrew Psalms, discussed Church Worship and Government, heard and criticised sermons, and also held conference with the students upon religious and other questions. William Douglas in one of his books offers much good advice to students, and warns students of Divinity against merely reading without collecting anything from what they read, and against allowing their minds to be confused by the multitude of books. He urges the diligent study of the creeds, and the theological discussions of the Fathers, and such commonplaces as those of Melanchthon and Calvin and Peter Martyr, but very specially to make diligent study of the scriptures, quoting with approval the saying of Musculus, "Visne esse bonus Theologus? Cura ut sis bonus Biblicus."

Typical works which indicate the style of the dictates are the *Therapeutica Sacra* of David Dickson, John Forbes's *Theologia Moralis* and even his *Instructiones*, and Samuel Rutherford's *Examen Arminianismi*.

III

A certain number of men completed their studies abroad, or came later into touch with foreign scholars.

With a view to licence students were subjected by the Presbyteries to a series of examinations spread over a period of some months, in Hebrew and Greek, questionary trial in historical theology, a latin exegesis on some common head with subsequent disputation thereupon, an exercise with addition (analysing and commenting upon a text to bring out textual and critical knowledge), and a popular sermon. Thereafter the candidate was "licentiat to open his mouth in publick as occasione sall serve as ane expectant," or given "liberty to exercise his gift." Before ordination to a parish similar trials had to be faced.

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The standard of learning demanded was not necessarily high. Gilbert Burnet complains that in his early days even the leading preachers had not very much Hebrew or Greek, but contented themselves with the study of the controversies against Rome and against Arminianism. At an earlier date we find the demand was chiefly that the candidate be "weill-seen in contraversies"; and towards the end of the century we have the complaint that when ministers have enough latin to plough through some Dutch theological treatise they are thought learned. Perhaps the intellectual standard was lower at certain points in the century than at others. About 1650 it was chiefly important from the Presbytery's point of view that an expectant should be very familiar with the Covenants and the Acts of the Commissions of Assembly. A dozen years later the demand for Episcopally inclined candidates produced the "Curates" to many of whom extraordinary deficiency in learning is attributed. But the prescribed University course was one which brought to any student the possibility of wide, if scholastic knowledge, and that many ministers had read extensively or intensively is evident.

The "Exercise" prevented the total extinction of such pretensions to scholarship as the ordinary minister might have. In 1617 the Synod of Aberdeen ordered that "the common heads of controversy be handled every month in all the exercises of the diocese, which shall be set down in theses, and disputation to follow thereon after doctrine." In accordance with this, Presbytery minutes regularly record that so and so handled a certain common head and "his travells was allowed by the brethren after censure," or that so and so "who had spoken on the common head de Paedabaptismo is found by all to have been deserted in the delyverse of it, so that he gave not satisfaction," or that so and so "taught in Latin," and "both the mater and expression was approven." At other meetings of the Presbytery one minister "exercised" and another "added," and the "censure" was no formality. An entry in the books of the Presbytery of Deer speaks of a minister who taught on 1 Thess. i. 3 and 4 and was "found to have delyvered orthodox doctrin, but is gravely exhorted to study a more spirituall way of applicatioun to consciences and tymes," while another who had preached, "is found to have given the Presbyterie no satisfaction at all, but to have spoken lyk a man who had nether sought God nor taken paines," though another who had added, "is approven as

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one who had done according to his talent and who was endeavouring honestly to improve it for his Master's advantage."

Such typical extracts show the periodical tests which the Presbyterian system at its best laid upon its ministers, and the encouragement offered them to maintain a fair standard of learning and utterance. A certain additional check was afforded by the regular Presbyterial " visitation " of congregations with the sworn testimony of the elders as to the attention of the minister to his studies and preaching as well as to much else. The Scottish belief in an educated ministry was unshaken even by the Independent invasion.

The ordinary minister does not seem to have had many books beyond his Bible. We know how small was the library of Thomas Boston. Books were dear. It was not easy to know what books there were on the market, and not easy to arrange their transport when they were bought. During a considerable part of the century there were not even meetings of General Assembly, when men might have seen the booksellers' stocks, and discussed publications with friends from other parts of the country.

Here and there we discover men of outstanding intellects or with special interests or with peculiar opportunities, and something may be learned from a perusal of lists of the books they possessed. Andrew Strachan, Minister of Logie-Durno and for a few months before his death in 1635 Professor of Divinity at King's College, Aberdeen, left his books to the University, and over eighty of them are still in the library. He had obviously intimate acquaintance with Aristotle, and a knowledge of the early Church, including the works of Augustine and other Fathers, and some of the Historians. He has Occam and Aquinas from the Middle Ages, Beza, Bullinger and Zwingli from among the Reformers, and a considerable selection of Dutch Theology of recent date. He had of course Bellarmin, and others from amongst the outstanding defenders of Rome. There are also quite a number of works by Englishmen which show he was interested on the ecclesiastical problems which had been raised since the Union of 1603. Dictionaries, texts and commentaries bear witness to the thoroughness of his scholarship.

Reference may be made to the Saltoun Library associated with the name of Gilbert Burnet of which an account appears in the *Life* by Clarke and Foxcroft, and also to the extensive library

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of Leighton at Dunblane which is carefully analysed by Bishop Knox in his recent publication. Aberdeen University has a manuscript list of the books of James Lundie, Minister of Dalkeith in 1680 which the Third Spalding Club hopes soon to publish; and there is also at Aberdeen a catalogue of the library of Bishop Patrick Scougal and his son Henry Scougal which displays additional interests to those already suggested and like that of Leighton is strongest in mystical literature. A survey of these collections of books is most illuminating as to the reading of outstanding, though perhaps not specially characteristic, clergymen of the century.

