

Puritanism and Natural Theology after the Restoration of 1660.

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Declaration.

This dissertation has not been nor is being submitted for the award of any other degree or similar qualification.

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Summary.

The main objective of the thesis is to examine critically the nature and role of Natural Theology in the thinking of post-Restoration Puritans. Although incidental consideration is given to the topics traditionally embraced by the term 'Natural Theology', such as the arguments for the existence of God, the main discussion centres on the epistemology that underlies the Puritan conviction that human beings possess a natural knowledge of God.

First of all an attempt is made to analyse this epistemology and trace its development. This involves a review of the period before 1660 in order to explain the contributions made by such influences as Puritan scholasticism and Federal Theology.

Second, a broad examination is offered of the part played by Natural Theology amongst other leading groups such as the High Anglicans, the Latitudinarians, Virtuosi and the Cambridge Platonists. It is instructive also to make passing references to smaller groups such as the Unitarians, the Deists and the Quakers. The intention here is to enquire whether there are convergences amongst these in their methodology.

Finally, the question is raised whether the Puritans shared common beliefs with other groups in their understanding of Natural Theology. To do this, special attention is given to the concepts of 'man', 'God' and 'reason'. This helps us to pose the question whether this was a period which produced a viable epistemology to justify the belief in the human capacity to know God and spiritual realities apart from Divine Revelation.

The field of study is a wide one but it is justified by the conviction that epistemological presuppositions are crucial in an adequate appreciation of the nature, and of the subsequent influence, of Restoration Puritanism. It seeks therefore to fill a manifest gap in the academic study of the thought of the period.

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Contents.

Introduction.....1

Chapter One. Puritan Natural Theology.....42.

Chapter Two. An Outline of Puritan Natural Theology.....70.

Chapter Three. Puritan concepts of 'Man' and Sanctification.....105.

Chapter Four. Puritan concepts of Politics, Rationalism and God...154.

Chapter Five. An Outline of Puritan Federal Theology.....180.

Chapter Six. Charnock's Attributes of God.....203.

Chapter Seven. The Virtuosi.....281.

Chapter Eight. The Cambridge Platonists.....306.

Chapter Nine. Pre-Restoration Anglicanism.....331.

Chapter Ten. The High Anglicans and Latitudinarians.....351.

Chapter Eleven. Socinians, Unitarians, Deists and Quakers.....385.

Chapter Twelve. Parallels in Liberal Method.....395.

Conclusion.....410.

Bibliography.....444.

Introduction.

It will help us in our discussion to know that this thesis grew out of an interest in why the great Puritan movement declined. Hence it is not an attempt to anatomise the faith of Puritanism, which we regard as beyond the ken of scholarship. Accepting this, if we look back at the movement from the time of the Great Awakening, the idea emerges that Puritanism declined because of the way in which it had developed. At this stage we should not allow such a point to pre-empt the discussion. Yet all studies have to start somewhere, and so we shall examine uses of Natural Theology within mainstream theology in the post-Restoration period.

Historically we are mainly concerned with the reigns of Charles II, 1660-85; James II, 1685-88; and William III, 1689-1702. However, any discussion of post-Restoration theology inevitably drags in developments as far back as the Elizabethan Settlement. This would include seminal figures such as Richard Hooker and William Perkins, who should be seen as taking on the task of developing the next stage of the English Reformation. This progressed through the reigns of Elizabeth I, 1558-1603; James I, 1603-25; and Charles I, 1625-49. During this period we had the great flowering of Puritanism with Presbyterianism and Congregationalism. No less with the Anglicans, a decisive catholic faith emerged with such men as Lancelot Andrewes and William Laud. All these movements were affected by the Civil War and the Commonwealth period. Accordingly, in considering post-Restoration theology, we need to have some understanding of the developments over the previous seventy years.

As well as having a historical framework, we also need to define several terms. This is because we can often use terms imprecisely. Hence it is important that for our purposes we are sure what they mean. The terms we shall attempt to define are: scholasticism, 'Chain of Being', Anglicanism, Puritanism, Virtuosi and Natural Theology. As far as Natural Theology is concerned we shall have to go somewhat further than a simple definition. Since Calvinism was very dominant for much of the pre-Restoration period, we shall also briefly discuss the implications of Calvin's theology in relation to Natural Theology.

Scholasticism.

There, "...grew up in the generations after the Reformers...an arid and unoriginal practice of systematizing reformed theology which is now...spoken of as 'Protestant Scholasticism.'" Hence in using this term we are not referring to the great Medieval Schoolmen, although it is important to note that whilst the schools might be epistemologically exclusive, they might well be methodologically close. For our purposes the following sums up the nature of such scholasticism very well: "...a method of philosophical and theological speculation which aims at a better understanding of revealed truths, that is an attempt by intellectual processes, by

analogy and by defining, co-ordinating and systematizing the data of faith, to attain a deeper understanding and penetration into the inner meaning of christian doctrine. Consequently, philosophy has a great part in scholastical theology." This last point is significant. For whilst the epistemology of Protestant scholasticism would limit itself to systematizing revealed truth, its methodological presuppositions would be formative. Its treatment of Natural Theology would mean that there would be no effective limit on the boundaries of its knowledge.

The Chain of Being.

This was both a cosmological conception of the physical universe, and a metaphysical view of the spiritual. It understood both realms to be joined hierarchically. Such a view was by no means limited to the Puritans. A.O. Lovejoy explains: "...through the Middle Ages and down to the late eighteenth-century, many philosophers, most men of science, and, indeed, most educated men, were to accept without question the concept of the universe as a 'Great Chain of Being', composed of an immense, or-by the strict but seldom rigorously applied logic of the principle of continuity- of an infinite, number of links ranging in hierarchical order from the nearest kind

of existents, which barely escape non-existence, through every possible grade up to the ens perfectissimum...."¹

The Virtuosi.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the term 'virtuosi' was used to describe those skillful in the arts and sciences.² In particular, the English scientists referred to themselves as 'virtuosi'.³ They were essentially religious men who sought expression through Natural Theology.⁴ "The key feature was the new combination of mathematical reasoning and experimental observation."⁵ Briefly we should point to the pioneering work of Nicholas Copernicus [1473-1543], who laid the foundations of modern astronomy when he outlined a heliocentric solar system. Most importantly his conclusions were based on empirical observation, and a 'purer' mathematics.⁶ "It was in the work of Galileo [1564-1642], that this mathematical approach was combined with an emphasis on experimentation."⁷ In England these trends were developed in the work of Francis Bacon [1561-1626], whose work was rationalistic with a strong emphasis upon empirical observation.⁸

1. A.O. Lovejoy, The Great Chain of Being. A Study on the History of an Idea. Harvard University Press. 1970. p.59.

2. H.G. Koenigsberger, Politicians and Virtuosi. Essays in Early Modern History. The Hambledon Press. 1986. p.ix.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.; I.G. Barbour, Issues in Science and Religion. S.C.M. 1966. p.37.

5. Barbour, op.cit. p.23.

6. Ibid. p.23.

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid.

Natural Theology.

When, "...the Bible speaks of revelation, the thought intended is of God the Creator actively disclosing to men His power and glory, His nature and character, His will, His ways and plans--in short Himself..."¹ Scripture assumes that such revelation is a mandatory rule of faith and conduct.² Even though pre-lapsarian man needed such revelation, the situation is complicated by the Fall. The result is that perception of divine things is dulled by Satan and sin.³ More than this, man's mind is full of a trust in his own wisdom which is hostile to the knowledge of God.⁴ Indeed it is beyond man's, "...natural powers to apprehend God, however presented to him."⁵ Despite this, Paul emphasises that God is constantly presenting Himself through creation and providence,⁶ as well as in natural conscience.⁷

This is all viewed as Natural Revelation, as distinct from the Special Revelation of Scripture. Natural Revelation is the basis of Natural Theology, although we should note that Natural Theology tends to be much more systematised.

Against this background a double knowledge of God emerges, "...one based on historical revelation and the other founded directly on

1. J.D. Douglas, [ed], The New Bible Dictionary. I.V.P. London, 1962. p.1090.

2. Ibid.

3. 2 Cor. 4 vs 4; 1 Cor. 2 vs 14.

4. Rom. 1 vs 21ff.

5. Douglas, op.cit. p.1091.

6. Rom. 1 vs 19ff; Acts 14 vs 17.

7. Rom 2 vs 12-15.

rational insight."¹ "Their scientific forms are of theology [of revelation] and natural theology."² We should be aware that Natural Theology has long been associated with a rational method not obvious in the Scriptural references to it. Riesenhuber describes this, "Since grace has a revelatory character, so too human nature, the intelligent spirit, is orientated to grace, that is, to God."³ Hence it is seen as preparing, "...for the God of revelation by a philosophical concept of God...."⁴

If we look at the charter of the Royal Society we see it, "...instructed its fellows to direct their studies, 'to the glory of God and the benefit of the human race'. "⁵ This explains why Robert Boyle regarded science as a religious task, "The disclosure of the admirable workmanship which God displayed in the universe."⁶ Newton believed the same, "Whence it is that nature doth nothing in vain; and whence arises all that order and beauty which we see in the world?...Does it not appear from phenomena that there is a being incorporeal, living intelligent."⁷

1. K. Rahner, [ed], The Encyclopaedia of Theology. A Concise Sacramentum Mundi. London, 1975. section by K. Riesenhuber. p.1027.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid. pp.1027-8.

5. Barbour, op.cit. p.37.

6. Ibid.

7. I. Newton, Optics. London, 1721. pp. 344ff.

The implications of using Natural Theology.

It is crucial that we associate the definition of scholasticism with Natural Theology. Being a philosophical approach, Natural theology has inevitably become associated with a rational system, and thereby with Greek philosophy. Accordingly all the manifestations of scholasticism can be seen as variations of Natural Theology. Until the seventeenth century Natural Theology tended to compliment Special Revelation, because as a scholastical epistemology it had a metaphysical foundation. Even with Plato's great dialectical system of knowledge, the foundation of such knowledge is spiritual. The great change in the seventeenth century was that the basis of Natural Theology was being viewed as a dialectical physics rather than a metaphysics. It is here that we see the beginnings of a breach between Special and Natural Revelation.

Brunner's Essays on the Nature of Personality is particularly enlightening in this respect. He tells us that at the centre of philosophy stands the individual thinker who has, "The confidence that thought, and that means human thought, has the power to penetrate to the ground, the unity of all things; consequently that this unity is present in the last resort in his own thinking; that the meaning and coherence of the world discloses itself to his thought...[therefore]...In his thought he has infallible access to that unity or ground or ultimate cause which we call God, and this access is infallible because it depends upon nothing but right thinking. In his thought he has not only control over the idea of God, but also in virtue of this, in the last

resort...he is identified with that ground of all things."¹

Philosophy can do this because Natural Theology isn't capable of understanding the Scriptural concept of sin. It does not accept that the pre-lapsarian unity of body and mind has been lost. This is unlike Reformed theology, which believed that sin has set man against God and himself.² Hence man is born under the compulsion to sin³, and needs to be freed by Christ.⁴

Thus, "Christian knowledge of man means knowledge of man in his contradiction..."⁵ Other thought systems have very different views about man. Idealism sees him as necessarily less complete than the supreme ideal. Pantheism, sees man as only complete when absorbed into the sum of the whole. Naturalism, treats the 'self' as an object amongst others. All these are characterised by a self-centredness, whereas Christianity stresses the transforming intervention of the eternal God, who takes the individual outside himself. Scripture also points to facts which have a place in time, such as the Fall and the ministry of Christ. These are not universal themes, and so cannot be expressed in philosophical terms.⁶ Despite this, it is a fact that aspects of Christianity can seem very well suited to expression through philosophy.

1. E. Brunner, God and Man. Four Essays on the Nature of Personality. Edinburgh, 1932. p.47; D.M. Edwards, Christianity and Philosophy. Edinburgh, 1932. p.71.
2. Numbers 23 vs 19; John 17 vs 17.
3. Calvin, Institutes. 1.15.2.
4. Ibid. 2.6.1.; John 8 vs 32; Rom. 6 vs 18; Gal 5 vs 1.
5. Brunner, op.cit. p.60.
6. Ibid. p.152.

But whilst philosophy can conceive of God as a hypothetical value, there are aspects of Christianity which are outside its ken. Philosophy cannot accept a mission by Christ whereby at a certain point in time the fundamental standing of the elect was profoundly altered. The significant difference lies in the way Scripture places the power of action outside the individual, with the God of whom we know only what He has revealed to us. Therefore we can see philosophy standing in opposition to a personal God who created the world out of nothing,¹ and made man in His own image.²

In this thesis we shall have to examine many subjects such as Puritan conceptions of 'soul', 'reason', 'sin' and 'temporality'. Again and again we shall discuss their relationships to Natural Theology. This will inevitably draw comparisons with Scripture. It could well be asked how we can judge the scripturality of a piece when often the author is struggling with questions of biblical exegesis. The answer lies in our trying to assess the grounds upon which they are doing this. We have just discussed the relationship of philosophy and Natural Theology, thereby underlining how hostile they can be to fundamental aspects of Scripture. We cannot approach a subject without bringing with us a host of presuppositions. If these are philosophical, and if we use Natural Theology as a means of examining and expressing Scripture, then our final stance might well be unscriptural. This point is crucial.

1. Gen. 1 vs 2; Rom. 1 vs 20.
2. Gen. 1 vs 20.

Natural Theology in its Reformed Setting.

Now that we are fairly clear about the nature and the implications of using Natural Theology, we should look at its use during the time of the Reformers.

We must stress the Reformers' commitment to, "...a vigorous experiential faith grounded in the scriptural promise of God's unconditional gift of salvation."¹ Luther and Calvin regarded the Special Revelation of God in Scripture as paramount.² Calvin saw God as almighty³, as well as the source and fountain of all good.⁴ Hence knowledge about God was central, and Calvin emphasised that this could only be granted through Scripture.⁵ This was regarded as the only means of teaching the children of God,⁶ although such instruction can only be sealed by the Holy Spirit.⁷ Hence Calvin stressed that there was no earthly challenge to Scripture⁸, and it is here that we see the Reformed doctrine of Scripture.

Calvin believed that for his own sake, man must put God in the centre of his life, but also that the Fall had impeded this.⁹ Accordingly the central question was: 'How could man know God?'

1. Lynne Carter Boughton, 'Supralapsarianism and the role of metaphysics in Sixteenth-Century Reformed Theology', in the Westminster Theological Journal, vol. 48, 1986. pp. 63-96.

2. E. L. H. Taylor, The Christian Philosophy of Law, Politics and the State, New Jersey, 1966. p. 481; Calvin, Institutes, 1.7.1.

3. Calvin, Institutes, 1.14.21; 1.16.T.

4. Ibid. 2.10.9; 1.2.1.

5. Ibid. 1.6.1.

6. Ibid. 1.6.4.

7. Ibid. 1.7.4.; 1.7.5.

8. Ibid. 1.7.1.; 1.7.3.

9. Ibid. 1.13.1.

He saw the answer in revelation: Special and Natural. We have already seen that Calvin gave the most weight to Scripture as Special Revelation,¹ simply because he saw it as the most accurate and authoritative means of describing God's character.² Having authority, and combined with grace, Scripture leads man away from his labyrinthine mind, which no longer has God as its foci.³ This in turn weakens Natural Theology⁴, which Calvin saw as inferential revelation, by which man attempts to see God in the world. We should stress that when Calvin said that Scripture is the only means of guiding the 'children of God'⁵, he means the elect, and by implication the reprobate are excluded. Therefore Natural Theology is useless to the reprobate, because they do not possess the necessary spiritual insight⁶. Indeed, without such spiritual guidance even Scripture is a mystery to the reprobate.⁷

The Relationship of Natural theology to Calvin's Doctrine of Sin.

It is sometimes maintained that Calvin used natural philosophy as the guiding method in his theology. Battenhouse sees Neoplatonism in Calvin's equating sin with slipping down the 'Chain of Being'.⁸ There seems to be a Neoplatonic contempt for the flesh in Calvin's work. He

1. Calvin, Institutes, 1.10.1.

2. Ibid. 1.6.2.

3. Ibid. 1.5.11; 2.2.11.

4. Ibid. 2.2.12.

5. Ibid. 1.6.4.

6. Ibid. 3.24.12.

7. Ibid. 3.24.13; 3.24.8.

8. R.W. Battenhouse, 'The Doctrine of Man in Calvin and in Renaissance Platonism', in Journal of the History of Ideas, ix.1948. p.450; C. Partee, 'The Soul in Plato, Platonism, and Calvinism'. In Scottish Journal of Theology, vol. 22, 1969. p.292.

admitted his regard for Plato¹, which probably emerged from his educational background², and his use of Augustine³.

Therefore he calls the body under sin a reformatory⁴, a prison⁵. Calvin stresses the struggle between flesh and spirit in his Commentary on Romans.⁶ Such a view of sin was developed into an existentialism by sin. "For Calvin the natural man does not live from what remains of the real, ontological goodness with the ordinances of God, but he moves with the witnessing force and the evidence of the divinely ordained good as revelation of His holy will. The predominating aspect in Calvin is not the goodness of the human nature but the goodness of the law and ordinances of God. Calvin's doctrine of common grace does not arise out of the inclination to remove anything from the corruption of human nature, but out of the certitude that this total corruption is taught by Scripture."⁷ In this sense we can see how Natural Theology has forced Calvin into viewing God and sin as hypostatic qualities.

E.L.H. Taylor tells us that it was Calvin's logic which caused him to deny grace to physical nature.⁸ This takes us to

1. Calvin, Institutes, 1.5.11.

2. Partee, art. cit. p.294.

3. Calvin, Commentary on John, ch. 11, vs 3.

4. Calvin, Institutes, 1.15.2.

5. Ibid. 3.9.4.

6. Rom. 7 vs 22; H. Quisthorpe, Calvin's Doctrine of the Last Things. Translated by H. Knight. Richmond, John Knox Press. 1955. pp.62,58.