IV

The mind of the time shows itself more definitely in the works of the great controversialists, and there also we find the widest range of theological literature surveyed. It is impossible in moderate space to note the names of all the authors mentioned in those books, though a complete classified list of this sort would be of value. One can only illustrate the width of study involved. Thus in David Calderwood's *Altare Damascenum* there are references to very many of the Fathers and not a few of the less known early Church writers. There is evident acquaintance with the Councils right up to Trent, with Canon Law, with the Liturgies. There are the Reformers, Wiclif, Calvin, Luther, Beza, Peter Martyr, Bucer, etc. There are the leading Romanist controversialists, Bellarmin,Cajetan, Suarez, and others. There is reference to English authors of different schools, Bilson, Whitgift, Whitaker, Godwin, Parker, Field, Perkins, Linwood, Cartwright, Camden, Reynolds, Jewel, Morton, Hooker and so on. Protestant assemblies such as the Hampton Court Conference and Dutch Synods including Dort are mentioned and continental authorities include Mucketus, Franciscus Junius, Molinaeus, Casaubon, Tilenus, Pareus, Morny and many more. Obviously every corner of Christian literature has been explored to find or refute arguments.

The same applies to that massive work of learning, the *Ephesians* of Robert Boyd. It is not merely an analysis and commentary, but a complete body of divinity, with discussions which cover almost the whole range of theological controversy. The full textual apparatus has clearly been at

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command; patristic literature, the Greek and Latin classics, many almost unknown scholastics, as well as every prominent author of his own or recent times may be found mentioned. At the end of the volume a list is provided of the authors to whom reference is made, and it affords ample proof of vast research.

When we turn to Roman controversy we have the *Instructiones* of John Forbes of Corse, and again this is a mass of learned references. Knowledge of the Fathers and of Early Church History is particularly strong, every point of heresy has been investigated, mediæval writers seem thoroughly familiar. Romanists such as Gretser, Stapleton, Baronius and above all Bellarmin are constantly under examination, the reformers, his master Pareus, his friends G. J. Vossius, Archbishop Ussher, Andreas Rivetus, his own father the Bishop, English contributors to the controversy, and many German, Dutch and French Reformed writers have their place. There are numerous learned citations on every page of the great folio volume. In his *Theologia Moralis* he has also room for a number of classical references and the Second Book of his *Irenicum* is a mass of quotations, a large number of them from the Reformers.

The chief name we associate with the Arminian controversy is that of Samuel Rutherford, but he was extremely versatile and seems to have at command all the literature of many subjects. Thus his *Lex Rex* displays his acquaintance with political thought in the scriptures, the Fathers, the ancient classics, the scholastics, the Reformers, and that interesting company of Jesuits who had made this their special topic. When he takes up the defence of Presbyterianism as in his *Divine Right of Church Government* and his *Due Right of Presbyteries* he battles learnedly with Robinson of Leyden and Erastus and Hooker and Jackson and the Aberdeen Doctors, citing authors of every period, his books being a complete bibliography. He was best known abroad for his treatment of Arminianism and his *Examen* shows minute investigation of the relevant literature. On one page we find Bellarmin, Vincent Lirensis, and Archbishop Laud quoted together, on another Chillingworth and Amesius, on another Augustine, Basil and Cyril of Alexandria, on another Corvinus, Socinus and Smalcius, on another Martinez de Ripalda, Calvin and Chemnitz. All Rutherford's works offer a most impressive parade of erudition.

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John Strang of Glasgow took a somewhat different attitude to that of Rutherford and was an infralapsarian and suspected of Amyraldism. His *De Voluntate Dei* is, however, as learned as anything produced by his rival, and amongst the countless references we came across early and mediæval Christian writers, the leading Reformers, the Scots Rollock, Cameron and Rutherford, the English Perkins, Whitaker and Twisse, teachers in Holland including Maccovius, Maresius, Rivetus, Amesius, Walaeus, Gomarus, Arminius, Grotius, the Leyden Professors, Trelcatius, Burgersdyck, etc., and other continentals such as Pareus, Molinaeus, Gualther, Buxtorf and Pagninus.

No advocate of Arminianism and Prelacy could have been found more learned than the first Bishop of Edinburgh, William Forbes, whose *Considerationes Modestae*, dealing irenically with questions in the Roman Controversy, show him unquestionably one of the best read Theologians of his day. The staunchly Presbyterian and Calvinist Gillespies, George and Patrick (and more especially the former) reveal a wide knowledge of continental and English puritan and independent Theology; and John Brown of Wamphray in his *Justification* and elsewhere shows himself equally well versed in what the modern churches have had to say, while far from ignorant of the Fathers. James Durham in his *Treatise concerning Scandal* and elsewhere is never at a loss for a patristic reference and shows quite a remarkable range of historical knowledge. Luther, Calvin, Knox, Melanchthon, Beza, Bucer, are mentioned and references made to numerous recent writers including a number of New England puritans.

Exegesis did not lend itself to quotation. Rollock's *Psalms* is, indeed, prefaced by short extracts relative to the psalms from Early Christian writers; and his Colossians has one or two references to Augustine and slighting allusions to Plato and Aristotle; but the expository works of Dickson, Nisbet and Hutcheson are without citations of other writers. Behind their efforts, however, is the detailed linguistic study to which the Reformation exaltation of the Bible naturally led; and we find such men as John Livingstone, John Row, and later Thomas Boston doing most laborious work with the help of the Buxtorfs and Stephanus, Tremellius and Junius and Pagninus.

Sermonic literature as it survives from the seventeenth century does not reveal much direct evidence of sources studied.

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A certain amount of learned (especially linguistic) scaffolding shows itself about the structure of John Forbes's sermons as we find them in his *Diary*. Samuel Rutherford's are sometimes argumentative and introduce then a good deal of reference to controversial literature. Leighton's sermons contain occasional apt quotations and give throughout the sense of well digested learning, especially in Seneca, Augustine, Bernard and the later mystics. Scougal's sermons show very clearly that he had steeped his mind in mystical literature and was fresh from the reading of John Smith, the Cambridge Platonist. Dickson's sermons, substantial, plain, convincing and converting, the more emotional, imaginative, sensuous, and mystical utterances of Rutherford, the affecting and persuasive words of Livingstone, the intense earnestness of Durham, the direct popular appeal of Andrew Gray, the fiery fluency of John Menzies, the broadmindedness of Hew Binning, were all effective because they had a solid theological and scriptural basis as well as a truly religious aim. Sound learning gave those preachers weight and confidence.

The worst that could be imagined of the ignorance of Scottish ministers appears in *Scottish Presbyterian Eloquence Displayed*. It is a scandalous and malicious document, but its statements are not necessarily without foundation; and we may conclude from a study of it, that, while in those days (as later) there were men in Scottish pulpits who were unworthy of their vocation, it was not possible for the church's worst enemy to adduce evidence of general ignorance. Extreme familiarity of language, with Scots words and homely and coarse illustrations and allusions, were no doubt common. On the other hand we have hints of occasional error in the other direction. We hear of logical analysis of a text "very remote from vulgar capacities." We know there was much "anti-Arminian metaphysics," and discussion of Election and Reprobation, much detailed argument against Popery and Prelacy and constant faithful dealing with the political and ecclesiastical causes of God's wrath. The standard varied as regards spirituality and intellect and commonsense; but one knows that every here and there throughout the century a parish was blessed with a servant of God whose sermons, like those of Henry Scougal, were esteemed as enlightening the mind and warming the heart and being plain and intelligible and suited to the common capacity.

No document has quite so much to give us on our whole

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subject as Robert Baillie's *Letters and Journals*. We know from Baillie's works how wide was his knowledge of Biblical and Theological science and of the literature of the Roman, Episcopal, Arminian and Independent conflicts of his day. In the *Letters* we find the process of the operation. We see him as a University teacher. We are reminded that he was no theoretical spectator of the controversies. We perceive his intimacy with the erudite of his time. Boyd and Rutherford and Gillespie and Strang and James Wood in Scotland he knew of course. His presence at the Westminster Assembly gave him the opportunity of meeting many of the English divines—Twisse, Calamy and Ashe and Rous and Marshall, and with some of them he afterwards maintained correspondence. Whatever was published among them by Puritans or Brownists he heard of and was eager to read, and not only volumes, but many of the innumerable pamphlets which were such a characteristic feature of the struggles of the period. He was also closely in touch with Dutch learning, through his cousin William Spang, and through his correspondence with Voetius and Rivetus and others. He kept himself up-to-date with publications in Holland, and had the latest books sent him for the Library at Glasgow. He was intelligently interested in the different attitudes of mind, and read not only Gomarus and Amesius and Spanheim but also Grotius and Vorstius and the *Acta* and *Apologia* of the Remonstrants, discussing Petavius with his students, studying also the writings of Amyraut and the new federal teaching of Cocceius, enquiring about the Jansenists and Cartesians. He exercised his personal judgment upon all he read and we are constantly reminded that while Scots were largely dependent upon the books of Englishmen and Dutch professors they were by no means uncritical in their reading and had their own very definite point of view.

V

Our survey suggests one or two more general reflections. The range of theological study in seventeenth century Scotland is very like what we find elsewhere. Richard Baxter in England was writing and reading in a precisely similar way. Maresius at Groningen was doing just the same. Reformed Europe thought in Latin and had a common experience and was a unity to which we have no modern parallel. One could not guess from the type of a book, and very often not even from its

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contents, whether its author were Dutch or English or Scottish. He might even be a Scot teaching in France, or a Frenchman teaching in Holland.

It is rather interesting to find so much general familiarity with the Fathers. We know that a certain type of Protestant—such as Andrew Cant—simply scoffed at them. We know on the other hand how Bishop Patrick Forbes and his son strove—in imitation of the Magdeburg Centuriators—to counteract such an attitude and to emphasise the continuity of Protestantism with historical Christianity from primitive times, a position which was perhaps scarcely to be expected at the time of the First Book of Discipline, but was orthodox in Scotland by the time of the Second. Knowledge of the Fathers is not confined to those who were specially concerned with the Roman and Episcopal controversies. We find it of course in such, as for example in John Welsh's *Popery Anatomised*; but we have it said also of James Durham that "he was so familiarly acquainted with the Fathers as if he himself had been one of them," and his writings bear out this assertion. Even such a short piece as Hume's *Admonition* (1609) reveals considerable familiarity with the Councils and early writers; and such knowledge (as the allusions already made must have proved), went all through the century. One notices specially to what an extent the personality of Augustine had impressed those Protestants. Nearly every writer seizes whatever opportunity offers itself of quoting him. Exegetes such as Rollock, preachers such as Robert Bruce, controversialists such as Rutherford, inspirational writers such as Robert Fleming, and such different men as Calderwood and Robert Leighton, Robert Baron and John Brown of Wamphray, George Gillespie and Henry Scougal, William Forbes and John Strang, Robert Boyd and George Garden, all quote Augustine and quote him with equal reverence.