7. G.C. Berkouwer, De Alemene Openbaring, quoted in Taylor, op. cit. p.488.

8. Ibid. p.484; W. Walker, Calvin. The Organiser of Reformed Protestantism, 1509-1554. Schocken, 1964. pp.148,117f; F. Wendel, Calvin: The Origins and development of his Religious Thought. London, 1963.

p.357; E. Brunner, The Christian Doctrine of God: Dogmatics. vol.1. London, 1970. p.345; J. Pelikan, The Christian Tradition. 3 vols.

Chicago, 1978. I. p.275; H. Cunliffe-Jones, [ed], A History of Christian Doctrine. Edinburgh, 1978. p.387.

one of the strongest sources of Natural Theology, viz. the methodological use of reason. Calvin saw reason as distinguishing man from the beasts.' He admired all, "...skill and knowledge of the world...[and]...those things which are of the highest excellence in human life..."² Even with the reprobate, "...the lord has been pleased to assist us by the work and ministry of the ungodly in physics, dialectics, mathematics and other sciences."³ Hence it is only because man is unable to use such disciplines properly that he calls Natural Theology ephemeral. Even so, he clearly had a high regard for them, and denied the Schoolmen's idea that they are fallen disciplines. "Not that they can be polluted in themselves...but that they have ceased to be pure to a polluted man..."⁴ So that, "I deny not, indeed, that in the writings of philosophers we meet occasionally the shrewd and apostate remarks on the nature of God..."⁵ "The Lord has bestowed upon them some slight perception..."⁶ Even where Calvin says that Natural Theology is not enough he quotes Aristotle to prove this.⁷ From our standpoint it is significant that whilst Calvin denies natural man's ability to evaluate Natural Theology, he admits that reason can do so. Importantly, he stresses the purity of disciplines such as mathematics and philosophy in their revelation of the character of God. Hence the methodology and conclusions of these disciplines could be associated with the person of God. We should note how Calvin is going beyond

1. Calvin, Institutes 2.2.17.
2. Ibid. 2.2.15.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid. 2.2.15.
5. Ibid. 2.2.18.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid. 2.2.23.

saying that man can reason from Scripture etc. Reason is being developed as a means of understanding and perfecting the 'Golden Rules of Art'. This approach is remarkably similar to that of the Puritans and the Virtuosi. Both these groups stressed reasonable method above unfounded empiricism. Accordingly the Reformed era can be regarded as a time when Natural Theology was emancipated, rather than a time of personal emancipation.

Whilst it is possible to see philosophical concepts that go to the very heart of Calvin's theology, many scholars stress that he was restrained. This is evident in his complete denial of the efficacy of natural reason in matters of faith.' But many of his contemporaries were not so restrained, especially in their view of predestination as a "...doctrine to be explored and refined through the use of...metaphysical categories."² Theologians such as Peter Martyr [1499-1562], Girolamo Zanchi [1516-1590] and Theodore Beza, "...incorporated new interpretations of the Aristotelian metaphysics established by Renaissance scholars into what seemed to be their own scholastic, and on occasion, Thomistic understanding of the relationship between philosophy and theology."³ As far as the role of Natural Theology throughout this period is concerned, we should be aware that there was continuity between pre and post-Reformation scholasticism. It was against this

1. Calvin, Institutes, 2.3.1; 4.15.10; C. Partee, art.cit. pp.291ff; Wendel, op.cit. p.357; T.H.L. Parker, 'The Approach to Calvin', in The Evangelical Quarterly, 16, 1944. pp.165-72.
 2. Boughton, art.cit. pp.64-5.
 3. Ibid. p.65.

background that Beza tried to demonstrate the intelligibility of the divine decrees. Thereby, "...venturing into metaphysics and scholastical theology and developing a doctrinal position concerning the efficient relationship of first and final causes."¹

One key point was the tendency to develop Calvinism as a physics rather than as a metaphysics.² This was part of a widespread trend which avoided metaphysical existentialism. Ramism played a key role because of its ability to deal with existence in logical terms. Ramus' [1515-1572]; "...dialectical method dealt with questions of existence and essence, traditionally the province of metaphysics, as aspects of physics, logic or theology."³ Most importantly, "...Aristotle's physics and dialectical logic were relegated to the investigation of the material world and man's perception of it..."⁴ The significant point is that epistemology began to have a 'natural' rather a spiritual basis.

Developments in England.

In Cambridge during the 1570's Alexander Richardson developed a logically based Ramism.⁵ He, "...felt competent to evaluate existence without metaphysical categories by focussing on certain 'rules of art', which were knowable in created beings and provided the basis for knowledge [scientia] and logic."⁶

1. Boughton, art. cit., p. 65.

2. Ibid. p. 70.

3. Ibid. p. 72.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

It is significant that Richardson associated these rules of art with ideas within the divine mind.' The traditional metaphysical concept of the 'Chain of Being' was adapted with God now being approached through a knowledge of His mind as dialectic.² "The eternal set of ideas...were subject to exploration because of their material manifestation in created things...."³ Philip Melancthon [1497-1560] was especially important in influencing a retention of a metaphysically based logic. "His philosophical influence remained strong at Cambridge, particularly among English supralapsarians. His naturalistic metaphysics, which had originally inspired Ramus to eliminate the discipline entirely, paved the way for Ramism in England and provided logical refinements for its development through the seventeenth-century."⁴

The problem of defining Puritanism.

'Puritanism' bridged at least a century in English history. It contained groups as far apart as the Presbyterians and Ranters. Hence the term 'Puritanism' is as enigmatic as its wide usage suggests. We should accept at the outset that real precision is difficult.

Petrus Ramus' methodology might have appealed to Puritans because it, "...advanced an inductive theology that seemed to nurture experimental piety while avoiding the intellectual and spiritual

1. Boughton, art. cit.; A. Richardson, Logician's School Master. Or a Comment upon Ramus Logicke. London, 1629. p. 13.

2. Ibid.; Richardson, op. cit. pp. 4-6, 100-107.

3. Boughton, op. cit. p. 73.

4. Ibid. pp. 74-5.

rigidity associated with metaphysics and doctrine."¹ Accordingly Puritanism can be seen as a type of subjectivism, which was, or had the potential to lead to anthropocentrism.¹ In the historic development of Puritanism there had indeed been a rejection of traditional authority, which can be said to have been replaced by empiricism.² It could be for this reason that Federal Theology was almost wholly taken up with the individual's place within the divine schema.⁴ Added to this we must take into account that a subjectivism which grew out of contemporary social and political trends, tied in well with Reformed concepts of personal saving grace and God's providence.⁵ Aspects of this can be seen in the Puritan diaries which endlessly plotted personal spiritual development.⁶ These trends can be interpreted as a rejection of an objective christocentrism in favour of subjectivism.⁷

However, it is easy to misinterpret what 'personal faith' meant to the Puritans. They believed in the 'priesthood of all believers'⁸, and so stressed the need for intense

1. Boughton, art. cit. pp. 63-4.

2. K. Nott, The Emperor's Clothes. Indiana, 1958. p. 182; A. S. P. Woodhouse, [ed], Puritanism and Liberty. Being Army Debates, [1647-1649]. Chicago, 1951. p. 50; B. K. Brown, 'Freemanship in Puritan Massachusetts,' in American Historical Review, vol. 69. No. 4. July, 1954. p. 229.

3. E. L. H. Taylor, op. cit. pp. 510-521; L. F. Solt, 'Puritanism, Capitalism, Democracy and the new Sciences', in American Historical Review, vol. 73. 1967-8. p. 19.

4. R. Schilter, [ed], Richard Baxter and Puritan Politics. New Brunswick, New Jersey. 1957. pp. 97-104.

5. Woodhouse, op. cit., see 'Introduction', and p. 50.

6. e.g. J. Beadle, The Journal of a Diary of a thankful Christian. London, 1656.

7. W. Haller, The Rise of Puritanism. New York, 1938. pp. 96-7.

8. "...salvation is freely offered...the purchase is made by a Saviour to our hands..." R. Baxter, Practical Works. London, 1846. 4 vols. vol. 4 p. 486.

personal preparation. This in turn was dominated by the idea of total dependence upon Christ.' Accordingly what can appear to be subjectivism was part of the process by which they put their souls in the hands of Almighty God.² Therefore 'individualism' is not an adequate definition of Puritanism for our purposes.

We introduced the section of Puritanism as 'subjectivism' by explaining the subjective nature of Puritanism. This suggests that Puritanism might have been a collection of scholars. It is true that very educated men were at the fore of the movement. But far more than this, it would be their attitude to education which would most concern us. The Puritans set traditional, classical education at a very high premium.³ Such a regard for education did not go unchallenged. Early in the movement's development Robert Browne recognized great differences between orthodox Puritanism and classical education.⁴ His protest was ignored, but later Webster and Dell's criticism of established education received much wider support. They contended that university education had nothing to do with faith.⁵ Mainstream Puritanism responded with a strong defence of the role of education.⁶

1. Ibid. vol.3, pp.2-4; John Owen would not admit the efficacy of preparation, but he emphasised that humility is important. see: John Owen, Works. W.H. Goold (ed), 16 vols. vol.4, p.554.

2. R.B. Perry, Puritanism and Liberty. New York, 1944. p.78.

3. Peter Toon, 'The Puritans at Oxford', The Gospel Magazine, June 1971, p.181.

4. M.M. Knappen, Tudor Puritanism. A Chapter in the History of Idealism. University of Chicago Press, 1970. p.474.

5. L.F. Solt, 'Anti-Intellectualism in the Puritan Revolution'. Church History, xxv. December, 1956. pp.306-316.

6. J. Hall, An Humble Motion... London, 1649; E. Waterhouse, Apologie for Learnigh and learned Men. London, 1653.

This is significant, but we are looking for more than simply holding education in esteem.' We are really concerned with whether a specific educational method and ideology lay at the heart of Puritanism.²

We have already touched on strains of scholasticism within mainstream continental theology. This inevitably influenced the Puritans. Briefly we could point to the Neoplatonic natural philosophy within the work of Calvin.³ This in turn was developed by Calvinists who as Aristotelians emphasized the temporal, seeing aspects of God in everything, and the means of disseminating these in man's reason.⁴ The result was a Calvinism which we can regard as very different to Calvin's theology.⁵ Indeed Calvinism has been described as a tragic mixture of Calvin and Aristotelianism.⁶

Bearing this in mind it is possible to see a movement centred on humanism but garbed in Reformed Protestantism.⁷ Indeed,

1. M.H. Carre, 'A Puritan at Oxford', art.cit. p.712.

2. Haller, op.cit. p.38; D. Wallace, Puritans and Predestination. North Carolina Press. 1982.p.54.

3. C. Partee, Calvin and Classical Philosophy. Leiden, 1977.pp.155-6; Battenhouse, art.cit. pp.468-9.

4. J.P. Donnelly, 'Italian Influences on the Development of Calvinistic Scholasticism.' Sixteenth Century Journal. 7.1976. pp.81-101; R. Bainton, Here I Stand. London, 1958.p.34; Wendel, op.cit. p.264; Knappen, op.cit. p.474; Wallace, op.cit. p.57; J.E. Platt, The development of the argument for the existence of God within natural theology among Dutch theologians in the first half of the seventeenth century. Oxford Ph.D thesis. 1976. pp.11-51.

5. J.S. Bray, Beza's Doctrine of Predestination. Nieukoop. 1975.pp.12,64; B.G. Armstrong, Calvinism and the Amyraut heresy: Protestant Scholasticism and humanism in seventeenth century France. Madison, 1969.p.37.

6. Boughton, art.cit. p.65; S.B. Ferguson, 'John Owen on Conversion'. The Banner of Truth. Issue 134. Nov. 1974. p.21.

7. L.J. Trinterud, 'The Origins of Puritanism'. Church History. 20. 1951.pp.38-40; P. Miller, The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century. Harvard. 1971. p.102.

this might be evidence of Puritanism being a classical, philosophical view of history.' This could be why Puritans are often seen as applying academic theories to Scripture², and also that they appear to be dependent upon the certainty of philosophical argument.³ Calvin's soteriology was re-arranged and centred by predestination, accompanied by a strict order of grace which was expressed through the philosophical constancy of a reasonable providence. This can be seen as one of the later characteristics of Puritanism, made all the more stark by its absence from the work of men such as Greenwood, Travers, Cartwright and much of the work of Perkins. The dividing line between these men and later Puritans is shown by Horton Davies when he describes the academic rigour of Ames' work when his theological propositions marched down the page like soldiers.⁴

If humanism is that enigmatic quality which defines Puritanism, it would follow that their Reformed Doctrines were merely tools in the hands of ascriptural scholars. They also might have viewed doctrines such as justification by faith and predestination as useful weapons against the authoritarianism of Tudor and Stuart society.⁵ Their humanism might also have been a replacement for the void left by

1. Lord Eustace Percy, John Knox, London. 1937. p.109; R.G. Collingwood, The Idea of History. Oxford, 1937. pp. 40-2; Taylor, op.cit. p. 488.

2. Haller, op.cit. pp. 83, 85.

3. Ibid. p. 330; G. Rosen, 'Left-wing Puritanism and science'. Bulletin of the History of Medicine. xv. April 1944. pp. 375-80.

4. Horton Davies, Worship and Theology in England from Cranmer to Hooker. 1534-1603. O.U.P. 1970. p. 134; Haller, op.cit. p. 90.

5. Wallace, op.cit. p. 193.

the loss of Roman Catholic casuistry.¹ Whatever the circumstances, we should regard it as clear that Puritanism expressed its faith through very much the same channels as the Schoolmen. Indeed, it has been suggested that they were another generation of Schoolmen.² Perkins shows this very well in the way he developed scholastic concepts of casuistry.³ If we look at the work of John Preston [1587-1628], "...there is a similar blending of Ramism with the principles of Aristotelian natural philosophy in the development of a systematic theology."⁴

It has been suggested that Puritanism lost its apparent theological cohesion after the Westminster Assembly. Hence the Westminster Confession is seminal in any discussion of humanism within Puritanism. Whilst being scriptural, the Westminster Confession is also a classically philosophical document⁵. "...framing the most highly philosophical statement of the nature of God which has ever been given confessional status..."⁶ Central to this theme was a reluctance to dismiss the intellectual ability of man to perceive aspects of God's

1. Wallace, op. cit. p. 192.

2. Miller, op. cit. pp. 100-101; I. Breward, 'William Perkins and the Origins of Reformed Casuistry'. The Evangelical Quarterly, vol. XL. NO. 1. Jan/March, 1968. pp. 13-15.

3. Boughton, art. cit. p. 87; R. Rogers, Seven Treatises... London, 1603, "...The Papists cast in our teeth, that we have nothing set out for the certain and daily direction of a Christian". Preface.

4. Boughton, art. cit. pp. 88-9.

5. C.K. Robinsin, 'Philosophical Biblicism: The Teaching of the Westminster Confession concerning God, the Natural Man, and Revelation and Authority'. Scottish Journal of Theology, vol. 18. 1965. p. 23.

6. Ibid., p. 25; Westminster Confession, 5.11.8.

character. This led to some ambiguity about whether good and evil could be perceived in the same manner.' Accordingly we can suggest that the underlying authority within Puritanism was a humanistic methodology.

Many studies refer to William Perkins as one of the first Puritans to effectively demonstrate such a use of humanism.² It is true that humanism is present within his work, but this does not mean that it is the focal point. Even if we accept that he used the Schoolmen to develop Puritan casuistry, it is quite feasible that he did so for pastoral reasons. This seems to be supported if we look at a wide sweep of those termed Puritans. Many were academics, but notable exceptions shunned it. Webster and Dell condemned the traditional approach to education, whilst Bunyan, and uneducated tinker, was one of the giants of the movement. It is important that John Owen, probably the most educated and brilliant Puritan, said he would have given all this up for the preaching eloquence of Bunyan³. Accordingly 'humanism' is not an adequate term to describe what Puritanism was, although it certainly contained it.

The Puritan era was one of great political ferment. This raises the possibility of Puritanism being a movement for political change.⁴

1. Ibid. 9.1.

2. Horton Davies, op.cit. p.311; Wallace, op.cit. p.55; Haller, op.cit. p.64; Knappen, op.cit. p.369.

3. J.G. Oliver, 'John Bunyan, 1628-1688'. The Gospel Magazine. Jan/Feb, 1983. p.27.

4. C.H. and K. George, The Protestant Mind of the English Reformation, 1570-1640. Princeton, 1961. p.6.

There was no way that those striving for Reformed Protestantism within the Established Church could escape being entangled in political issues. Ecclesiastical Polity, the belief in a union between the Church and state, meant that any call for church reform would turn into a political struggle. Beyond the issue of Church reform, we see that contemporary society contained groups which were far from satisfied with their place within the status quo. This might have been the unifying factor in that movement we term 'Puritanism': a socio-politico liberator, which effected a separation of Church and State.'

The Reformed background of Puritanism was politically significant. If we look at the work of John Downname and John Foxe, we see that they developed Reformed Theology with an acute apocalyptic vision of England as God's nation.² This was set against a background of the great change involved in the emergence of the Nation State under monarchs such as the Tudors.³ It became clear to the Puritans that God and England had claims upon each other⁴, and this nurtured growing ideas of what nationhood meant in the minds of those we term 'Puritans'.⁵

1. A. L. Morton, 'Pilgrim's Progress'. History Workshop. A Journal of Socialist Historians. Issue 5. Spring, 1978. p. 4.; L. F. Solt, art. cit. p. 19.

2. See J. Downname, The Christian Warfare. London, 1604; and his Lectures Upon the First Four Chapters of the Prophecy of Hosea. London, 1608; M. McGiffert, 'God's Controversy with Jacobean England'. American Historical Review. vol. 88. No. 5. Dec. 1983. pp. 1151-1154; D. K. McKim, 'The Puritan View of History, or Providence Within and Without'. The Evangelical Quarterly. vol. 52. No. 4. Oct-Dec., 1980. p. 223.