The practice of copious citation of authorities—both the Fathers and later writers—is the outstanding feature of the theological literature of the century. It was, indeed, partly an affectation, and we know that one can quote without necessarily understanding—without, indeed, having even read the context of the words. We know that the erudite evidence produced was the result of gradually accumulating effort—as a modern steamship was made possible by the invention of coracles and Spanish galleons. Otherwise we would suspect—as was once suggested

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in the case of Bellarmin—that the works were produced by syndicates.

The habit was due to the prevailing scholasticism of the day. Writers used the proof-text method, and sought to substantiate their beliefs by accumulating witnesses for themselves and against their opponents. To carry a position the number of witnesses was depended upon almost as much as the quality of their names, and the importance of their judgments; and utterances were quoted without reference to their context. Writers were thoroughly versed in the literature of the special problem with which they dealt. Their difficulty was to get away from their chosen authorities.

Ministers' reading was naturally not confined to strictly theological works. We find much interest in history, ancient and modern. Travel books were popular. Science was not neglected. The Latin and Greek classics were the regular study of many all their lives. Some knowledge of modern languages is apparent here and there. On the other hand there seems to have been remarkable neglect of English literature and of contemporary foreign drama and poetry. One finds no trace of Shakespeare or Milton, though George Herbert was certainly familiar in some quarters.

It is quite clear that the mental background of the century was theological to an extent utterly unknown to us. The history of those years is ecclesiastical history from beginning to end. Even the enemies of the Church were not so much against it as some of its present friends. No doubt the times were narrow, pedantic and disputatious ; but the people were pious, and theological learning was universally respected. There was no great theologian who could rank in History with such a giant as Calvin ; but there were a number of patient, diligent and extraordinarily erudite scholars, and from their publications and University classes a very systematic and precise Theology, a genuine delight in Theological argument, and an acquaintance with the technical vocabulary and the names of Dutch, English and Romanist controversialists, filtered down through the pulpits and helped to provide both dignity and assurance to the common religion, to give meaning to scripture, and to place all life in the light of eternity.

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Aberdeen.

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MILTON'S PHILOSOPHY

If one should wish to characterise Milton, it would be difficult indeed to find a name that would better express the impression which his personality and life make on us than that of the hero of one of his great poems, *Samson Agonistes*. Samson, the lonely giant. Samson, the Champion. The Champion of a great cause, seemingly doomed to ruin, but too vital, too essentially necessary for mankind, to die.

A lonely champion he was. No matter whether one asks: Who was Milton? Or: What was Milton? The answer is always and only: Milton. And if you inquire: Who was standing by him in the great struggle of his life? the answer is: nobody; it was only Milton, just Milton. Of him can be said what we read of the son of Hagar: his hand was against everybody and everybody's hand was against him.

But what party, what school, what church, what current of thought, can now claim him as their own, now that the fumes of faction and of strife around him have lifted? The answer must once more be: nobody—though, of course, his views are more closely related to one current of thought than to another.

Nor has the strife around him wholly ceased. For, though Milton's own struggle has been over long since, there is still a struggle going on about him, over him so to say, and lately new oil was poured into the flames of this controversy.

For it is remarkable indeed, how this great figure has attracted people's attention like a magnet, throughout the centuries. He is sitting in majesty on the summit of the English Helicon, sometimes veiled by clouds, sometimes displaying all the glory of his dazzling countenance—and then some say: he belongs to us, and others: no, he is of our kin; but there are also those who grimly turn their backs on him and growl: Let him be; he only belongs to himself, or at best he is one of the relics of a time and faith that has no longer any message for us. Let him be.

However, the number of these grumblers is continually decreasing in our days, and you and I are not among them. Yet, we do not want to claim him as our own, but to understand him better, this giant who strides over the tops of Parnassus in superhuman splendour.

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For two reasons I should like to say a few words about him. The first is, that I was repeatedly struck by the fact that in some writers there is a tendency to put several of the repugnant qualities they blame him for, on to Calvinism, and yet to hold, on the other hand, that he is not really a Calvinist at all.

And the second is, that criticism has been very busy about him of late and has endeavoured to place him in a new light, so that Professor Denis Saurat of Bordeaux even feels himself entitled to speak of a "nouvelle école" in Miltonic studies.

The first question that presents itself is: Was Milton a Calvinist, yes or no? And the answer must so unreservedly be in the negative, that one is inclined to wonder how it is possible that the legend of Milton being the Calvinistic poet *par excellence* should have been able to hold its own notwithstanding all the outstanding facts that prove the contrary. In my opinion we must look for the cause of this in the words *Calvinist* and *Puritan* being often interchanged, though their meanings are widely different.

Now, if a man falls into that error, it is easy to explain that he is unstable in the application of the name of Calvinist to Milton, because Milton was undoubtedly a Puritan but as undoubtedly no Calvinist.

Even if one does not take the word Puritan in its historical sense, that is in the meaning it conveyed in the heroic age of Puritanism in England in the middle decades of the seventeenth century, even then it will not do to treat the terms *Puritan* and *Calvinist* as if they were synonyms.

For if one takes the word Puritan in its present popular sense, denoting a man of stern views who has forsworn what he considers to be the idle pleasures of the world, if, I say, one takes the word Puritan in that meaning, it does not only apply to Calvinists, but also, for example, to orthodox Baptists and Quakers. Floyd Dell even calls Upton Sinclair a Puritan.

And as to the *historical* meaning of the word Puritan—for which we must turn to the England of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—I tried to give a brief outline of that in my *Butler, the Author of Hudibras*, 1923 (pp. 113-131). I can only say a few words about it here.

As you all know, the word Puritan means properly speaking something like "Purifier": the Puritans were people who wanted to purify the Church of England from what, in their

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opinion, savoured too much of the Church of Rome. Some of them remained in the Anglican Church; others left it or were ousted from it, and formed different groups: Presbyterians, Independents or Congregationalists, Millenarians, Quakers, etc. All these were Puritans—but only the Presbyterians and, to a certain extent, the Independents or Congregationalists proper, might be called Calvinists.

All were Puritans, for all maintained that the Bible was their *only* guide for their faith and their lives, thus opposing subjection to the priesthood and to ecclesiastical authority, all the while laying more stress on ethics than on dogma,[1] which, I think, is characteristically English: historically Puritanism is a typical English phenomenon! But by no means were all of them Calvinists, that is adherents of the doctrine of the election of sinners to eternal life by the free grace of God, this in connection with the doctrine of the fundamental and unmitigated sinfulness of human nature in *all* men before their regeneration, and the perseverance of redeemed man in grace.

And among all these we also find John Milton. Doubtless a genuine Puritan, not only in the sense indicated above, but also in the *political* sense of the word, as he belonged to the party that defended the rights and the liberties of the people against the encroachments made on them by the crown, especially by Charles I.

However much the Puritans might differ, there was one mental attitude which was characteristic of them all: absolute subjection to the Word of God on the one hand, and a strong desire for liberty, a strong impatience of all arbitrary bonds laid on them by man, on the other.

And that is also John Milton's attitude: "The rule and canon of faith, therefore, is Scripture alone," he says in his *De Doctrina Christiana*[2]; and his whole life has been one great struggle for liberty, personal, religious and civil liberty, the liberty of speech and of printing, and what not.

So it is quite sure that Milton was a Puritan. But as certain it is that he was not a Calvinist. He could not even agree with the Nicene Creed. For he had decidedly Arian principles. Speaking of the relation between God the Father and the Son

[1] See especially the "conduct-books" of the Puritans, on which *Schücking* rightly lays so much stress in his *Die Familie im Puritanismus* (1929).

[2] *De Doctrina Christiana* in Bohn's Standard Library, IV., p. 445.

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of God, he says: "(God) was properly the Father of the Son made of His own substance. Yet it does not follow from hence that the Son is co-essential with the Father, for then the title of Son would be least of all applicable to Him, since He Who is properly the Son is not coeval with the Father, much less of the same numerical essence; otherwise the Father and the Son would be one person."[1] And further: "If God be one God, and that one God the Father, and if notwithstanding the Son be also called God, the Son must have received the name and nature of Deity from God the Father, in conformity with His decree and will."[2]

Thus Milton expresses himself in his *De Doctrina Christiana*. And *Paradise Lost* is in accordance with this. For that matter, we can generally say that the views which Milton expounds more systematically in his Latin treatise on the Christian Doctrine, also make themselves felt, but in the manner of the poet now, of course, in his three great poems: *Paradise Lost*, *Paradise Regained*, and *Samson Agonistes*. The limited range of this paper does not allow me to point this out in detail. That it should be so, is not to be wondered at, as all the works mentioned took existence in Milton's last, mature period.

In his youth he was much more orthodox. In that splendid hymn *On the Morning of Christ's Nativity*, which he wrote when he was twenty-one, he sings of the new-born King:

> That glorious Form, that Light unsufferable,
> And that far-beaming blaze of Majesty,
> Wherwith he wont at Heav'ns high Councel-Table
> To sit *the midst of Trinal Unity*,
> He laid aside;

so then he still believes in the Trinity, whereas afterwards, as we saw, he considered Christ's godhead only as conferred on Him by decree of the Father. And to the Holy Ghost, I would add now, he assigns an even more inferior place: "The Holy Spirit," he says in *De Doctrina Christiana*, "inasmuch as he is a minister of God, and therefore a creature, was created or produced of the substance of God, not by a natural necessity, but by the free will of the agent, probably before the foundations of the world were laid, but later than the Son, and far inferior to Him."[3]

[1] *De Doctrina Christiana* in Bohn's Standard Library, IV., p. 83.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 95.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 169.

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The evolution in Milton's views in this matter is typical of the whole complex of his thoughts. This strong individualist, who said, "The rule and canon of faith is Scripture alone," but added, "every man is to decide for himself through its aid, under the guidance of the Spirit of God," built up for himself a personal philosophy, which was entirely and exclusively his own, and for which there is only one suitable name: Miltonism.[1]

I therefore want to make it understood that, unless I expressly state the opposite, I take Milton as he is in his mature, later period, after the terrible downfall of the Puritans.

I said that Milton was no Calvinist. That he was not even, on the whole, orthodox in the ordinary acceptation of the word. Witness his denial of the doctrine of the Trinity.