3. O. Chadwick, The Reformation. London, 1960. p. 35; H. J. Hillerbrand, [ed], The Protestant Reformation. London, 1968. p. xiii; E. L. H. Taylor, op. cit. pp. 471-3; W. Ferguson, The Renaissance. New York, 1940. pp. 1-43.

4. M. McGiffert, art. cit. p. 1152; Thomas Tymme, A Preparation Against the Prognosticated Dangers of this Year. London, 1588. p. B7r.

5. McGiffert, art. cit. p. 1152.

There is no avoiding the fact that 'predestination' was important to the Puritans.¹ This proved to be central to the questioning of the class structure. Its emphasis upon free-grace, and personal election helped to consolidate the emerging middle classes.² Thus it was the Puritans who fought and executed the King they saw as a tyrant. They fought him with a sword in one hand and a catechism in the other.³ The very fact that they won the Civil War demonstrates support from classes which could find no niche in the old order. The Puritans were part of this, and have been seen as its mouth-piece.⁴ Hence in New England it was church membership rather than class which got a man the vote. That theology was being used as a political tool is further suggested in the work of Milton and Roger Williams. Williams came to the startlingly revolutionary conclusion that all men stand equal in politics regardless of class, and most significantly, regardless of religion. This latter point suggests that religion was a tool in the political struggle. Williams seems to have developed the

1. Haller, *op.cit.* p.83; Wallace, p.194.

2. Wallace, *op.cit.* p.192; C.Hill, Milton and the English Revolution. New York, 1979. p.270; C.Hill, The World turned upside-down: Radical Ideas during the English Revolution. New York, 1972. p.276; C.Hill, Society and Puritanism in Pre-Revolutionary England. New York, 1967. pp.509-510.

3. P.Toon, 'A message of hope for the Rump Parliament'. The Evangelical Quarterly. vol.44.No.2. April/June.1971p.82.

4. This is especially important in the way they were able to communicate; see: C. Richards, 'John Bunyan-The unlettered Tinker'. The Evangelical Library Bulletin. Spring 1978. No.60.p.3; G.R. Elton, 'Parliament in the sixteenth-century, functions and fortunes'. Historical Journal. xxii. 1979. pp.255-78; M. Graves, 'Thomas Norton the parliament man: an Elizabethan M.P., 1559.' Historical Journal. xxiii. 1980. pp.17-35; Haller, *op.cit.* p.334.

Congregationalist concept of personal covenant into one of individual political standing. In New England this would lead to the famous Half Way Covenant.¹

But as neatly as these ideas tie together, they do not cover all Puritans. We must remember that political ferment precedes and post-dates the Puritan movement. This raises the possibility of politically orientated groups latching on to Puritanism. So the picture emerges of Puritans who were opposing the establishment for religious reasons, being joined by those who only wanted to latch on to a group who seemed to be the most effective opposition at the time.² Robert Greville, or Lord Brooke, is a representative of this type which, "...sympathized with the Puritan preachers if for no other reason than they resented the steady intrusion in politics of church men like Laud...Their object was a strong nation, led not by preachers but by energetic, God-fearing gentlemen."³ Because of this and other factors it can be said that Puritanism had little time for politics.⁴

1. B.K. Brown, art. cit. pp. 880-884; L. Ziff, Puritanism in America. New Culture in a New World. Oxford, 1973. pp. 297-8; W.W. Abbot, The Colonial Origins of the United States. 1607-1763. London, 1975. pp. 40-2; D.J. Boorstin, The Americans: 1. The Colonial Experience. Harmondsworth. 1958. p. 40.

2. Haller, op. cit. p. 330.

3. Ibid. p. 331; L.F. Solt, art. cit. p. 25; C. Hill, The Century of Revolution. 1603-1714. Edinburgh, 1961. p. 180.

4. One of the great political issues was toleration, but the reasons for this can be seen as apolitical. See V.H. Gould, 'John Owen on Toleration and Church Government'. The Banner of Truth. Issue 44, Sept/Oct 1966. p. 15. Even if we see their work as political, it is not in the obvious sense. For they really wanted a disciplined, Holy Commonwealth; see, R. Schlatter, The Social Ideas of Religious leaders, 1660-1688. London, 1940, pp. 188-9. Therefore they can be seen as seeking religious freedom to worship God: see, A.S.B. Woodhouse, op. cit. pp. 67-9. Hence Puritans cared little for politics as we know it; see, Knappen, op. cit. p. 350.

Or, at least it was not politics that made a Puritan what he was. If there had been any real political unanimity in the movement, Charles II would never have got the throne back. When the Presbyterian Richard Baxter published his Political Aphorisms in 1658, his sternest critic was a fellow Puritan, the Congregationalist John Owen. Politically they were stern enemies, and yet they are both Puritans. Clearly politics does not adequately define the group we term Puritans.

If not a political movement, Puritanism might have been the expression of a changing society. Attempts have been made to explain Puritanism as a class phenomena. But whilst Puritanism contained middle-class persons², much the same can be said of Anglicanism.³ Even so, well established scholars have emphasised that Puritanism appealed to the middle classes, "...because they could dominate the church through elderships..." More than this they used predestinarian theology to validate the growing economic niche they had in society.⁴ It has been said that, "In the extreme sects, participation in the church became the total substitute for unsatisfactory civil experience."⁵

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1. P. Toon, 'English Puritanism'. The Gospel Magazine. May, 1971. p. 136.
 2. R. B. Knox, [ed]. Reformation, Conformity and Dissent. London, 1977. p. 256.
 3. T. H. Breene, The Non-Existent Controversy: Puritan and Anglican Attitudes to Work and Wealth, 1600-1640. Church History. xxxv. Sept. 1966. pp. 273-87.
 4. J. F. H. New, Anglican and Puritan. The Basis of their Opposition. 1558-1604. London, 1964. p. 64; H. G. Plum, Restoration Puritanism. A Study on the growth of English Liberty. Kennikat Press, 1972. p. 10; Wallace, op. cit. p. 192; A. L. Morton, art. cit. p. 4.
 5. New, op. cit. pp. 50-51.

It was easy for these groups to associate societal bondage with the Reformed doctrine of the bondage of sin. Because of this there were social implications in Puritan theology. ¹ This is why Puritanism can be seen as a catalyst in the formation of a morality of nationhood ².

As far as the major Puritans are concerned, they were mostly university men, what we might term the intelligentsia. ³ It is true that they were mostly middle class men eager to consolidate their role in society.⁴ But for our purposes the most telling question is what were the reasons behind the popular doctrines which these men formulated? Were they answering a need when they produced pastoral theology?⁵ Did they adapt existing Reformed Theology to produce a pastoralism which articulated contemporary emphases on liberty for the lower classes, mixed with anti-sacerdotalism?⁶ Taking this into account some scholars see Puritanism as a movement of the emerging gentry, as we see in the work of Walzer, Tawney and Trevor-Roper.⁷

1. Wallace, op.cit. pp.195-6; B.A. Garrish, Tradition and the Modern World: Reformed Theology in the Nineteenth Century. Chicago, 1977. Where he underlines the social significance of assurance, see, pp.138-40.

2. M. McGiffert, art.cit. p.1154; W. Haller, The Elect Nation: The Meaning and Relevance of Foxe's Book of Martyrs. New York, 1963. *passim*.

3. Wallace, op.cit. p.42; M.H. Carre, A Puritan at Cambridge. art.cit. p.712-716; M.H. Carre, 'Robert Boyle and English Thought' History Today. vol.8. 1957.p.324

4. Haller, op.cit. p.40. This points to how aware the Puritans were of the need to gain a living. Also that since the Dissolution of the Monasteries the number of clerical livings had vastly shrunk; see Haller, ibid. p.99. For all his piety John Owen is said to have dressed expensively, see: Peter Toon, 'The Puritans at Oxford' Gospel Magazine. June, 1972. p.262. He says they were generally upstarts with an eye for advancement, and little respect for anyone getting in their way, ibid.

5. J.E. Springarn, Critical Essays of the Seventeenth-Century. London, 1908. pp. 37-48.

6. Ibid.; Solt, art.cit. p.19.

7. Knox, op.cit. p.257.

Obviously any society is made up of classes, and it is true that many of the Puritans came from the middle-classes. Whilst accepting this, it is also true that Puritanism attracted aristocrats such as Robert Rich, Earl of Warwick'. It also appealed to the working classes.² Nothing shows this better than the Webster and Dell controversy of the middle seventeenth-century. They represented a strong movement which criticised education, the 'darling' of the middle-class university Puritans. They did this because they were effectively barred from the universities.³ The confrontation was a sharp one, and yet all are termed Puritans. Hence we cannot define Puritanism as a class struggle, or a single class party.

During this Period Presbyterianism was by far the most popular religious movement among the Puritans. This raises the possibility that Presbyterianism can furnish us with an effective definition of Puritanism.

When looking at the Presbyterian church system we come closest yet to the heart of Puritanism. Many scholars highlight the group which strove for Presbyterian church reform within the established Church.⁴

1. Knox, op. cit., p. 257.

2. Ibid.

3. P. Miller, op. cit.; Education was the sole preserve of the upper and middle-classes. Hence Samuel Howe wrote that their approach scholastic education was wrong, that it was enough to feel the spirit of God. See: S. Howe, The Sufficiencie of the Spirits Teaching Without Human Learning to be no help to the Spirituall understanding of the Word of God. London, 1653; J. Webster, The Saints Guide. London, 1653.

4. R. B. Knox, 'Puritanism Past and Present'. Scottish Journal Of Theology. vol. 19. 1966. p. 296; J. I. Packer, 'Puritanism as a Movement of Revival'. The Evangelical Quarterly. vol. 52. No. 1 Jan/March, 1970. p. 330; the latter denied by I. Murray, in 'Who were the Puritans?' The Gospel Magazine. Sept. 9 1970. passim.

Numerically there were more Presbyterian Puritans than any other group, but this does not prove that their church system is Puritanism. Certainly, Field, Cartwright, Greenwood, Travers and many others hoped for such a system, and it can be said that all divergent Puritan groups are a consequence of the blocking of this type of church reform.¹ In many ways Presbyterianism was the synthesis of this wish for reform of the established Church. Within its doctrine, church government and Apocalyptical enthusiasm were synthesised to produce a platform for a national Reformed Church. Such a consensus peaked with the production of the Westminster Confession in 1644. The political ramifications of the Commonwealth led to the dominance of the minority Congregationalists, and a religious toleration quite out of step with the Presbyterian ecclesiastical polity. This marked the decline of the Presbyterians, made plain by the rejection of Baxter's Holy Commonwealth, in 1658. If we associate Puritanism with the Presbyterian movement, this can be seen as the end of Puritanism. To further consider this, we should discuss what it was that propelled the founders of Presbyterianism.

If we do this we see that it was the excitement, drive and feeling of Apocalyptical immanence which fired them with a mission to prepare for God's Holy Commonwealth. The Presbyterian Church Government was their attempt to give shape to these ideas. If we go behind this church government, we see a Reformed, spiritual pastoralism with a

1.P. Collinson, Elizabethan Puritanism. London, 1964. p. 466.

strong revivalist impulse. Hence there doesn't seem to be any great division between them and the Congregationalists.¹

The Congregationalists felt the very same drive. Indeed, they had no great disdain for the Presbyterian church system. They simply saw it as impossible to have such a far-reaching system in a fallen world.² Relying wholly on free-grace, they gathered God's elect in Independent churches. They believed in Christ's death supplying efficient grace for the elect, and hence saw that the church's validity and strength went only so far as the justification of the members of each individual congregation.³

Like the Presbyterians they had some strong scholastic, or ascriptural traits. There was a scholastic compulsion to be exact about the mysteries of salvation, and God was at times made too compatible with ascriptural, philosophical concepts.⁴ Like the Presbyterians they were not averse to bending their theology to political necessity.⁵ However, as far as defining Puritanism is concerned, all this is interesting but not central. When we strip away superficial aspects, we see the same impulse behind both movements. Accordingly the structure of Presbyterianism does not adequately define what Puritanism is.

1. Packer, art. cit. p. 3; G. F. Nuttall, The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience. Oxford, 1946. p. 9.

2. Owen, Works, XII. p. 147; I. Murray, The Reformation of the Church. London, 1965. pp. 285-6.

3. Owen, Works, X. pp. 159-60, 164, 452.

4. Boughton, art. cit. pp. 90-1, [in relation to William Ames].

5. R. Tudur-Jones, Congregationalism in England. London, 1962. pp. 33-5, 45.

After getting this far in our discussion we can understand Knappen's statement: "In strict accuracy there were many Puritan spirits but there was no Puritan spirit." ¹ Whilst agreeing in general, it is important that we examine one more area in order at least to grasp what it was that united Presbyterians and Congregationalists, as well as Baptists, Quakers, Seekers, Ranters and others. We shall discuss the place of 'revival' in Puritanism.

Presbyterianism and Congregationalism are sometimes criticised for being too subjective.² So that their theology can appear to be anthropocentric, rather than theocentric.³ Such developments can be seen as the inevitable outcome of systematising the 'spirit' of Puritanism. Nuttall and even Christopher Hill have stressed the central position of personal, spiritual experience at the heart of Puritanism.⁴ Accordingly we should view Puritanism as essentially an appeal to the conscience.⁵ In plain words it was a religious revival,⁶ a renewed awareness of personal goodness.⁷

Bearing this in mind we need to consider whether Puritanism was that movement in sixteenth and seventeenth-century England which sought further reform and renewal within the Established Church. If so,

1. Knappen, *op.cit.* p.339; R.B. Knox, *op.cit.* p.257.

2. D.K. McKim, *art.cit.* pp.227-232; A.S.P. Woodhouse, *op.cit.* p.50; Haller, *op.cit.* p.96.

3. T Lane, 'The Quest for the Historical Calvin'. Evangelical Quarterly, vol.55. No.2. April, 1983. p.101.

4. Knox, *op.cit.* p.257.

5. Wallace, *op.cit.* pp.193-4; Breward, *op.cit.* pp.10-11.

6. Packer, *art.cit.* *passim*.

7. Collinson, *op.cit.* p.26; Murray, *art.cit.* p.405.

we should understand that there was no radical departure from past trends in the movement. Therefore it is understandable that William Perkins should draw on Roman Catholic authorities in his Problema de Romanae Fidei Ementito Catholicismo, and his Cases of Conscience. He drew on such background material and combined it with Reformed Theology to inspire church reform.¹ Essentially, the Puritans stood out from other ministers because of their emphasis on a Reformed, Pastoral ministry.² Men such as Walter Travers and Richard Greenham were revivalists. They were inspired by the idea of God's visible sovereignty, and by the immanence of the Millennium. This inspired them to glorify His name³, as much as any sectary.⁴

By 1648 the Established Church had been disbanded, and if Puritanism was a movement for reform within the Church, it follows that it no longer existed.⁵ The ideal of a state church had been rejected by Parliament because the Congregationalist party no longer accepted it.⁶ But we cannot accept that Puritanism no longer existed. It was not just a pressure group within the Church. Nuttall explains how the

1. Beward, art.cit. p.10; W. Perkins, Works. London, 1626-1631. 5 vols. vol.3.p.389.

2. Haller, op.cit. pp.5, 173; Packer, art.cit. p.6.

3. Beward, art.cit. pp.10-11.

4. P. Toon, 'Comments on the Chialism in Puritanism'. The Gospel Magazine. June, 1970. p.275.

5. Knox, art.cit. passim; P. Toon, 'English Puritanism'. The Gospel Magazine. May, 1971. p.142.

6. Knox, art.cit. p.297; Collinson, op.cit. p.466; Toon, 'English Puritanism'. The Gospel Magazine. p.142.

Congregationalists, "...left undisturbed the greater part of those ideas and ideals which still as hitherto, they had in common with the more conservative Puritans from among whom they came."¹ Accordingly, even though the Established Church was disbanded, the spirit, which probably was in fact Puritanism, continued.

Hence we can see Puritanism as an attempt to salvage individual pastoral care. This was a trend made all the more obvious by the church authority's failure to do this.²

Defining Anglicanism.

In defining Anglicanism we are doing so from the perspective of the post-Restoration period, more precisely after the Great Ejection of 1662. Hence in sketching a brief history and discussing its theology, we should bear in mind that we are primarily concerned with the history of the High Anglicans and the Latitudinarians.

There is no doubt that at its outset the Anglican church was a political creation.³ Whilst accepting this, it must also be seen as Protestant with a strong religious motivation.⁴ The Church

1. Nuttall, op. cit. p. 9.; A. Kuyper, The Work of the Holy Spirit, New York, 1900. Intro., p. xxxiii, xxviii.

2. McKim, art. cit. p. 221; S. J. Knox, Walter Travers: Paragon of English Puritanism, London, 1962, ch. 2. Cartwright pointed to this, see: T. Cartwright, A Reply to an answer... Wandsworth, 1574. p. 144. For the Anglican Church's failure to deal with pastoral problems see: Breward, op. cit. p. 7.

3. E. L. H. Taylor, op. cit. p. 465; O. Chadwick, The Reformation, London, 1972. p. 35; F. J. Shirley, Richard Hooker and Contemporary Political Ideas, London, 1949. p. 1; R. Powicke, The Reformation in England, Oxford, 1941. p. 27.