And in his views of the origin of things he is doubtless influenced by Neo-Platonic and Pantheistic notions as they had got embedded in the Renaissance. In his chapter on Creation in *De Doctrina Christiana* it becomes clear that he thinks the orthodox notion of Creation—that God should have produced matter, forms, bodies, out of nothing—quite absurd. Equally impossible it seems to him that matter should have existed from eternity, coeval with God Himself. So in his opinion there is only one possibility left: everything has emanated from God. And "since therefore," he concludes, "it has been satisfactorily proved, under the guidance of Scripture, that God did not produce everything out of nothing, but of Himself, I proceed to consider the necessary consequence of this doctrine, namely, that if all things are not only from God, but of God, no created thing can be finally annihilated."[2]

Another consequence of this theory is, according to Milton, that "the original matter of which we speak, is not to be looked upon as an evil or trivial thing, but as intrinsically good, and the chief productive stock of every subsequent good."[3] Which is, of course, decidedly *anti*-Neo-Platonic.

This point of view involves that there could not be any essential difference between spirit and matter. And it was bound to lead Milton to the denial of an essential distinction between soul and body. When he has pointed to the words of

[1] See also Paul Chauvet, *La Religion de Milton*, Paris, 1909.

[2] *De Doctrina Christiana* in B. IV., 181.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 179.

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the Bible telling us that " man became a living soul," he goes on by saying: " Hence it may be inferred, that man is a living being, intrinsically and properly one and individual, not compound or separable, not, according to the common opinion, made up and framed of two distinct and different natures, as of soul and body—but that the whole man is soul and the soul man, that is to say, a body, or substance individual, animated, sensitive, and rational."[1]

Consequently Milton rejected the orthodox doctrine of the immortality of the soul, which had so emphatically been maintained by his older contemporary, Descartes, with whom he on the other hand agrees in laying much stress on *reason* as the guiding principle of man, as abundantly appears from his great poems and from *De Doctrina Christiana*, passim, and was also drawn attention to by Mr. Denis Saurat in his *Pensée de Milton*.

Milton, then, rejects the orthodox doctrine of the immortality of the soul. Or had we better say that he *proclaims* the immortality of the body? This is not quite a paradox, as he sees no essential difference between body and soul. It is true Milton uses the terms " body " and " soul," but then he understands by " soul " rather, as he puts it, " an inspiration of some divine virtue fitted for the exercise of life and reason, and infused into the organic body."[2]

It goes without saying that, according to Milton, body and soul die together. That manifestation of the unity " man " which we call soul, falls asleep at death, and awakes again when in the day of resurrection the body rises from the grave. Milton, therefore, was in his later years a Mortalist or " Soulsleeper " as these people were then called.

It is remarkable that Milton in his definition of man, quoted above, literally uses the words of another contemporary of his, John Hobbes, the great prophet of Materialism, who also calls man " a body or substance individual, animated, sensitive and rational." Indeed, in his cosmological conceptions and their consequences he doubtless got on materialistic lines, however great the difference may be between Milton's general train of thought and that of Hobbes, seeing that Milton started from a purely Theistic Spiritualism and treated matter only as something secondary.

[1] *De Doctrina Christiana* in B. IV., p. 188.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 188.

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All this is sufficient to prove that Milton was not even orthodox in the accepted sense of the word.[1] And from the Calvinists he differed in particular by his denial of the doctrine of predestination and his recognition (to a certain extent) of free will in man.

" I allow that future events which God has foreseen, will happen certainly, but not of necessity," he says in his *De Doctrina Christiana.*[2] And further: " It seems, then, that there is no *particular* predestination or election, but only *general*—or in other words, that the privilege belongs to all who heartily believe, and continue in their belief—that none are predestinated or elected irrespectively, e.g. that Peter is not elected as Peter, or John as John, but inasmuch as they are believers and continue in their belief."[3]

" It is much better," Milton maintains, " to allow to man some portion of free will in respect of good works, or at least of good endeavours "; this is much better " ad asserendam justitiam Dei," which expression reminds us at once of the opening lines of *Paradise Lost*, where he even introduces a Latinism apparently derived from it, namely *assert* in the sense of *vindicate* :

> That to the height of this great argument
> I may *assert* eternal Providence
> And justify the ways of God to men.

It is then, as I said, according to Milton better to allow some portion of good will to man " ad asserendam justitiam Dei," for, he observes, " if He (=God) inclines the will of man to moral good or evil according to His own pleasure, and then rewards the good and punishes the wicked, the course of equity seems to be disturbed."[4]

Milton's attitude towards predestination and free will, of course, has its necessary consequences for his standpoint as to the perseverance of man in grace, and other matters of which I cannot treat here at any length. It is evident that in these things Milton took sides with the Arminians, whose great advocate in England, the famous Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, he had formerly attacked so fiercely.

[1] Orthodox in religion is " holding correct or the currently accepted opinions on religious doctrine, not heretical or independent-minded or original; generally accepted as right or true, in harmony with what is authoritatively established, approved, conventional." (C.O.D.)

[2] B. IV., p. 41.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 49.

[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 267-268.

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In his views of Baptism Milton is a Baptist[1]; by setting, in practice, more value on the "inner light" than on Scripture (though he declares to accept only the lead of the latter) and also by rejecting a regular clergy he joins hands with the Quakers[2]; in his looking forward to the Millennium he proves himself a Millenarian; in his notions of church-rule he is more independent than the Independents, more individualistic than the greatest Individualists.[3]

Indeed, did I say too much when I maintained that Milton cannot be included in any special school of thought, in any definitely labelled religious persuasion? If we want to indulge our passion for labelling, we had better put his philosophy all by itself, and call it Miltonism—with one adherent: John Milton.

John Milton was a Puritan among the Puritans, but certainly no Calvinist. There can be no doubt about this. And yet it is the confusion of these two names with reference to him which is, in my opinion, greatly responsible for the frequent misunderstanding of Milton's position in the currents of thought of his time.

Of course, Milton's thought was not without any connection with Calvinism. For some ten years (±1636—±1646) he had even been considered to take his stand with the Presbyterians, who were certainly as Calvinistic in their views as any among the Puritans. And afterwards, in his last, great, mature period, the period of *Paradise Lost*, *Paradise Regained*, *Samson Agonistes*, and *De Doctrina Christiana*, he was not quite severed from that past. But more we cannot say for his Calvinism.

The Swede Liljegren, one of the most talented Miltonic scholars of the "New School," also confuses Puritanism and Calvinism. In his *Studies in Milton* he says in the introduction, after first giving a sketch of Calvinism as he sees it: "An examination of Milton's Works must undoubtedly start from the point of view offered. An individualist, self-respecting even to the point of self-complacency, deeply contemptuous of disagreeable fellow-beings, active, an innovator, revolutionary, caste-hating, facing the future, he exhibits the features pointed out,"[4] that is, of Calvinism.

[1] *De Doctrina Christiana* in B. IV., pp. 404-5.
[2] *Ibid.*, 448-9, 432-6.
[3] *Ibid.*, 452-470.
[4] S. Liljegren, Studies in Milton (1918), Introduction, p. xix.

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And then he adds in a note: "Of course, this does not affect his position as advanced *beyond* Puritanism." Here, too, the terms Calvinism and Puritanism are evidently interchanged. I can only observe in passing that Liljegren entertains strangely distorted views of Calvin and Calvinism, which display an almost childish ignorance as far as this important part of his subject is concerned.[1]

And then it further comes to this, that the many disagreeable characteristics which Liljegren thinks he sees in Milton, such as his strong ego-centric tendencies, his pride, his untrustworthiness, his Machiavelism, are all characteristic features of Calvinism, or at least fully reconcilable with it; so that if we allowed ourselves to be impressed by Liljegren's reasoning we should think that Milton was a man of many vices, and that these vices were largely to be imputed to Calvinism.

Now some years ago, I already tried to point out how distorted Professor Liljegren's notions of Calvinism are.[2] And moreover, Milton is not a Calvinist at all, as I think I have proved. So that Dr. Liljegren's argumentation in this matter does not hold good. This seems to me a cardinal mistake in his treatment of Milton, however clever a piece of work his book on Milton may be in many other respects.

Speaking of Liljegren, I have come to what Denis Saurat calls the "Nouvelle école" in Miltonic studies. To this "New School" may be said to belong, among others, the Swede Liljegren, the Frenchman Denis Saurat, the German Mutschmann and some American critics like Hanford, Greenlaw, Thompson and Baldwin.

Of these the Americans and the Frenchman have done—or tried to do—the more *positive* work. Liljegren and Mutschmann have been the severest critics of Milton's person and character.

Dr. Saurat states in the *Revue germanique* that the Americans and he, though they have generally come to the same result, have worked quite independently of each other.

As to the standpoint of this American-French group, and what has led to it, I would venture to make some observations. I see Milton and their attitude towards him as follows:

Milton may on important points disagree with the current Orthodox notions, yet there is no doubt but he himself

[1] See, e.g., pp. xv., xvi., xvii., xviii., xix. of the same work.

[2] Neophilologus, 1924, pp. 281-3.

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deliberately and decidedly wants to found himself on the Bible. In his poetry and in his prose-writings he generally takes the Bible as the basis of his thoughts, according to the strongly personal insight he has into it; he paraphrases the Bible; he argues from the Bible; he exults or thunders in the language of the Bible; in a word, as a genuine Puritan he feels and thinks and speaks in the spirit of the Bible, and that, after the fashion of the Puritans of his time, in an Old-Testamentic strain. But, in addition to this, he is also a man of culture, which then meant a child of the Renaissance. But mind, this is something additional; it is not the principal thing.

But this Milton, the Puritan, seems so very far removed from modern thought! The story which Milton took from the Bible and made the foundation of his *Paradise Lost* is according to Saurat, " une légende absurde et choquante pour le bon sens."[1] And Puritanism was considered to be necessarily " kulturfeindlich." Wrongly, as I tried to prove in my *Butler, the Author of Hudibras*, 1923 (pp. 117-122).

Consequently, for some time Milton seemed to have almost been mummified, and Sir Walter Raleigh called *Paradise Lost* " a monument to dead ideas."

But he was mistaken. It was no more than an apparent death. Milton's sublime epic in which he wants to " justifie the ways of God to men " is full of eternal truths which will never grow antiquated; full of what is truly human, seen in the light of eternity.

This was felt again in our time. As, however, Milton the Puritan seemed so ungenial to modern thought, but Milton the humanist was a kindred spirit, it was only natural that the child of the Renaissance in Milton should grow and grow in the estimation of modern minds, whereas the old Puritan should dwindle to shrivelled insignificance. " C'est véritablement le Zeitgeist qui's occupait de Milton," Saurat rightly observes.[2] Thus one has come to see the great Puritan, who was influenced by the Renaissance, as the incarnation of the spirit of the Renaissance in whom some vestiges of Christianity were left. As Saurat puts it in an article on " La Conception Nouvelle de Milton " in the *Revue germanique*: " Il ne faut pas oublier, dans la recherche de tant d'influences diverses, que, malgré tout,

[1] D. Saurat, *La Pensée de Milton*, p. 137.
[2] *Revue germanique*, 1923, p. 115.