4. Taylor, op. cit. p. 456; New, op. cit. p. 12; Hillerbrand, op. cit. p. xiii.

was overwhelmingly Calvinist well into the seventeenth-century. The Puritans were the strongest representation of this, but there were many within the Anglican Church who were Calvinist whilst not being Puritan. Whitgift accepted the Lambeth Articles, which were openly acknowledged to be Calvinistic.¹ Calvinism further developed under Bancroft and Abbot.² Such Calvinism found a stern opponent in the Crown. Initially this was with Elizabeth who battled to assert her authority, and then with the Stuarts who thought they had an God-given right to the powers the Tudors had cunningly acquired. Indeed, it has been suggested that it was at the behest of the Crown that Richard Hooker developed his Ecclesiastical Polity.³ His work was seminal, especially if we are to understand the position of post-Restoration Anglicans. Hooker provided a political, intellectual and religious foundation for an anti-Calvinist stance.⁴

One significant point was that Hooker saw Scripture as just one authority amongst others. For him Christianity was a synthesis of Scripture, antiquity and reason. He developed a liberal method which regarded reason as the ultimate authority in theology.⁵ In allowing man a free ability to use innate reason to judge the merits of theology, Hooker undermined the Reformed Doctrine of total depravity.⁶ He

1. H. R. McAdoo, The Spirit of Anglicanism. A Survey of Anglican Theological Method in the Seventeenth-Century. London, 1965. p.10.

2. Ibid. p.11.

3. Collinson, op.cit. p.34; Frere, History of the English Church. London, 1924. p.39; Shirley, op.cit. p.33.

4. Ibid.; McAdoo, op.cit. pp.v,5.

5. McAdoo, op.cit. p.5.

6. New, op.cit. p.25.

outlined a communal rationality which largely undermined Calvin's emphasis upon free-grace.¹ He saw such an ability especially suited in the development of Natural Theology. Accordingly he regarded Natural Theology as complimenting Special Revelation.² Hooker didn't regard man as totally depraved, rather as slightly deficient, in a state similar to ignorance. Significantly he saw reason as central to the process of salvation, and much more than this, it is seminal that he regarded 'reason' as capable of expressing salvation in dialectical terms.³ Reason became morally important to him, allowing the educated mind to approach God.⁴ Such a reasonable moralism became a basis of justification⁵, thereby allowing man to ascend the order of grace.⁶

Hooker expanded the scope of Natural Theology by placing the Church in the realm of nature. One result of this was a dilution of the concept of the communion of saints.⁷ Grace was increasingly thought of as something linked to devotional acts, and therefore the Reformed emphasis upon the Word of God took second place to sacramental grace.⁸ Predestination was also reinterpreted, with a greater emphasis upon the individual being able to contribute to his salvation.⁹

1. New, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

2. Richard Hooker, The Works of the Learned and Judicious Divine, 2 vols. Oxford, 1850. I. iii. 2-5.

3. Ibid. I. viii. 3.

4. Ibid. viii. 7.

5. Ibid. I. xvi. 5.

6. Ibid. Ibid. I. ix. 1.

7. Ibid. V. ix. 3; IV. xiv. 4.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid. IV. xiv. 6.

We should stress that within his work there is a belief in God's grace and justification by faith.¹ However, his ideas formed the bedrock of a strongly anti-Calvinist movement, "...centred around those such as Laud, Andrewes, Chillingworth, Taylor, Hammond, and Sanderson...In their writings, as in those of the Cambridge Platonists a little later, is to be seen a developing of the method indicated by Hooker...they attempted to liberate their thinking by means of rational enquiry from the systematised statements of the Reformers...."²

In the early seventeenth-century this group was in the minority. James I played a crucial role in their development when he extended patronage to them because of the support they offered his threatened crown.³ Hence Charles I was raised within an Anglican system of Divine Right and sacramental devotionalism, and so he extended royal patronage.⁴ In fact he became a driving force behind Laud's plans to unify the whole nation under his conception of Anglican ecclesiastical polity.⁵

Laud denied the Reformed emphasis on justification by faith. He preferred the idea of receiving grace through the elements of the sacrament. Added to this was a great respect for reason as a means of uncovering aspects of God's being.⁶ Like Hooker he saw

1. Ibid. I.xi.6; I.xi.5.

2. McAdoo, op.cit. p.12.

3. P. Welsby, Lancelot Andrewes, 1555-1636. London, 1958. p.169.

4. G.E. Cragg, Freedom and Authority: A Study of English Thought in the Early Seventeenth Century. Philadelphia, 1975. p.107.

5. C. Russell, [ed], The Origins of the English Civil War. London, 1973. p.132.

6. W. Scott & J. Bliss, [eds], The Works of ...Laud. 7 vols. Oxford, 1847-60. vol.2. pp.71-2.

rational thought as God's handmaiden, ranking lower than faith, but a holy attribute nonetheless.' Whilst his theology is important, it is for his patronage that he is significant. We need to consider others who were attempting to develop a distinctly Anglican theology.

Thomas Jackson continued the anti-Calvinist movement with his emphasis upon man possessing a free-will.² Robert Selford took this a step further and concluded that man could fulfill God's laws.³ Accordingly we can see that conceptions of grace were becoming increasingly moralistic, with Natural Theology ranking alongside Scripture.⁴ All these strands were pulled together by William Chillingworth, Laud's god-son.⁵ His work, The Religion of Protestants, a safe way to Salvation, [1638] is a key statement of pre-Restoration Anglicanism. He produced a detached, sceptical, rational and undogmatic view of faith.⁶ Stressing Natural Theology, he only curtailed it slightly when it clashed with Scripture. Also, without foregoing the final assurance of faith, he proposed to set man's mind

1. New, op.cit. p. 11.

2. T. Jackson, Works, 12 vols. Oxford, 1844. vol. 2. pp. 198, 318. T. Jackson, [1579-1640]. Anglican theologian. Educated in Cambridge. Was promoted under Laud, and became a very influential Anglican theologian. see: F.L. Cross, [ed], The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church. London, 1957. p. 708.

3. R. Selford, Five Pious and Learned Discourses. Cambridge, 1635. pp. 58-60.

4. C.F. Allison, The Rise of Moralism: The Proclamation of the Gospel From Hooker to Baxter. London, 1966. pp. 47-8.

5. W. Chillingworth, [1602-1644]. Anglican divine. Fellow of Trinity Oxford. Converted to R.C. church in 1630, went to Douai. 1631 declared himself a Protestant. "On the plea that, 'the Bible only is the religion of Protestants', he defended the rights of reason and free enquiry into doctrinal matters, and denied that any Church has the gift of infallibility." Cross, op.cit. p. 272.

6. Haller, op.cit. p. 245.

free from the 'tyranny of dogma'. It was by watering down what many saw as essential that he laid the basis for toleration.' We can see his conception of toleration as a rejection of the Reformed emphasis on the Word of God as articulated in Scripture and dogma. "Take away this persecuting, burning, cursing, damning of men for not subscribing to the word of men, for the words of God require of Christians, only to believe Christ, and to call no man master...let those leave claiming infallibility that have no title to it..."²

Up to this point we have looked at the influence of men such as Hooker, Laud and Chillingworth, but it is important to be aware that none of these controlled Anglicanism in the same way that the work of Baxter influenced the Presbyterians. McAdoo furnishes us with an explanation for this, "Anglicanism is not a theological system and there is no writer whose work is an essential part of it either in respect of content or with regard to the form of its self-expression."³ Accepting this we should also be aware of the work of men such as Jeremy Taylor [1613-67]. His great contribution is summed up in his Holy Living, [1650], and Holy Dying, [1651], they "...are characteristic expressions of Anglican spirituality in their balanced sobriety and their insistence on a well-ordered piety which stresses temperance and moderation in all things."⁴ Henry Hammond, [1605-1660],

1. W. Chillingworth, Reasonable belief... London, 1638. Preface.

2. H. D. M. Spence, The Church of England... 4 vols. London, 1898. vol. 4 p. 84.

3. McAdoo, op. cit. Pref. p. v.

4. Cross, op. cit. p. 1325.

opposed Calvinism's emphasis on predestination, and emphasised the importance of "...a high standard of personal devotion and discipline bordering on asceticism."¹ The influence of John Hales [1584-1656] should be highlighted. In works such as his Schism and Schismatics, [1636], he emphasised a broad church and the love of God.² He firmly denounced what he saw as the logical development of dogma in Calvinism, "It shall well bebefit our Christian modesty to participate somewhat of the sceptic...till...the remainder of our knowledge be supplied by Christ."³ The list could be extended, but the most significant point for us to be aware of is that in the years leading up to the Restoration, two distinct groups within Anglicanism were emerging. Broadly speaking one was 'High', wherein we find the influence of men such as Laud, Lancelot Andrewes [1555-1626], Jeremy Taylor and John Hales. They laid great store by the 'church visible' and sacramental grace, along with a veneration of antiquity and spiritual reason. In the pos-Restoration period they were represented most effectively by Edward Stillingfleet [1635-1699]. The other group is termed 'Latitudinarian', which can be seen as relying heavily on the work of Chillingworth. Isaac Barrow [1630-1677], is also referred to as a proto-Latitudinarian. He especially emphasised the importance of mathematics and counted Newton among his students.⁴ Post-Restoration

1. McAdoo, op.cit. p.12; Cross, op.cit. p.606.

2. Cross, op.cit. p.603.

3. J. Pearson, The Golden Remains of the Ever Memorable Mr John Hales. London, 1659. p.31.

4. Cross, op.cit. p.134.

Anglicans such as Simon Patrick [1625-1707], extended this by synthesising Anglican liturgy with what we would term Natural Theology. The same could be said of John Tillotson [1630-1694].

A Definition of Supralapsarian.

"A name applied to those Calvinists who held the view that, in the divine decrees, the predestination of some to eternal life and of others to eternal death was antecedent to the creation and the fall: opposite to Infralapsarian." [The Shorter Oxford Dictionary].

A Definition of Federal Theology.

"Of or pertaining to a covenant, compact or treaty...pertaining to the Covenant of Works or Covenant of Grace....Federal Theology: the system based on the doctrine of covenants made by God with Adam as representative of mankind, and with Christ as representing the Church." [The Shorter Oxford Dictionary.] The basis of Federalism is that Christ redeems the 'chosen' as the Second Adam. Christ is head of the 'chosen', just as Adam is head of all mankind. God had made a covenant with Adam. Adam breached this by sinning, thereby plunging the whole of mankind into disobedience and inability to fulfil the first Covenant of Works. In Christ the covenant was renewed as a Covenant of Grace rather than works. "The operative principle is the same in both cases; by virtue of our union with Adam, he being our

representative and head, we are constituted sinners; by virtue of our union with Christ we are constituted righteous."¹

1.B. Milne, Know the Truth. I.V.P. 1983. pp.105-6.

Chapter One.Puritan Natural Theology.

In the previous chapter we discussed the nature of Natural Theology, highlighting some of the problems involved, such as ascripturality. Bearing this in mind it would be surprising if the Puritans- who were dedicated to the primacy of Scripture- used Natural Theology to any great extent. If they did use Natural Theology this would have important implications in our view of them. The possible development of an epistemology will be crucial in our discussion.

Although we are mostly concerned with post-Resoration Puritanism, any discussion must take the previous eighty years into account. This is easily explained when we bear in mind that many of the major Puritans lived before and after the Restoration. It is also necessary that we look at the early years of the movement.

It must be underlined that every issue we touch upon will be linked to Natural Theology. Naturally we have to be selective. Puritanism covers a huge field, and it will be inevitable that we will have to avoid certain areas because they are irrelevant to our discussion.

The Development Prior to 1660.

We don't really know what put the fire into the magnificent Puritan movement. Some scholars see the root cause as 'pastoralism': explained as a number of men, mostly inside the Established Church, who felt impelled to minister to the individual, and who thus saw a lack of personally relevant religion, or casuistry within the Established Church.¹ If we read the sermons of Richard Greenham [1535-1594],² we can see the development of this warm, relevant faith, which scholars have termed 'pastoralism'. The basis of such an approach was Biblical and purposefully non-scholastic.³ However, whilst Puritans such as Greenham and Browne [1550-1633] might insist that, "...the word of God doth expressly set down all necessary and general rules of the arts and of learning..."⁴, most Puritans did not practice this. A cursory examination reveals that most of these early Puritans were scholars,⁵ who might well have been forced into a popular pastoralism because of the contemporary fall off in church jobs because of the dissolution of the monasteries.⁶ This may be why

1. Haller, *op.cit.* p.15; I. Breward, 'William Perkins and the Origins of Reformed Casuistry'. The Evangelical Quarterly. vol. 40. No.1. Jan/March, 1968. pp.10-11.

2. R. Greenham. Like many Puritans he went to Cambridge. A moderate Puritan, he "...more concerned for the substance of religion and for the co-operation of all the religious men within the church..." D.N.B. IV. p.520.

3. Greenham complained of sermons, "Glassie, bright and brittle...so cold and so humane, that the simple preaching doth greatly decay." R. Greenham, Works. London, 1612. pp.291, 294; Haller, *op.cit.* p.26.

4. Haller, *op.cit.* pp. 131-2.

5. *Ibid.* p.85; Knappen, *op.cit.* p.341; Miller, *op.cit.* p.67; O.M. Griffiths, Religion and Learning. Cambridge, 1935. pp.17,54-67.

6. Knappen, *op.cit.* p.353; Haller, *op.cit.* pp.128-9; M. McGiffert, 'God's Controversy with Jacobean England'. The American Historical Review. vol.88. pp.1151-2.

there can be such a sharp divide between the scholasticism of their studies, and the pastoralism of their sermons. William Perkins endorsed this approach when he advised preachers to, "...note that 'Artis etiam celare artem'; it is the point of art to conceal art."¹ The key point is that from the earliest times Puritanism laid a great emphasis on scholasticism. So much so that at times it seemed more important than the pastoralism.

As a result of the necessity to court popular support, and the undoubted evangelistic zeal of men such as Greenham, the Puritans' ministry tended to be comparatively simplistic and inward looking.² This methodical self-examination married very well with the Puritan's academic leanings. As just one example, Breward tells us that their use of Roman Catholic casuist literature led to them being directly influenced by the huge tradition of Roman scholasticism.³ However, the crucial point for us is that the Puritans took scholasticism to the very heart of their pastoralism. In doing this the tendency was to equate scholastic values with grace, thereby providing an ascriptural base for their epistemology. Such a combination of pastoralism and scholasticism meant that soteriology was increasingly expressed as law and science.⁴ It was for this reason that the seminal William Perkins charted an exact

1. Haller, op. cit. pp. 131-2.

2. W. Perkins, Armillæ Aurea. Cambridge, 1592. pp. 70-9; H. Davies, Worship and Theology in England from Andrewes to Baxter and Foxe, 1603-90. Princeton, New Jersey, 1975. pp. 131-2.

3. Breward, art. cit. p. 12.

4. Haller, op. cit. p. 129.

table of salvation in his Armillæ Aurea. This allowed any intelligent man to plot his progress towards heaven or hell.¹

If we look at Thomas Hooker's [1586-1652] The Soul's Preparation for Christ, [1632], we see that a pastoral emphasis upon a very personal faith continued into the next generation.² But for all this it is accepted that scholasticism had become entrenched in their attitude.³ This certainly doesn't mean that Owen or Baxter's work was devoid of pastoralism,⁴ it simply means that pastoralism was no longer the driving force. An evangelical, personal faith, gave way to a more rigid Federalism, which can be seen as a subjective scholasticism.⁵

Whilst accepting this, we must note that any decline in pastoralism was masked by millennial or apocalyptic excitement-being an awareness of England fulfilling the will of God in the last years through the second coming of Christ. Millennialism became one way of overcoming those aspects of scholasticism which jarred with contemporary faith.⁶ Millennialism itself has been interpreted as a scholastical interpretation of Scripture.⁷ Whether or not this is the case,

1. Haller, op.cit. p.92.

2. Thomas Hooker. Went to Oxford where he came under Perkins' influence. A contemporary of John Cotton, and Thomas Goodwin. As a minister he was particularly caught up with the theme of pastoral preparation for Christ. Forced to flee to America by Laud. See: T. Hooker, The Soul's Preparation for Christ. London, 1632. p.190.

3. H. Davies, op.cit. pp.269-70.

4. P. Toon, God's Statesman. The Life and Work of John Owen. Paternoster Press. 1971. p.17; W. Lamont, Richard Baxter and the Millennium. Protestant Imperialism and the English Revolution. London. 1979. p.134.

5. Knox, art.cit. p.301.

6. McKim, art.cit. pp.217-8.

7. Ibid. p.223; E.L. Tuveson, Millennium and Utopia. Berkeley, 1949. pp.25-6.

"It gave God his glory, man his place, events their meaning- England its due."¹ With an assurance that God was guiding England to the Apocalypse, it is hardly surprising that the academic Puritans were able to combine their scholastic philosophy of history with an emotional view of the times they lived in.²

Root Causes of Puritan Scholasticism.

We have already seen that Puritan scholasticism contained Natural Theology, and also that this would probably draw in aspects of scholasticism. Now we need to examine possible sources of this scholasticism. As usual when discussing the Puritans we must start with the Reformers.

Whilst Puritans such as Perkins drew from the Fathers and the Medieval Schoolmen³, it was upon the Reformers that the

1. P. Gay, A loss of Mastery: Puritan Historians in Colonial America. Berkeley, 1966. pp.9-10.

2. J. V. Allen, A History of Political Thought in the Sixteenth Century. New York, 1961. pp.217-8; H. Davies, op.cit. p.272; Lamont, op.cit. p.176; Owen, Works, VIII, p.453; R. Baxter, A Christian Directory, London, 1673. p.736. It is significant that Thomas Goodwin saw the failure of the Commonwealth as God's breaking of an agreement, see: Baxter, Works, II. p.xxxvii; A.S.P. Woodhouse, [ed], Puritanism and Liberty. Chicago, 1965. p.50.