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au centre de la pensée de Milton, il reste une forme du christianisme, quelque évoluée qu'elle soit ; la théorie de la chute et de la régénération."[1] It is true, three years before (1920) the same Saurat had written in his *La Pensée de Milton* : " Après la crise passionnelle de son marriage et après ses expériences politiques, Milton's est tourné tout entier vers le christianisme,"[2] and " Le christianisme et la Bible out aidé sa pensée même à se former,"[2] but in the course of the same work from which I quote this, he had doubted if Milton himself really believed in the " mythology " of his *Paradise Lost*, and accordingly he says in 1923, that Milton as a man and as a philosopher is first of all a son of the Renaissance : " Au centre de la personnalité, comme de la pensée de Milton, il y a l'homme de la Renaissance avant tout : l'homme dont le but est la libre expansion du moi, et qui prend partout où il les trouve les arguments qui lui servent à se justifier. Le fond de la pensée de Milton, c'est donc le matérialisme panthéiste et l'individualisme de la Renaissance, que Milton a pris dans le milieu cultivé de son époque, et qui était l'expression naturelle de sa personalité."[3]

I need hardly repeat after what I have said, that I cannot agree with Saurat in his view of Milton as stated above, though I recognise a strong Renaissance influence on Milton. A careful and—as I hope—unbiassed perusal of Milton's work has led me to the conclusion that the web of his thought was a Puritan warp with partly a Renaissance woof, and not a humanistic texture with some stray Puritan threads.

A characteristic instance of the tendency to modernise Milton, I find on page 158 of Saurat's book. Milton says in *De Doctrina Christiana* that man's covenant with God is not put an end to by death. And then he adds that if there were no resurrection, the good would be the most miserable of all men, and the bad, who have the best of it in this life, would be the happiest.

Now Saurat calls this an " argument kantien de la raison pratique."

Well, if this is a " Kantian argument," it is only a proof how " modern " the Bible is, and more particularly St. Paul, for from him Milton has, of course, borrowed this thought, which

[1] *Revue germanique*, 1923, p. 130.
[2] Saurat, *La Pensée de Milton*, p. 279.
[3] *Revue germanique*, 1923, p. 130.

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he expresses almost literally in the words of St. Paul himself, as everybody who will take the trouble to look up the fifteenth chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians can ascertain.

Nor can I omit observing that the proposition which the French-American group of the "New School" lay so much stress on—Milton a son of the Renaissance—is not quite new after all. They emphasise it unduly. But Stopford Brooke already said of Milton: "He summed up in himself the learned and artistic influences of the English Renaissance, and handed them on to us."[1] He added, however: "He represents Puritan England, and the whole spirit of Puritanism, from its cradle to its grave."[2]

I cannot enter now into Milton's "mysticism," nor into the influence of the "Hermetic Philosophy," the Rosicrucians and the Cabala on Milton, nor into Liljegren's and Mutschmann's treatment of Milton either, because this lies outside the range of my paper.

This much is certain, that nobody who wants to make any serious study of Milton can henceforth neglect the work of Saurat and that of Liljegren; Mutschmann can hardly be taken seriously—I mean on Milton, of course. He is too fantastically fierce in his onslaught.

Of course it is interesting to compare the different conclusions at which these three scholars have arrived on special points. There is, for example, the influence of the Stoa on Milton. Saurat says: "Le stoïcisme, influence certaine, n'est cependant qu'un élément, qui, d'ailleurs, a pu aussi bien parvenir à Milton par le néoplatonisme ancien qui l'avait absorbé en partie, ou par la Renaissance"[3]; Liljegren proclaims him to be "less of a Christian than a disciple of Roman Stoicism"[4] and thinks that "Roman Stoicism (is) the chief foundation of his modes of thought and action"[5]; while Mutschmann throughout his strange book, *Der andere Milton*, treats Milton as a heathen Stoic, if not as a devil with Stoic tendencies.

No doubt Saurat is nearest the truth here,[6] and this is in accordance with our conclusion that Milton was a very

[1] Stopford Brooke, *English Literature from A.D.* 670 *to A.D.* 1832, p. 112.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 113.
[3] *Revue germanique*, 1923, p. 130.
[4] Liljegren, *Studies in Milton*, p. xl.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 140.
[6] *Paradise Lost*, XII, 98; "Virtue, which is reason."

George David Henderson [1888-1957], "Scottish Theological Learning in the 17th Century," The Evangelical Quarterly 3.4 (Oct. 1931): 404-419.

individualistic Puritan, partly also because there was a strong humanistic strain in him; an independent thinker, though not "un penseur original de premier ordre," to use Saurat's words; no Calvinist; a lonely champion of liberty; a great man, with great defects no doubt, yet one of the best that were ever given to mankind, and in particular—as Milton himself would say[1]—to God's Englishmen.

The revendication of Milton's place as a teacher of mankind in his great poetry is partly due to the work of the "New School." Mr. Hanford, the American critic, proclaims *Paradise Lost* to be "richer in human truth than anything in English imaginative literature outside Shakespeare."[2] This is indeed a remarkable change for the better from Sir W. Raleigh's "monument to dead ideas," though it cannot be denied that some of the "New School" read their *own* ideas into Milton.

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[1] *Areopagitica*, ed. Dent. p. 54.
[2] *Revue germanique*, 1923, p. 115.