3. William Perkins, [1558-1602]. Like so many other Puritans he went to and taught in Cambridge. Like Cartwright and Walter Travers he must be placed at the very forefront of those who formed this movement. He was influenced by Laurence Chaderton. Famed most as a theological writer, especially with his Aurea Armilla. see: D.N.B. XV. p.829; the Puritans used patristic sources in the study, but not so much in the pulpit, see: Perkins, Works, 1631. vol.2. p.644; Baxter, Works, London, 1707. vol.4. p.428.

bedrock of their theology lies.¹ In recognising their dependence, we also need to be aware that by the seventeenth century glaring differences existed.² Such differences should not be viewed as a basic disagreement, but rather as a consequence of dealing with problems which the Reformers did not solve.³ Whilst this is not a study of Luther and Calvin, it is probably fair to say that they were far more concerned with outlining a soteriology rather than an epistemology. As we have seen the Puritans were concerned with constructing a stable epistemology, this is probably one of the most important differences between the Puritans and the Reformers.⁴ Perry Miller tells us that in striving to construct an epistemology, the Puritans were continuing the pre-Reformed tradition of scholasticism, and that the Puritan movement was therefore an attempt to stabilise knowledge.⁵ "All Puritans were once more confident of what the fifteenth century had brought into question, that natural and revealed religion agreed, that belief and an adequate degree of understanding could be reconciled together...Protestantism was a revolt against medieval thought, but only on a limited number of particulars; otherwise it was the same thought once more stabilised."⁶

If we agree with S.B. Ferguson that Puritanism was largely a mixture of Reformed Theology and scholasticism, it does not follow

1. Breward, art. cit. p.12; Perkins was aware of the dangers of the schoolmen for the Puritans, hence he wrote, Problema de Romanae Fidei...., London, 1596.

2. Bass, op. cit. p.55.

3. Miller, op. cit. p.55.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid. p.102.

6. Ibid.

that their Natural Theology came from scholasticism alone. We have already seen a scholastic ambiguity in Calvin's work, and while it is possible to give Calvin the benefit of the doubt, this is not true of some of his contemporaries such as Melancthon', or of the Calvinists who followed Calvin.² From our point of view it is significant that these men had no qualms about developing Calvin's occasional view of God as a philosophical constant, or most importantly Calvin's Reformed philosophy of history.³

For us to understand the significance of a philosophy of history for Calvin, it is more useful for us to look at his education rather than his faith. Calvin was influenced by the Florentine Platonists, and hence by their view of God.⁴ No doubt this is why he saw Plato as the best of philosophers.⁵ Although Calvin limited the importance of Neoplatonism by stressing that the best it can do is to conceive of an impersonal god, there is no doubt that in his work we occasionally come across an embryonic synthesis of a philosophical

1. Platt, *op.cit.* pp. 11ff.

2. *Ibid.* pp. 35, 45, 51, 261; For ambiguity in Calvin's stance see: 30, 35.

3. B. B. Warfield, *Calvin and Calvinism*. New York, 1931. pp. 29-130, 133-85;

S. Jackson-Case, *The Christian Philosophy of History*. Chicago, 1943.

p. 144; R. G. Collingwood, *The Idea of History*. Oxford, 1937. pp. 40-42;

C. A. Patrides, 'The Grand Design of God; The Literary Form of the Christian View of History.' *The Banner of Truth*. Issue, 17. Oct. 1959.

p. 13.

4. C. Partee, 'The Soul in Plato, Platonism and Calvin'. *The Scottish Journal of Theology*. vol. 22. 1969. p. 294. It is interesting that the Cambridge Platonists drew from the same source.

5. G. J. Postema, 'Calvin's Alleged Rejection of Natural Theology'. *The Scottish Journal of Theology*. vol. 24. p. 431; Platt, *op.cit.* p. 30;

Miller, *op.cit.* p. 234.

ground motive and biblical providence. This formed a philosophy of history, which in fairness, was only part of Calvin's soteriology. However, for his followers such as Beza, the Reformed philosophy of history was developed into a predestination centred soteriology.¹ This in turn would form a central part of Puritan epistemology.

Neoplatonism is almost an impossible philosophy to work into a sense-perception epistemology. Calvin's contemporaries and followers overcame this by drawing upon Aristotelianism. This is probably the main reason why Calvin's partially developed philosophy of history was expanded into a tremendously encompassing doctrine of predestination.² Dewey Wallace shows us that this method was scholastic because it relies on ascriptural logic and metaphysics, and therefore treated soteriology as part of a unified and rational epistemology.³ If this is the major part of Puritanism's scholastic heritage, it seems obvious that Puritanism could never have remained the 'simple', evangelical movement of the pastoralists.⁴

As Christians, Calvin's contemporaries and immediate followers knew their faith to be correct, but the premium at which they set Natural Theology, meant that they wished to stabilise Christianity within 'established knowledge'. This meant that Reformed faith

1. Bass, *op.cit.* p.12; The Evangelical Quarterly, vol. 40. pp.97,105.

2. Calvin was hostile to Aristotelianism, see: Wendel, *op.cit.* p.264; J.P. Donnelly, Calvinism and Scholasticism in Vermigli's doctrine of Man and Grace. Leiden, 1976.p.207. Peter Martyr, Jerome Zanchi, and Theodore Beza were all Aristotelians, see: J.P. Donnelly, 'Italian Influences on the Development of the Calvinistic Scholasticism.' Sixteenth Century Journal. 7. 1976. pp.81-101.

3. Wallace, *op.cit.* p.56.

4. P. Miller, Errand into the Wilderness, Massachusetts, 1958. pp.66-7,95-113.

was set within the Roman Catholic tradition¹, but most importantly it took them straight to the Medieval Schoolmen.² We have already seen that the Puritans were mostly educated men, and so they were caught in this trend. Hence we see that William Ames [1576-1633], was heavily influenced by the established scholastical works.³ "Ames' philosophical orientation, grounded in the Ramism of Perkins, Richardson and George Downname, and also influenced by Johan Heinrich Alsted [1588-1638] and Bartolamaus Keckermann [1517-1609], two Germanic scholars who as "Systematics" combined Ramism with certain aspects of Aristotelian philosophy."⁴ So that we can view Ames' Meduual and Cases of Conscience as syntheses of pastoralism and scholasticism.⁵ The great John Owen [1616-1683] criticised Roman Catholic scholars who spun endless philosophical distinctions from a single Christian truth.⁶

1. Breward, op. cit. p. 12.

2. Ibid.

3. William Ames: Went to Cambridge where his tutor was Perkins. He was a Puritan divine and casuist. "In the opinion of his contemporaries his genius was better adapted for the professor's chair than for the pulpit." Because of reactions from the establishment he had to spend much of his time abroad. see: D.N.B. I. pp.355-7.

4. Boughton, art. cit. p. 90.

5. W.W. Bass, Platonic Influences on Seventeenth Century English Puritan Theology. As Expressed in the Thinking of John Owen, Richard Baxter and John Howe. Ph.D thesis. 1958. p.62; Miller, New Engalnd Mind. pp.106-7. Therefore T. Goodwin refers to Keckermann's System Theolog. see: Works. IX. p.86.

6. Owen, Works. II. p.379. John Owen, Oxford man who was a very capable student. After initial Presbyterian leanings he became a Congregationalist. Came to the fore in the Civil War. 1652 mader Vice-Chancellor of Oxford, where he maintained high academic standards. He was a moving force for the Savoy Conference of 1658, at which the cornerstones of the Congregationalist faith were laid. Offered a bishopric in 1664, but refused. He only ever really considered compromise with Richard Baxter. Owen must be regarded as a great theologian. D.N.B. XIV. pp. 1318-1320.

In no uncertain terms he often referred to all natural learning as weak, as in his 1656 sermon before Parliament, God's Works Founding Zion. "...the schoolmen brought...Aristotle's philosophy into church divinity; I cannot but think it had been well if they had never done it."¹ But despite such statements, Owen drew on all the schoolmen, "Thomas Aquinas, Anselm, and Duns Scotus were those in whom his acute intellect found high exercise and real delight, and rejoiced in whetting and exercising it on them its dialectic powers, until he could rival in subtle and shadowy distinctions those ghostly schoolmen..."² He could do this partly because of his education, but most of all because scholasticism had been taken to the very heart of the Puritan faith. We have seen that this was done in an attempt to resolve everything to an epistemology, and that this in turn meant that everything was measured against reason. It is significant that we have already touched upon a central but ambiguous role for reason in Calvin's theology, we should view the Puritans as in a trend of developing this theme, of straightening out the ambiguities. So that J. McCash tells us, " Their profound views of human reason...enabled them to construct a theology in some measure corresponding to the profundity of Scripture."³

1. Owen, Works, VIII. p.412; he talks similarly of Platonism, see: XIV. p.60.

2. A Thompson, 'Life of Dr Owen', in The Works of John Owen, D.D. W.H. Gould, [ed]. Edinburgh, 1862, p.xxv. Quoted in Bass, op.cit. pp.93-4; Owen, Works, IV. pp.87, 93, 97, 99-100.

3. J. McCash, [ed], Works of Stephen Charnock. London, 1864. p.xlviii.

Even amongst the earliest Puritans we see a central role for reason, and such a trend became even more overt in the 1650's, as we see in the work of John Howe, "...[with]...reason as itself the source of truth, the container and giver of ideas through inward intuition or recollection...reason as a principle of action, a power or faculty by which truth was discovered in the sensibles..."¹

Puritan epistemology grew out of a faith in the ability of reason to construct a Natural Theology. For them there was no facet of God, man or the world which was beyond reason. Therefore it was not enough for them to accept the fact that Christ died on the cross, they sought to express it through contemporary science.² We should recognise the beginnings of science as we know it in this. For with the Puritans we see an eagerness to set all knowledge in an ordered system. Hence for them reason pointed to Christ, and Christ to reason. Part and parcel of this dependence on reason was their development of Calvin's doctrine of history. Using reason, they developed this with little caution, so that supralapsarian, double-predestination became a strong intellectual force within the movement. We might well wonder why these faithful, compassionate men could live by their evangelium, whilst formulating a supralapsarian, doctrine of predestination which almost

1. Miller, New England Mind, p.190; John Howe, [1630-1705]. Influenced by the Cambridge Platonists. Philosophically he was the most able of the Puritans. He lacked some of their zeal, and wasn't much interested in Federal Theology. Worked for ecumenism. He didn't get on well with the Cromwells. Ejected 1662. Suffered persecution. Welcomed William to the throne on 1687. Toleration came in 1689. Unlucky enough to give a certificate of genuineness to the postumous works of Tobias Crisp, which some saw as an endorsement of antinomianism. See: D.N.B. X. pp.85-7.
 2. Perkins, Works, p.29. His description is taken from Columbus' Anatome Corporis Humani, Venice, 1589.

drove John Cotton, [1584-1652], to Antinomianism.¹ The answer might well lie in their reliance on reason. This asserted the philosophical necessity that God should be an unchanging ideal, and thus if salvation lies with God, it is reasonable that the decision is infinite, and so not connected with actions within finite time, or with temporal creatures.² So we see that already in the early seventeenth century divinity was becoming the handmaid of reason.³ This is why being educated was put at such a premium. It is said that John Owen told Charles II that he would have given up all his academic abilities for the evangelistic zeal of John Bunyan. We should balance this against Owen's deep resentment when people tried to break away from a scholastical view of God. In his A Brief Declaration and Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity, [London, 1669], Owen emphasised that without scholastical terms men would become brutes.⁴ His Animadversions, [1662], was written to oppose those Catholics who argued that reason is useless, and that men should surrender blindly to God.⁵

1. John Cotton, A leading clergyman of New England's first generation. A leader in civil and religious affairs, and a most persuasive writer on the theory and practice of Congregationalism. This man was extremely influential, and breathed fire into Federal Theology. See: The McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of World Biography. III. 1973.

2. McKin, art. cit. pp. 217ff; Perkins, Works, 3 vols, 1626. II. p. 605; G.E. Duffield, [ed], John Calvin, containing Basil Hall's, 'Calvin against the Calvinists'. Grand Rapids, 1968. pp. 13-37.

3. H. Davies, op. cit. p. 412. In this way the reasonable, good god of the Puritans, "...is the good god of Plato and not the arbitrary God of the Calvinistic decrees..." See: F.J. Powicke, The Cambridge Platonists. Mass., pp. 33-6; Miller, The New England Mind, p. 195.

4. Owen, Works, II. pp. 378-9.

5. Miller, New England Mind, pp. 70-1.

The Antinomians, Roman Catholic Fideists, along with Webster and Dell, were all seen as opponents to the concept of God as perfect reason. They were denounced by the Presbyterians and Congregationalists for doing this.' Along with Owen's Animadversions, Baxter's The Judgement of the Non-Conformists, can be seen as an archetypal Puritan apology for the scholastical view of reason's role in religion, along with its ability to synthesise all knowledge.

This would explain why Puritan education never came to terms with their faith. For whilst 'reason' became the great standard in their thought, there is no doubting that at heart Puritanism, like Scripture, is 'unreasonable'. [1 Cor. 1 vs 20]. It seems incredible that men who quoted Scripture and damned the philosophers, weaned their students on ascriptural, heathen authors.² This probably shows their twin loyalties, one to a Biblical faith, the other to a scholastical Natural Theology.³ Hence it is important to see Puritan theology as a conflicting mixture of Scripture and scholasticism, as an attempt to synthesise mutually contradictory grounds of knowledge. Maybe this is why some claim that John Owen produced a flawed theology.⁴

Such a duality was further complicated by the complex nature of their scholasticism. It is rare to find a Puritan such as Charles

1. T. Goodwin criticised Arminianism's unreasonableness in its stress on the universal efficacy of the atonement. See: Works, IX. p.91; also, Owen, Works, pp.223-4.

2. Knappen, op.cit. p.473; P. Toon, 'John Owen on Education.' The Gospel Magazine, June, 1971. pp.184,188.

3. Therefore Puritans tended to be leaders in both fields. See: D. Wallace, op.cit. p.159; R.S. Westfall, Science and religion in Seventeenth-Century England, Michigan, 1973. pp.141-2.

4. Charnock, Works, I. p.xliv.

Morton who was a consistent Aristotelian¹, or Theophilus Gale who was a committed Neoplatonist.² Most used a synthesis of Aristotelianism and Neoplatonism, and for this they turned to Petrus Ramus. Ramus radically transformed established philosophy in in that he saw logic as an art for disciplining man's natural intellect, rather than as a science of proof. Most significantly he insisted that truth should be internalised.³

Ramism became a central part of Puritan scholasticism, and it can be said to have dominated their thought throughout.⁴ It is true that John Owen was not a strong Ramist, but we should realise that he was a great enough scholar not to need the support of Ramus' thought.⁵ William Ames was one of the most complete Ramists. For him it meant the integration of physics and metaphysics, a stabilisation of his faith within an all-encompassing epistemology.⁶

From what we have already looked at we can see that by the generation of Preston, [1587-1628]⁷, and Owen, scholasticism was becoming a driving force within their theology. By this time they were

1. Bass, *op.cit.* p.69.

2. Tudur-Jones, *op.cit.* p.88.

3. Knappen, *op.cit.* p.475; Bass, *op.cit.* p.198.

4. Miller, *Orthodoxy in Massachusetts*, 1933. pp.107,111; Miller and Johnson's, *The Puritans*, New York, 1938. p.291; Bass, *op.cit.* pp.68-9; Toon, *Hyper-Calvinism*, pp.24-5.

5. Bass, *op.cit.* p.94; although Ramism is present in his early work, see: *Works*, X.p.10.

6. W. Ames, *The Marrow of the Seed*, London, 1642. p.227; Toon, *op.cit.* p.25; Miller, *The New England Mind*, pp.161-2; Boughton, *art.cit.* pp.90-1;

7. John Preston, Cambridge man. Influenced by John Cotton, after Preston had given himself to the studying of scholastic divinity. "It is clear that his heart was set on the propagation of Calvinistic theology." *D.N.B.* XX. p.308.

looking at the Bible as science and law.' This in turn married well with their emphasis on placing all aspects of their faith within an epistemology of reason. These factors were combined with Calvin's doctrine of history to produce the great Puritan doctrine of Theological Federalism, a supreme theory of individualistic, historic determinism.²

In essence this scholasticism was dominated by reason and empiricism. The Puritans didn't like the Neoplatonic tendency to dismiss the individual, or the Aristotelian tendency to see man as simply part of the whole. For them it was important that all knowledge should be resolved to the individual, so that each man became the centre of creation, with all creation set in microcosm within each man.

Somehow men such as Baxter and Owen managed to limit the scholasticism, but with the Restoration, scholasticism became increasingly dominant.³ By this time pastoralism had certainly declined⁴, and theology was increasingly absorbed into their scholastic epistemology. In short, during the Restoration period God was on trial, and His judge was anthropocentric Natural Theology.

1. Haller, *op. cit.* p. 70; Bass, *op. cit.* pp. 69-71; The Westminster Confession, has been seen as a thoroughgoing philosophy. See: Robinson, *art. cit.* pp. 36-9; Bass, *op. cit.* p. 94; Owen, Works, XIII. p. 340. pp. 412-3.

2. Haller, *op. cit.* pp. 83, 84, 90-2.

3. Tudur-Jones, *op. cit.* p. 88; J. W. Ashley-Smith, The Birth of Modern Education, London, 1954. pp. 31-2; Bass, *op. cit.* pp. 36-8.

4. Bass, *op. cit.* p. 33; E. Cassirer, The Platonic Renaissance in England, Austin, 1953. p. 68. For an outline of a developing scholasticism see: D. K. McKim, 'John Owen's Doctrine of Scripture in Historical Perspective.' The Evangelical Quarterly, Issue. 4. Vol. 45. Oct/Dec, 1973. pp. 197ff.

Theological Federalism before the Restoration.

We have seen that whilst the doctrine of predestination was part of calvin's soteriology, it was steadily developed into a rigid and all-encompassing philosophy by his successors.¹ We must view the Puritans as part of this process, for if we look at their earliest work, we see the likes of Perkins expressing pastoralism through this scholastic doctrine of history. The result was an ethical system², regulated by dialectical covenant theology, in terms calculated to appeal to the populace.³

At this stage the conception of God began to be expressed in philosophical terms. Puritans such as Perkins avoided doing this with little success.⁴ One of the most important consequences of this was the decreasing emphasis they laid on the Trinity as we see in the work of Perkins and Richard Sibbes.⁵

The next generation relied even more on systematic, scholastic Federalism. They sought to relate all to an omnipotent God and an impotent man.⁶ Covenantism took up a central place within their epistemology, so that regeneration was set in tandem with nature and

1. Bass, op. cit. p. 13; A. C. McGiffert, Protestant thought before Kant. New York, 1949. p. 76; T. Lane, art. cit. pp. 97-9; Toon, Hyper-Calvinism. p. 13.

2. Breward, art. cit. p. 20.

3. Haller, op. cit. pp. 84-93, 130, 135.

4. Breward, art. cit. p. 20.

5. Breward, op. cit. pp. 178, 183-4, 250; shows how Christ is a tool in the Father's plan; R. Sibbes, The Works of Richard Sibbes, D.D., with general preface by J. C. Miller, D.D. London, 1865. 7 vols. vol. I. p. 42.

6. Miller, op. cit. p. 28; Haller, op. cit. p. 83.

reason, as we see in John Preston's, The Position of John Preston, [1654].¹ In this way they provided an authoritative system within which man could embark upon an agreement with God. The certainty of this agreement was important, for we should note that, "...for any thoughtful person in the seventeenth-century the problem of authority was urgent. It was involved directly or indirectly in every controversy of the age."² Hence we can understand why John Owen wrote that the substance of religion is intellectual assent to propositional, orthodox divinity.³ We should note that, "By the word 'covenant' Federal Theologians understood just such a contract as was used among men of business, a bond a mortgage...each enters the pact of his own volition, each has the right to expect from the other a fulfilment to the letter."⁴ Such an emphasis upon the terms of covenant led to a Federal legalism.⁵ The Puritans were relying upon a reasonable certainty as we see in the work of Thomas Goodwin, "...the infallibility of which maxim is abundantly evident in scripture, and from undeniable reason, draw from the perfections of God."⁶ Accordingly what the preacher said, "...was not rhetoric or poetry but science and law"⁷.

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1. J. Preston, The Position of John Preston. London, 1654. pp.5-10; Miller, op.cit. pp.29-31.
 2. G.R. Cragg, The Church and the Age of Reason. London, 1966. p.71; Miller, op.cit. pp.102,375-6.
 3. Toon, God's Statesman. p.106.
 4. Miller, op.cit. pp.375-6.
 5. Bass, op.cit. p.193; Jones, op.cit. pp.16-17; Haller, op.cit. p.129.
 6. Goodwin, Works, IX. p.27.
 7. Haller, op.cit. p.129.

As a Puritan one could be infralapsarian like Baxter¹, or a supralapsarian like Owen², believe in sufficient grace, like the left-wing Arminian John Goodwin in his Redemption Revealed, [1651]³ or efficient grace, whereby God minutely quantified grace to save only the elect.⁴ The differences are profound, but all are linked by a reasonable view of Covenantism. All of them resolved salvation to what we can term a scholastic epistemology. However, there were many factors which camouflaged this such as millennialism, but in the post-Restoration period this was less so.⁵

The Pre-Restoration Doctrine of God.

One of the reasons why the Puritans' scholasticism was allowed to penetrate to the heart of their faith was because they tended to conceive of God in terms of Natural Theology. Such concepts of God were formulated either upon the basis of an innate idea of the deity, or upon the providential ordering of nature and theology.⁶ Added to this were the traditional philosophical concepts of God with which they were all familiar. All these trends were integrated with the Christian Doctrine of God. So that even for Calvin,

1. Wallace, op.cit. pp.136-7; Lamont, op.cit. p.127.

2. Toon, God's Statesman, p.169; Owen, Works, X. p.326.

3. John Goodwin, Redemption Revealed. London, 1651. p.94; Lamont, op.cit. p.129.

4. J.S. Coolidge, The Pauline Renaissance in England. Oxford, 1970. pp.110-111, 237-8; T. Goodwin, Works, IX. p.236.

5. E.G. Theophilus Gale's very scholastical defence of Federalism, see: Wallace, op.cit. p.178; William Bates affirmed single predestination in supralapsarian terms. See: W. Farmer, [ed], William Bates. The Whole Works, 4 vols. London, 1815. III. pp.5, 419-20; I. p.261.

6. Platt, op.cit. p.12.

Christianity could be a philosophy of history, with God as a constant, as in dialectical reason.¹ God was viewed as an eternal idea underlying the finite process of historical change.² Hence Puritanism could draw upon the riches of Scripture and individual experience, whilst relying upon a scholastical concept of God.

Thus Puritan scholasticism viewed God as sovereign reason and will, but it did not allow the concept of God to become detached from everyday life. We have already seen the emphasis they placed on an individual's innate ability to comprehend God as the pinnacle of existence, and even to comprehend an intellectual works righteousness as a means of reaching salvation. This resulted in a very subjective view of God. One consequence of this was that they tended to view God through man's scholastical conception of Him. This in turn meant that the concept of total depravity could find no real resting place within their epistemology. This was because for Puritan scholasticism, 'manhood' by definition, meant the possession of faculties which the concept of total depravity destroyed.³ If we look at the Westminster Confession we see a reluctance to apply the full consequences of the Fall. Chapter IX section ii reads: "Man, in his estate of innocence,

1. McKim, art. cit. pp. 215-217.

2. R.G. Collingwood, The Idea of History. Oxford, 1937. p. 46.

3. William Perkins and William Ames saw man as made up of three parts: substance of body and soul, the faculties of reason and will, and the integrity of the faculties. Sin for them meant a lack of balance in the latter. Hence salvation became a process of redisposing one's faculties. Inevitably this was equated with an intellectual works righteousness. See: W. Ames, The Marrow of Sacred Divinity. London, 1643. pp. 60-3; Sibbes, Works. III. pp. 210-11; Miller, New England Mind. pp. 183ff.

had freedom and power to will and to do that which is good and well-pleasing to God; but yet mutably, so that he might fall from it." Here we have man able to will freely, and yet this is not a stable state. Remarkably, this is nearly the same as their description of natural man: "God hath endued the will of man with that natural liberty, that is neither forced, nor by any absolute necessity of nature determined, to good or evil."¹ They did this because 'manhood' and 'godship' were equated with philosophical ideals such as: 'reason', 'goodness', 'will' and 'finiteness'. Accordingly God tended to be viewed as a cluster of philosophical ideals, as perceived within limitless, objectivist epistemology.²

Puritan scholasticism increasingly viewed God through man's use of reason.³ There was no doubt that God is rational.⁴ We see an early development of this in Alexander Richardson's Ramist development of 'rules of art', -rational rules which emerge after examining existence- which he saw as ideas in the mind of God.⁵ This was also shown by Perkins, who saw theology as, "...a science that combined man's knowledge of God and himself."⁶ In some ways these trends

1. Robinson, art. cit. pp. 28ff.

2. Breward, op. cit. pp. 176-8; "The necessary being is, in strict propriety, not so truly said to have essence, as to be it...not so properly a being possessed of goodness, as goodness itself."

Miller, op. cit. pp. 12-13; John Howe, The whole works of the Reverend John Howe M.A. 8 vols. London, 1822. I. p. 177.

3. Miller, op. cit. pp. 29-31, 236-340.

4. Bass, op. cit. pp. 69-72.

5. Alexander Richardson, The Logician's School-Master: Or a comment upon Ramus Logicke. p. 13.

6. Boughton, art. cit. p. 84.

peaked in Ames' brilliant Technometry, where 'rules of art' are seen as discernible by mathematics, physics and theology, serving, "...to piece together revelations of God's understanding of being, including his understanding of himself."¹ If we return to the Westminster Confession, "Here we have a highly philosophical and very precise definition of the Creator-creature relationship. The category of causality is basic. God is the first cause."² "Although in relation to the foreknowledge and decree of God, the first cause, all things come to pass immutably and infallibly; yet by the same providence, he ordereth them to fall out accordingly to the nature of second causes, either necessarily, freely, or contingently."³ Therefore for Ames, philosophy had a central role to play in describing the person of God.⁴ In these terms he saw God as a unified essence⁵, with the covenant of grace as necessarily supralapsarian.⁶ For Ames, and Owen in his Of Communion with God, [1657], God is viewed as the reasonable peak of a scale of perfection from which all being flows.⁷ "Try as they would to worship the Jehovah of the Old Testament, their concepts surrounding him implied that he is the highest being in the scale of being."⁸

The expression of God through philosophical terms pre-dates Puritanism, but the uniqueness of their approach lies in their Ramist

1. Boughton, art. cit. p. 90.

2. Robinson, art. cit. p. 30.

3. Westminster Confession, V. 11.

4. William Ames, The Marrow of Sacred Divinity, London, 1642. p. 277.

5. Ibid. p. 12.

6. Ibid. pp. 161, 228.

7. Ibid. p. 125; Owen, Works, II. pp. 8, 19.

8. Bass, op. cit. p. 153.

denial of incomprehensible system. This is why they used reason to demonstrate that the world conformed to the divine mind, and vice versa'. The result was a naturalistic/objectivist epistemology, with God expressed through Natural Theology as a universal law.² Hence we see that the Puritans have reformulated the Reformed Doctrine of God.³ For post-Restoration scholars the results of this were as numerous as there were schools of thought, the main ones being: God as perfect reason⁴; the 'Cause of causes'⁵, the one true necessary being⁶, or supreme goodness. Common to all these was the Puritan tendency to approach God through the mind of man.⁷

1. Bass, op. cit. pp. 74-5.

2. Ibid. p. 6.

3. Toon, Hyper Calvinism p. 104; cf. with the post-Restoration work of Charnock, Works, I. p. 129.

4. "The practice of virtue consists in living suitably to the dictates of reason and nature." See: Owen, Works, XIII. pp. 416, 439; "This is the sovereign dictate of reason... that whatever God reveals to be believed is true, and as such must be embraced, though the bottom line of it cannot be sounded by reason's line; and that because the reason of a man is not absolute reason." ibid., XIV. p. 74; also, Baxter, Practical Works, II. p. 12.

5. Baxter, Practical Works, IV. p. 35; Howe, Works, I. pp. 105-6.

6. Howe, Works, I. pp. 111-112; Charnock, Works, I. p. 151.

7. Baxter, Practical Works, II. p. 3; Owen, Works, IV. p. 229; "I find that truth must..." Baxter, The Reason of the Christian Religion, p. 1; Charnock, Works, I. p. xlvii.

The Pre-Restoration View of Man.

We have seen how anthropocentric the Puritan concept of God could be. This leads us on to a discussion of their concept of man.

One characteristic of Puritanism is its pre-occupation with the nature of man.¹ For them man is essentially a soul, and thus viewed as chained to the corpse, as Thomas Goodwin explains in his An Immediate State of Glory. "When a child is born, a lump of flesh, animated with a soul, comes forth..."² Perkins had taken a more balanced view, seeing a unity between body and soul, which meant for him that pre-lapsarian man didn't need a Messiah. He was impressed by, "...the decency and the dignity of the body in which...nothing was unseemly, so was there in it imprinted a princely majesty."³ Perkins saw a balance in the attributes of pre-lapsarian man, and viewed sin as a disruption of man's faculties and place in the hierarchy of creation.⁴ Hence he saw sin as of the body and soul, and caused by the Devil.⁵ This in itself is a ^every balanced Scriptural view, and by it Perkins resists the scholastical tendency to set sin in all unnecessary being.⁶ Such a tendency was given great impetus by the contemporary hardships which pointed to sin being associated with the temporal.⁷ It is true that at

1. Charnock, Works. I. p. xlvii.

2. T. Goodwin, Works. XII. pp. 26, 17-21; Sibbes, Works. V. p. 143.

3. Miller, The New England Mind. pp. 184-6; Breward, op. cit. pp. 187-8.

4. Miller, op. cit. p. 184; Sibbes, Works. I. p. 187; Breward, op. cit. p. 192.

5. Breward, op. cit. pp. 192, 196, 238.

6. Ibid. p. 226; Sibbes, Works. V. pp. 164-5.

7. J. Sears McGee, The Godly Man in Stuart England. London. 1976. p. 18; see: T. Goodwin, The Trial of a Christians Growth. London, 1641; Joseph Caryl, An Exposition with Practical Observances Upon the Book of Job. 12 vols. London, 1647. I. p. 116; T. Goodwin, Works. IX. p. 14.

times he describes a sin of temporality which divorces Christ's mission from a historic Fall.¹ But on balance he sets sin in the body and the soul.²

The early strains in Puritan theology developed into very different views between the Congregationalists and Presbyterians. By the 1640's the Congregationalists saw man as utterly depraved, hardened in sin, and totally reliant on a supernaturally moved salvation.³ Whereas the Presbyterian document, The Westminster Confession, [1648], tended not to have such a strong view of depravity. By this we do not mean that The Westminster Confession has no place for the doctrine of depravity, it is simply that their doctrine of natural man undermines this.⁴ This separated them from Congregationalists such as Ames and Owen who insisted that depravity meant that, "...any testimony about God, to be effectual, must be preceded by an affection of the will to God."⁵

The Presbyterians believed that Christ had died sufficiently for all men, and that the onus was on man to turn to God.⁶ In matters of reason, Ames in his The Marrow of Sacred Divinity, [1643], did not deny man free-will.⁷ Whether the differences were due

1. Breward, op. cit., pp. 178, 192, 210, 184; Sibbes, Works, V. p. 143, II. p. 296, VII. pp. 441-2, I. p. 298.

2. Therefore the sacraments are not tokenal: Breward, op. cit. pp. 220-222. Whereas for T. Goodwin they are only a sign, Works, IX. p. 362; Owen, Works, VI. p. 39; Howe is close to Perkins, see: Works, I. pp. 447-448.

3. Owen, Works, VI. p. 631, VII. p. 441, X. p. 108, I. p. 477, III. p. 242, III. p. 608; T. Goodwin, Works, X. pp. 5, 59, IV. p. 22.

4. Westminster Confession, IX. 1; Robinson, art. cit. *passim*.

5. Bass, op. cit. p. 149; Ames, The Marrow, pp. 2, 6.

6. Robinson, art. cit. pp. 23ff; N. Davidson, 'The Westminster Confession of Faith.' The Scottish Journal of Theology, vol. 19. 1966. p. 312.

7. W. Ames, The Marrow, 1643. pp. 60-3.

to Congregationalist, Neoplatonic disdain for the temporal, or Presbyterian, Aristotelian optimism in an ethical system of discipline, or whether indeed, they are legitimate differences in biblical exegesis, it is not easy to decide. However, whilst they were denominationally polemical, they were methodologically very close. We should stress that they both set their doctrine of man in a scholastic 'Chain of Being'. If we note that the Congregationalists tended to write about elect man, and the presbyterians about natural man, we can see similarities in their standpoints. Both gave man super-temporal, god-like souls, with an innate reason to construct a Natural Theology.' When we look at their theories of church government, such as those of John Eliot [1604-1690],² in his Christian Commonwealth of 1659, or of Baxter's Holy Commonwealth of 1658³, we see a Presbyterian emphasis upon external discipline. We should view the stance of Roger Williams, [c1604-1683],⁴ and Owen as very similar, except that they internalised the concept of 'Holy

1. With reason an art for disciplining man's natural intellect, rather than as a science of proof. See: Bass, op.cit. p.65; Miller, New England Mind, pp.106-7. Hence reason is not an art, but eternal truth, see: Owen, Works, IV. p.223; hence reason proves that Scripture comes from God, idem, XIV. p.38; God is known in the exercise of reason, idem, IV. p.84.

2. John Eliot, 'The Indian Apostle', Cambridge man. Influenced by Thomas Hooker. Under pressure from the authorities he quit England, landed in Boston 1631. Great evangelist to the Indians, and a good pastor. Links with Richard Baxter.

3. S.C. Carter, 'John Eliot, 1604-90.' The Evangelical Quarterly, Oct. 1948. vol.20. No.4 pp.289ff.

4. Roger Williams, Cambridge man. Sailed to New England in 1630 for religious liberty. Argued with Massachusetts authorities, thus he set up Providence in 1635 as a tolerant province. Wrote The Bloudy Tenent... in 1644. This was an important defence of religious toleration. See: Clark, op.cit. p.1466.

Commonwealth'. It may seem that the Congregationalists created, "...a warm evangelical piety, detached from worldliness, and inward looking..." Without denying this, we should realise that they demanded an assurance in the innate powers of natural man to rationalise.²

From our point of view the significant feature is that the Puritans viewed man within a 'Chain of Being' which encompassed all epistemology and theology. More important than this was the universal appreciation of the spiritual nature of man, and especially how this was associated with the higher faculties. In this way grace and salvation were equated with intellectual development. A key part of this process was their attitude to 'conscience'. We shall end this section by examining the Puritan's approach to conscience.

The Puritan Concept of Conscience.

In many ways Puritanism was a movement of the conscience, "...the only authority of this pastoral care was its appeal to the conscience of its subjects."³ William Perkins was the early driving force in this field.⁴ He realised that despite the reluctance of the authorities, a counselling service needed to be initiated.⁵ He was ~~very~~ very concerned with curing the diseases of the soul⁶. But there is no intense concentration upon the conscience here,

1. Wallace, op. cit. p. 162.

2. Taylor, op. cit. pp. 521, 513ff.

3. Breward, art. cit. pp. 11, 7.

4. Ibid. pp. 7ff.

5. Ibid.

6. Breward, op. cit. pp. 244, 169; Miller, New England Mind, p. 184.

rather an appeal to the whole man.¹ Perkins saw sin as a practical rather than as a metaphysical problem, the answer lay in, "...continual and fervent prayer with watching."² Whilst accepting this, taken as a whole, Perkin's theology has an emerging psychology of conscience.

These trends were taken a step further by Puritans such as Richard Sibbes, [1577-1635]³, and William Ames, who developed a very rationalistic view of the conscience's function. "God hath set up a court in man, wherein conscience is register; witness; accuser; judge; executioner."⁴ In developing such a super-temporal view of conscience, the Puritans drew heavily on Neoplatonism, "...characterising these principles as 'common reason', 'nature within man'..."⁵ They placed the conscience in the mind, "There is a law in the minds of men which is the rule of good and evil."⁶ They also suggested parallels between man's conscience and God.⁷ So that, "The notion of God seems to be twisted with the nature of man..."⁸ Accordingly conscience was viewed as a spiritual substance, and they were not precise in defining where within it manhood finished and godship began.⁹ In doing this they

1. "If thou feelest in thyself some great defect and want of faith, pray unto God earnestly that he will vouchsafe to increase it." Breward, op.cit. pp.224-5.

2. Ibid. pp.237-8.

3. Richard Sibbes. Went to Cambridge. Influential Puritan divine. D.N.B. XVIII. p.182.

4. Sibbes, Works. III. p.210-11, I. pp.87,339; Ames saw conscience as super-temporal reason and will, see: Miller, op.cit. p.184.

5. Charnock, Works. I. p.xliv.

6. Ibid. p.xliii; Owen, Works. XIII. p.377; T. Goodwin, Works. IV. p.304.

7. Owen, Works. XIII. p.395; W. Ames, The Marrow of Sacred Divinity. pp.60-3.

8. Charnock, Works. I. p.xliv.

9. Owen, Works. XIII. pp.414,416. For Howe, God becomes the perfection of man's latent perfection, see: Works. I. p.183.

gave reason a central role to play, with a reasonable conscience seeking absolute reason.¹ John Owen explains this in his Truth and Innocence Vindicated, [1669], "Things evidently deduced and necessarily following the first principles and dictates of nature are of the same kind with themselves, and have the authority of God no less enstamped upon them than the other; and in respect unto them conscience cannot by virtue of inferior commands plead exemption."²

1. Owen, Works, XIII. p. 439, IV. pp. 223-224; Baxter, Practical Works, II. p. 63, IV. pp. 39, 68.

2. Ibid.

Chapter Two.An Outline of Puritan Natural Theology.Puritanism's Role for Natural Theology.

The Puritans knew that Scripture gave Natural Theology some scope', but they saw this as making man's sin inexcusable, rather than as a basis for believing man has the natural ability to construct a system of thought that would encompass all being. Theologically they found it a difficult problem to solve. They solved it by referring to a rigid providence within which man would have free-will. Hence Richard Baxter stressed that a man should re-align himself,² "...God is not only a bare permissive agent in an evil work, but a powerful effector of the same..."³ Hence the emphasis is upon life as a test which each man can pass. The earlier Puritans tended to come down in favour of God's government and the need for free grace, so they viewed Natural Theology as ingenious but spiritually ineffective.⁴ Hence despite the respect which men such as Sibbes and Perkins had for reason, the emphasis was upon practical, experiential faith.⁵ Perkins wrote,

1.e.g. Rom. 1 vs 19; 2 vs 14; 1Cor. 11 vs 14.

2. Baxter, Practical Works, IV. p.64.

3. Ibid.; Lamont, op.cit. p.143.

4. T. Goodwin, Works, I. p.375.

5. Sibbes, Works, I. p.80, II. pp.281,495, IV. p.159; Breward, art.cit. p.10; Breward, op.cit. pp.19-20.

" That which the affections receive is a disorder by which they are therefore affected because they eschew that which is good and pursue that which is evil."¹ Therefore they viewed Natural Theology as insufficient², and looked for authority in Special Revelation³

Whilst Natural Theology appears to be curtailed, the search for an epistemology inevitably led them to ascriptural sources. This is shown by their scholastical view of sin being a dislocation of faculties which man still retains.⁴ This demonstrates that whilst denominationally the Puritans put definite limitations on man's ability to use Natural Theology, methodologically this was not the case. Hence despite his emphasis upon the corruption of Natural Theology, Thomas Goodwin [1600-1680] ⁵, used traditional, ascriptural scholasticism to describe man as essentially super-temporal, reasonable conscience that needed to be saved before the Fall.⁶

Despite this, the Puritans were well aware that man's reason could be an enemy to the 'unsearchable abyss' of God's work.⁷ When pressed they even dismissed the ancient philosophers whom they otherwise cherished. "All the books of the ancient philosophers will not give us the light unto that notion of grace which the Scripture declares unto us."⁸ Hence, "Reason stands by amazed and

1. Breward, op.cit. p. 10.

2. Sibbes, Works, II. p. 147, VII. p. 112.

3. Ibid. II. p. 441.

4. Breward, op.cit. p. 193; Miller, New Engalnd Mind, p. 184.

5. T. Goodwin, D.D. Cambridge man. Influenced by John Cotton. In turn he influenced Charnock, Howe and Gale. A leader of the Congregationalists. Somewhat eclipsed by John Owen. see: D.N.B. VIII. pp. 148-9.

6. T. Goodwin, Works, IX. pp. 14, 97-8, IV. p. 304.

7. Ibid. II. p. 151; Owen, Works, XIV. p. 56.

8. Owen, Works, XIII. p. 415.

cries..."' Most importantly, they would stress that truth does not emanate from the mental faculty.² They were further willing to divorce Scripture from philosophy³, and insist that sanctification has no parallels with philosophical perfection.⁴ They were well aware that Christianity is amenable to being expressed philosophically.⁵ Puritans such as John Owen denied this with a rigorous support of Scripture, as we see in his The Causes, Ways, and Means of Understanding the Mind of God, [1678]⁶.

Accordingly Owen denied the efficacy of the arts of natural man, and so drew a sharp distinction between reason and faith, as we see in his Brief Declaration, [1669].⁷ The same can be said of Thomas Goodwin in his A Discourse of Election, [1682]⁸. Owen rejected Natural Theology or the Church Visible as sources of authoritative knowledge of God.⁹ When we turn to the Presbyterian Richard Baxter, [1615-1691]¹⁰, we have to bear in mind that he was not as competent a theologian as Owen, and so never produced such a sound system of thought.¹¹ We also need

1. Bass, op.cit. pp.97-8, 94-5; Owen, Works, VII. p.16.

2. W.H. Goold, 'John Owen's Greatness as a Theologian'. The Banner of Truth. Issue. 45. Nov/Dec 1966. p.14.

3. Bass, op.cit. p.95; Owen, Works, p.224.

4. Regeneration is to be a new creature with a new inner principle. See: Wallace, op.cit. pp.156-7; Owen, Works, IV. pp.193ff.

5. Owen, Works, IV. pp.202,209; Wallace, op.cit. p.157.

6. Owen, Works, IV. p.192.

7. Ibid. X. pp.119-128, II. pp.389-90; Wallace, op.cit. pp.155,150.

8. T. Goodwin, Works, IX. pp.5-7.

9. Ibid. IV. pp.514-516; Owen, Works, V. p.70; T. Jones, op.cit. p.56.

10. Richard Baxter. Largely self-educated. Ordained 1638. 1641 assistant at Kidderminster, where he developed a great ministry. Largely eclipsed by Owen during the Interrugnum. Refused bishopric from Clarendon. Suffered persecution. A great Puritan writer and pastor. See: D.N.B. I. pp.1349-1353.

11. E. Donnelly, 'Richard Baxter. A Corrective for Reformed Preachers.' The Banner of Truth. Issue 166-7. July/August 1979. p.6.

to bear in mind that he had a more positive view of man's ability, and therefore believed in external codes of discipline for all men.¹ Even so, Baxter questions Natural Theology, and "self-conceited wisdom".²

However, whilst Puritans doubted natural man's abilities, they tended not to doubt reason.³ Time and again they refer to Christianity as intellectual assent to propositional divinity⁴, as we see in the 1760 edition of Owen's The Doctrine of Justification by Faith.⁵ In Owen's Discourse of the Holy Spirit, grace is seen as infused into the mind.⁶ "This internal efficacy of the Holy Spirit on the minds of men, as to the event is infallible, victorious, irresistible, or always efficacious."⁷ Owen associates grace with the Ramist notion of 'rules of art'. For the Puritans this was part of the broad progress to rest in Christ. "The Lord Jesus was willing to come from heaven to earth for us, and shall we be unwilling to remove from earth to heaven for ourselves and him?"⁸ To do this Owen saw, "...the ways and methods of reasoning" as important.⁹ Hence Baxter saw sin as an abuse of man's reason.¹⁰ In turning to God, "There is some part of this which nature itself will teach you, as soon as you come to the free use of reason, and look about

1. Lamont, op.cit. pp. 181, 188, 237.

2. Ibid. p. 160; Baxter, Practical Works, III. p. 400, II. p. 383.

3. T. Goodwin, Works, IV. p. 361; Owen, Works, IV. p. 72. X. p. 23, XIV. p. 76; Lamont, op.cit. pp. 241-2.

4. Toon, God's Statesman, p. 166; Baxter, Practical Works, II. p. 400, 499; Bass, op.cit. p. 95.

5. Glasgow, 1760. Introduction to the reader.

6. Owen, Works, III. p. 316.

7. Ibid.

8. Baxter, The Saint's Everlasting rest. Quoted by: Bass, op.cit. p. 176.

9. Owen, Works, IV. p. 223.

10. Ibid. II. p. 63.

you in the world."¹ It is fundamental that we should see this as a contempt for natural man. 'Natural Man', was the man without grace or intellect. Hence the Congregationalists addressed the elect man, and Presbyterians all men, because of their belief in universal efficacy. These stances can be seen as contrary to the pre-Westminster Assembly pastoralism.² What we can term as the scholastisation of 'elect man' was widespread, and certainly developed at a great pace in the last years of the Commonwealth.³ By this time a scholastic emphasis on reasonable method had moved away from practical pastoralism in favour of an intellectually sound soteriology.

To balance this view, we should realise that the same men tended to dominate Puritanism before and after the Restoration. They had in turn experienced the very peaks of Puritan fervour in the millennial period, and so tended to have strong pastoral sides to their faith. In grasping this we understand one of the strongest restraints to Natural Theology.⁴ Scholastic methodology became irrelevant when Baxter or Owen warned of hell-fire., "The genuine offspring of sin are death and hell...that the earth is filled with darkness, resentments, griefs...is to be attributed entirely to this cankerous ulcer of nature."⁵ Herein we see a great source of spiritual unity

1. Baxter, Practical Works, IV. p.68.

2. J. B. Rogers, Scripture in the Westminster Confession, Grand Rapids, 1967. p.114; McKim, 'John Owen's Doctrine of Scripture', art.cit. pp.196-7.

3. See Owen's Animadversions of 1662, and Baxter's The Reason of..., 1666.

4. Miller, New Engalnd Mind, pp.12-20; Toon, Hyper-Calvinism, p.31.

5. Owen, Works, X. p.618; see also the outstanding ministry of Baxter: Donnelly, art.cit. p.12; J. I. Packer, 'Baxter's Reformed Pastor'. The Banner of truth, Issue. 129. June 1975 pp.1-2; Wallace, op.cit pp.128,139,152; for Owen's own pastoral qualities, Ibid. p.150.

in the puritan movement.¹

By the 1650's several factors were taking the fire out of Puritanism. One aspect of this was the way political power had gone to the head of the Independents.² Because of factional rivalry, and different views on how the church and country should be run, this led directly to a decline of the more numerous Presbyterian movement.³ Although it is true that the impact of Baxter reversed this to some extent.⁴ These changes within Congregationalism and Presbyterianism, along with the decline in millennialism and the development of scholastic Federalism, were brought to a head by the fall of the Commonwealth and the approaching Restoration. Pastoralism in particular had begun to disintegrate by 1559. Although rigid, scholastical theology proved to be more resilient. All these trends are reflected in The Orthodox Evangelist, [1652], of the New Engalnd Congregationalist, John Norton, [1606-16663]⁵. Norton used scholastical method to express his orthodox Congregationalism. In the process he balanced God's sovereignty against man's self-hood. He emphasised reason, and especially ethics, whilst effectively lessening any emphasis upon total depravity and the need for free-grace.⁶ It is important for us

1. I Murray, 'Who Were the Puritans.' The Gospel Magazine. September, 1970. p.409.

2. Tudur-Jones, op.cit. p.34.

3. A.H. Drysdale, History of the Presbyterians in England. London, 1889. pp.312, 346.

4. Lamont, op.cit. p.182; Drysdale, op.cit. pp.364-5.

5. John Norton. Cambridge man. Although his work was scholastic, his education was not that good. Ordained a 'teacher' in 1638. D.N.B. XIV. pp.659-660.

6. J.V. Jones, op.cit. pp.3-31.

to realise that it is fitting to bring the New England Puritans into this discussion. In many ways they were extensions of the English Puritans. They are especially useful as examples of what Puritanism developed into away from factors such as the Civil War, the English class structure and most importantly the Restoration.

All these factors represent areas in which Puritanism curbed or developed Natural Theology. Next we need to highlight specific developments of Natural Theology prior to the Restoration period.

The Place of Philosophy within Puritanism.

Even from the earliest days of its development, Puritanism tended to see God and soteriology in terms of a detached, atemporal mind.¹ This inevitably brought in philosophical ideals and methodology, so that Puritanism tended to expect academic standards in theology.² Indeed, they shaped central parts of their soteriology by making it conform with it.³ So that they began to deny that knowledge could be separated from God.⁴

One phrase, "...as becomes creatures endowed with reason and understanding...", is important.⁵ It suggests that Puritans viewed

1. Breward, *op. cit.* p. 186; Sibbes, *Works*, II. p. 147, I. p. 245.

2. Thus T. Goodwin criticised Arminianism because of what he saw as logical inconsistency. *Works*, IX. p. 91.

3. e.g. when Owen denies universal efficacy, *Works*, X. p. 245.

4. Bass, *op. cit.* pp. 166-177; Owen, *Works*, XIII. pp. 416, 439.

5. *Ibid.* XIII. p. 439.

reason and understanding as of God. Neoplatonic ideas about reason became a key part of their view of humanity. This tied in with a basic Neoplatonic contempt for the flesh¹, which in turn led them to lodge reason in what they saw as the atemporal soul.² Reason was viewed as a principle of action, bringing order out of chaos, with man allied to the former.³ In this system God is the First Cause which transcends temporal imperfections.⁴ God is absolute reason⁵, which man, as the world in microcosm⁶, assents to.⁷

These trends developed steadily in New England where they maintained a legalistic Federalism⁸, whilst developing ideas of human autonomy.⁹ One of the most important consequences of this was the lessening of the historic role of Christ as they centred all in the Father as First Cause.¹⁰ By the 1670's the sovereignty of God was compromised in their theology. Religion had become an expression of the individual thinker seeking his own happiness, with faith as an act of the will.¹¹ The answer to personal problems was seen in one's own experience and reflection, rather than in Scripture. We see this attitude in Giles Firmin's, [1614-1697], The Real Christian, [1670].¹²

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1. R. Baxter, The Saint's Everlasting rest. London. The Religious Tract Society. p.199; T. Goodwin, Works. XII. p.26.
 2. Baxter, Practical Works. IV. p.69; Goodwin, Works. IV. p.304.
 3. T. Goodwin, Works. XII. p.18, IX. pp.5-8.
 4. Ibid. IX. p.100; Baxter, Practical Works. II. p.12.
 5. Owen, Works. XIV. p.74.
 6. Baxter, Practical Works. II. p.11.
 7. Charnock, Works. I. p.xliii; Baxter, Practical Works. II. p.12.
 8. Jones, op.cit. pp.28-9.
 9. Ibid. pp.16-17.
 10. Ibid. p.26.
 11. Ibid. pp.32-4, 41-2.
 12. G. Firmin, The Real Christian. London. 1670. p.141.

They increasingly viewed God as having to approach man's rationality, rather than man having to approach God. Hence, "...the spirit is reduced to trying to provide man with reasons to convince him it would be better for him to be saved than damned..."¹ They did this because they had changed the Reformed view of a Scriptural God into that of an ideological First Cause.² It is remarkable that they did this whilst expressing it through traditional Congregationalist language.³

The Presbyterian's optimistic view of man led to a more overt use of Natural Theology before 1660, and this was continued after. Those such as John Howe, and Stephen Charnock, [1628-1680]⁴, saw God everywhere. Therefore in his Living Temple, [1676], Howe emphasises that we can learn about God in pagan writings.⁵ He stressed that such a natural source would lead to an intimate knowledge of God, "...in the highest perfection originally, in and of itself."⁶ Similarly in his Attributes of God, [1682-3]⁷, Stephen Charnock said, "...every visible object which offers...itself to our sense presents a deity to our minds..."⁸ They perceived a vast, interrelated system, and

1. Jones, op.cit. pp. 44-5.

2. Ibid. pp. 59-60.

3. Ibid. p. 64. Especially true of Cotton Mather, [1663-1728], Ibid. pp. 79-83. See: S. E. Ahlstrom, A Religious History of the American People. Yale, 1972. p. 159.

4. S. Charnock. Cambridge man. Chaplain to Henry Cromwell in 1654. "His theology was Calvinistic...but assigning to man a power of distinguishing good and evil which threw on him the responsibility of his actions." D.N.B. IV. pp. 134-5.

5. Howe, Works, I. pp. 87, 98.

6. Ibid. I. pp. 102-3.

7. Adam and Veal, [eds], The Collected Works of Stephen Charnock. 2 vols. London, 1682-3.

8. Charnock, Works, I. pp. 129, 131.

equated it with a 'Chain of Being' ', which could not be broken by sin.² Because of this belief in stability, like Firmin, they saw the onus as being on man to use his reason and choose.³ Hence Charnock wrote, "Faith supposeth natural knowledge, as grace supposeth nature."⁴

Much more than making God approach man, they began to see God as perfect man.⁵ This can be seen as a by-product of assimilating the concept of God into Puritan epistemology. To the Puritans the harmony of the 'Chain of Being' demonstrated man's goodness⁶, and rationality⁷. 'God' became the idealistic apex of this ascriptural epistemology, "...we ascend to a conception of a substance purely incorporeal and spiritual, so from a multitude of things in the world, reason leads us to one choice being above all..."⁸ Here we see a definite emphasis upon the natural basis of theology.⁹

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1. Baxter, Practical Works, IV. pp.36,69; Charnock, Works, I. p.134.
 2. Charnock, Works, pp.131,133,137,162, IV. pp.17-19; Baxter, Practical Works, III. p.65.
 3. Charnock, Works, I. pp.xl,xliii,166, II. pp.27-9,III. p.120.
 4. Ibid. I. p.130, IV. p.96, I. p.133; Howe, Works, VI. p.404, I. p.9.
 5. Charnock, Works, I. p.131; Howe, Works, I. p.183.
 6. Baxter, Practical Works, IV. p.36; Charnock, Works, I. pp.10-11.
 7. Charnock, Works, I. pp.137-9,142,132,154.
 8. Ibid. I. pp.150, 151-2; Baxter, Practical Works, IV. pp.69-70.
 9. Wallace, op.cit. p.159; R.S.Westfall, Science and Religion in Seventeenth century England, Michigan,1973. pp.141-2. This demonstrates their links with scientists and philosophers such as Newton and Locke. See: Toon, Hyper-Calvinists, p.34; Howe, Works, I. pp.132-4.

Puritan 'Golden Chain' Epistemology.

From what we have touched upon so far we can be fairly sure that Puritans were constructing a theory or science of the method or grounds of knowledge: an epistemology. For the vast majority of them this was theocentric. Hence they regarded the various branches of Natural Theology as demonstrating aspects of God's character.' They believed that to study nature was to study God in the act of willing.² The resulting scholastic aspects were in turn focussed on the heart of what we have discussed as 'Puritanism'. Its inarticulate nature did not stop them incorporating it into their epistemology, "...trying to articulate a vision in the words of a highly abstract system of thought."³ An even more extensive system came out of this. It incorporated all known epistemology and theology in a 'Chain of Being', which linked the meanest atoms to Almighty God. Since William Perkins' Golden Chain, [1590], is seminal in this approach, it will be useful if we term this 'Golden Chain Epistemology' from now on.

Dudley Fenner's [1558-1587]⁴ Sacra Theologica was one of the first important Puritan works in this field. But it was Perkin's Golden Chain which really, "Marked the beginning of a series of English

1. Miller, New England Mind, p.216.

2. Ibid. p.225.

3. Jones, op.cit. p.70; Miller, op.cit. p.102.

4. D. Fenner. Went to Cambridge. Follower of Cartwright. Had to flee country before taking B.A. Returned and put back into prison in 1584. Subscribed to get abroad to be pastor of a church in Middleburgh. Probably one of the most able Puritans. D.N.B. VI. p.1181.

systematic theologies..", like Ames Medulla, [1627], and Ussher's A Body of Divinity, [1645].¹ Perkins' methodology owed much to Aristotelian and Ramist influences.² "In Perkins' thought, the will of God functioned as what Aristotle would have described as an efficient cause appropriate to the Prime Mover-as a single, pure act, not the consequence of reason or arbitrium, but the operation of the 'final' cause in ordaining all things for the glory of God. Ramist reasoning could arrive at the same conclusions as the pre-Christian Aristotelianism that was used by Christian Reformers."³ Aristotelian influences meant that Perkins had a sound ascriptural base for his ethics, whilst his Ramism became a source for an atemporal, Neoplatonism which was very important for following Puritans such as Ames.⁴

The use of scholastic language tended to wrap their faith in philosophical terminology. This in turn led to viewing salvation as the acquisition of knowledge by the mind through the senses.⁵ This is demonstrated in their scholastical view of man⁶, which saw the Fall as a dislocation of man's place in the 'Golden Chain'⁷, but which did not

1. Breward, op.cit. p. 171.

2. Wallace, op.cit. pp. 56-7. It is important that Perkins drew from Beza, who detested Ramus. Beza's Summa Totius Theologiae included a chart of salvation and followed the medieval method. Breward, op.cit. p. 171.

Boughton stresses the epistemological parallels between Ramism and Beza's Aristotelianism. art.cit. pp. 86-7.

3. Boughton, art.cit. p. 86.

4. Wallace, op.cit. p. 57; K.L. Sprunger, The Learned Doctor William Ames: Dutch Backgrounds of English and American Puritanism. Urbana, 1972. pp. 109-110.

5. Wallace, op.cit. pp. 56-7; Miller, op.cit. p. 281.

6. Miller, op.cit. p. 184.

7. Ibid.; Sibbes, Works. I. p. 131.

doubt man's strong links with God, as we see in Ames' The Marrow of Sacred Divinity, [1642].¹ The linchpin of this whole view was predestination. This fulfilled the philosophical role of linking ground-motives with God's decrees, whilst drawing on all aspects of Reformed Theology.²

One consequence of making predestination the centre of their epistemology was that they had to defend all its corollaries.³ Reprobation was one which they philosophically accepted whilst ethically they rejected it⁴, as we see in Baxter's The Saint's Everlasting Rest⁵. This approach also tended to lessen the role of Christ, "The purpose of a Saviour was subordinated to the purpose of election."⁶ They saw it as far more important to assure a man of election than to preserve the Scriptural role of Christ.⁷ Everything was collapsed into the idea of a supralapsarian election, which would give the soul grace which not even Adam had received.⁸ Therefore it was not a minister's role to convert, rather to assure the elect of their salvation.⁹ Pastoralism can be viewed as a practical extension of the scholastical interpretations of the decrees of God.¹⁰ So that it was to this scholasticism that Apocalyptic excitement added the fire of revival from the early

1. Ames, The Marrow. pp. 60-3.

2. Wallace, op. cit. p. 56; Breward, op. cit. p. 183.

3. Wallace, op. cit. p. 56.

4. Ibid.; Lamont, op. cit. pp. 137-8.

5. Baxter, Practical Works, III. pp. 125, 152, 379, 476, 499, 400.

6. Wallace, op. cit. p. 48.

7. Ibid. pp. 48-9; John Downname, The Christian Warfare. London, 1604. p. 284.

8. Wallace, op. cit. pp. 48-9; T. Goodwin, Works. IX. p. 14.

9. Ibid. pp. 51-2.

10. Ibid. p. 59; Haller, op. cit. p. 83.

1630's. It is further significant that the scholasticism was obscured at the height of this excitement.

As well as Perkins, John Preston, [1587-1628],¹ significantly developed 'Golden Chain' epistemology. Here, "...there is a similar blending of Ramism with the principles of Aristotelian natural philosophy in the development of a systematic theology."² Here again we see the development of predestination through scholasticism. "The stated purpose of Preston's discussion of the divine essence was to defend predestination yet at the same time his philosophical position produced a supralapsarian understanding of salvation."³ In works such as Life Eternal [1634], Preston emphasised the power of human reason, and its ability to discern the fundamental character of God.⁴ In works such as The New Covenant [1631], he expressed the perception of God through philosophical constants which are not related to physical existence.⁵ The whole of Christian history, whereby God and man were affected by occurrences such as the Fall, and the Atonement, are irrelevant to such a scholastical view of God. "Election and reprobation were, therefore, necessary to God's act of self-revelation and glorification."⁶

1. J. Preston. Cambridge man. Influenced by John Cotton. He was much preoccupied with studying scholastic divinity. "It is clear that his heart was firmly set on the propagation of Calvinistic theology." D.N.B. XVI. pp.308-311.

2. Boughton, art.cit. p.88.

3. Ibid. p.89.

4. J. Preston, Life Eternal or a Treatise of the Knowledge of the Divine Essence and Attributes. London, 1634. pp.1-5.

5. J. Preston, The New Covenant or the Saints Portion. London, 1631. pp.40-1.

6. Boughton, art.cit. p.90.

It was against this background that William Ames developed his view of Federal Theology. In works such as his Medulla, [1627], "...Ames identified being with the eternal good..."¹ In this view of God Ames associated God's attributes with the philosophical arts. So that, "There was, in other words, no real difference in knowledge between what was known by nature and what was revealed in the written word."² It is very important that we realise that the Puritans' methodology was leading them a belief that knowledge is unified. This effectively put Natural Theology on a par with Special Revelation. In this system, "...God is essentially a promiser who also performs, irrespective of man's action or inaction, fidelity or infidelity."³

Ames was thorough in the way he expressed Federal Theology through scholasticism. In 1626 he published his edition of Ramus' Dialecticus with Commentary.⁴ The role of the individual became central because of his view that theology functions, "...according to the Golden rules of art."⁵ Accordingly an individual was seen to judge himself in parallel with God. In his Conscience with the Power and Cases Thereof, [1643], Ames defined conscience as, "...a man's judgement of himself, according to the judgement of God of him."⁶ In this outlook

1. Boughton, art. cit. p. 92.

2. Ibid.

3. Horton Davies, op. cit. p. 312.

4. Wallace, op. cit. p. 59.

5. Bass, op. cit. p. 68.

6. W. Ames, Conscience with the Power and cases Thereof. London, 1643. I. p. 2; L. Ziff, Puritanism in America. New Culture in a New World. Oxford, 1973. p. 14; M. Walzer, The Revolution of the Saints. Cambridge, Mass. p. 110; C. Hill, Society and Puritans in pre-Revolutionary England. London, 1964. p. 291

words replaced religious symbols as instruments of theological precision.¹ Hence the man who possesses an enlightened conscience has found his real identity.² There was a great emphasis upon the worth of man, so that it followed that God would have to fulfill his part in any agreement. It is rumoured that when the Commonwealth fell Thomas Goodwin quoted Jeremiah 20 vs 7³, believing that God had broken a pledge with the Parliamentarians.

Hence 'Golden Chain' theology can be viewed as, "...the fountainhead of a new conception of evangelical inwardness..."⁴ Because of such internalisation, there was great emphasis upon personal judgement. Therefore the accuracy of sense-perception became important.⁵ Because of this, and their rationalistic view of God and revelation, it became essential that Scripture should be demonstrably the word of God.⁶ In view of what we have already discussed about their philosophical view of the ground of God's being, it was natural that Scripture, as God's revelation, should be measured against the 'Golden Rules of Art'. Added to this was the way they tended to set their concepts of 'man' and 'god' in parallel. Apart from man being atemporal spirit, they saw reason and will as profound similarities with

1. Ziff, op. cit. p. 14; Horton Davies, op. cit. p. 314.

2. Ziff, op. cit. p. 15.

3. T. Goodwin, Works, Introduction by R. Halley. p. xxxvii; Horton Davies, op. cit. p. 313; Ahlstrom, op. cit. p. 131; M. Guizot, History of Richard Cromwell and the Restoration of Charles II. London, 1856 p. 64.

4. Ahlstrom, op. cit. p. 128.

5. Baxter, Practical Works. IV. pp. 68-9.

6. T. Goodwin, Works. IX. p. 43; Owen, Works. XIV. p. 38, XIII. p. 439.

God.¹ Reason more than anything else became a tool and a goal for them.² Hence to use reason was to worship God.³

As the Restoration approached Covenant theology was expressed more in terms of a reasonable agreement. It became a philosophical and a theological constant, the infrastructure of 'Golden Chain theology'. No matter how far apart the Puritans drifted apart denominationally, they all clung to the security of such a stable system. 'Golden Chain Theology' was very adaptable to their superficial differences, whilst uniting them in the grounds of their epistemology.

Against this background all Puritans viewed the Fall as disorder.⁴ With salvation as a re-establishment of this unity.⁵ Despite their strong concept of sin, they regarded all nature and time as united under God's providence.⁶ Throughout all history and nature man emerges as the apex of the earthly chain of existence, confirming his god-like character⁷, as we see in Baxter's Mother's Catechism, [1682]⁸. Such an emphasis upon the worth of man, combined with an atemporal view of sin, can be regarded as a further assault on the role of Christ.⁹ Scholastical 'Golden Chain Theology'

1. Miller, New England Mind, pp. 182-3.

2. Owen, Works, XIV. p. 74, III. p. 365; Miller, op. cit., pp. 71, 74.

3. Bass, op. cit., p. 79.

4. Owen, Works, I. pp. 103, 185. XIX. pp. 341, 347, 387; T. Goodwin, Works, IV. p. 153; Baxter, Practical Works, II. p. 63.

5. Baxter, Practical Works, IV. p. 68.

6. Owen, Works, XIII. p. 435; Charnock, Works, II. p. 292.

7. Owen, Works, XIII. p. 435; Baxter, Practical Works, IV. p. 35.

8. Baxter, ibid.

9. T. Goodwin, op. cit., IX. p. 3.

tended not to have a real role for Christ.' 'God' emerges as a philosophical constant. He is the orderer of the 'Chain of Being'², and sin became a fall from the higher levels of the chain, while salvation was viewed as a pilgrimage towards super-added grace.³

Despite this atemporalism, Puritans took it for granted that man could develop a very complete picture of God from natural revelation. Everything was expressed through the ground attributes of God as first cause. Hence they saw everything as essentially good, reflections of an all-embracing determinism.⁴ This was understood to be essentially good, and regarded as the super-temporal peak of the 'Chain of Being'.⁵ Baxter explains the thinking behind this in his The Catechising of Families, [1682], "...we see that the regions above us excel in the glory of purity and splendour: and when this dark spot of earth hath so many millions of men, can we doubt whether those vast and glorious parts are better inhabited...If our souls are invisible spirits, essentiated by the power of life, understanding, and will, the spirits above us can be no less, but either such or more excellent. And he that made us must needs be more excellent than his work."⁶ In England, Congregationalists tended not to view physical creation as optimistically as this. They came closest to doing so in New England,

1. T. Goodwin, Works, IX. p. 97

2. Ibid. p. 106.

3. "Where inward man is strictly the soul with its graces, set in opposition to our outward man...a mouldering and decaying condition." Ibid. XII. p. 3; Baxter, Practical Works, II. p. 977.

4. Baxter, Practical Works, IV. p. 36; Owen, Works, IV. p. 87, III. p. 272.

5. Owen, Works, II. p. 91, I. p. 151, VI. p. 399, IX. p. 42.

6. Baxter, Practical Works, IV. p. 69.

"...where Puritanism achieved its fullest, least inhibited flowering."¹ After John Cotton, one of the most interesting is Roger Williams. His theology emphasised the worth of man so much that he demanded 'soul liberty'. Such a subjectivism has been seen as divorcing man from God.² Against a background of 'Golden Chain' epistemology, Williams demanded a 'soul liberty' which had close parallels with Locke's rationalistic empiricism.³ 'Golden Chain' epistemology rapidly outgrew what had formally been regarded as sacrosanct.⁴

Developments of Covenant Theology During the Restoration.

Many scholars see a decline in the pastoral theology which we earlier associated with the beginnings of the Puritan movement. To some extent the troubles of the Restoration period brought a revival in pastoralism. Works such as Baxter's Now or Never, [1663], Joseph Alleine's, [1634-1668]⁵; A Call to the Unconverted, [1672], Owen's A Discourse of the Holy Spirit in Prayer, [1682], and Bunyan's, [1628-

1. Ahlstrom, *op. cit.* p. 135.

2. A. Simpson, Puritanism in Old and New England. Chicago, 1955. pp. 53-7.

3. Taylor, *op. cit.* p. 514.

4. Ahlstrom, *op. cit.* p. 161.

5. J. Alleine. Went to Oxford in 1649 whilst Owen was vice-Chancellor. Assistant to George Newton in Taunton in 1654. Ejected 1662. Imprisoned when he continued to evangelise. Released 1664., imprisoned again and again. "His evening years, spent often in hiding, were temptuous and dark." A great Puritan pastor. D.N.B. I. p. 299.

1688]’, Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners, [1666], are all parts of this renewed search for spiritual fulfilment. “These are plummetts sounding the uttermost depths of Nonconformist religious experience.”² But whilst Puritanism crumbled as a mass religion³, the efforts to synthesise a ‘Golden Chain’ epistemology continued. Nothing underlines this more than Joseph Alleine’s Theologia Philosophica. Alleine was one of the greatest pastoral ministers of post-Restoration England. Despite this he felt impelled to produce a work which attempted to synthesise Special and Natural Theology.⁴

Similarly in Charnock’s A Discourse of Divine Providence, we are furnished with a reason for turning to nature for authoritative revelation: “Things are not ordered in the world by blind fortune, but an all-seeing Deity, who hath the management of all sublinary affairs.”⁵ Within this system man’s sense-impression feeds the mind, thereby communicating the wisdom of God to the wisdom of Man. “In nature it is so: the eye guides the body, because that is the chief organ of sensitive knowledge; the mind, which is the seat of wisdom, guides the whole.”⁶ It was also important for Charnock to stress that nature

1. John Bunyan. Born of poor parents. He probably acquired mastery of the English language from reading the Bible. 1657 recognised as preacher. Spent most of 1660-72 in Bedford gaol, “...his chief writings demonstrate that to him the world was exclusively the scene of spiritual warfare...” Cross, op.cit. p.207.

2. Horton davies, op.cit. pp.453,438ff.

3. Knox, art.cit. p.301.

4. D.N.B. I. p.299. Although this work has been lost.

5. Charnock, Works, I. p.8.

6. Ibid. I. p.9.

gives man direct knowledge of God, for no other being could communicate such knowledge through nature: "No creature hath the skill or power to work immediately upon the will of men; neither angels or devils can do it immediately, but by proposing objects, and working upon the fancy, which is not always succesful."¹ It was because of this that Thomas Browne in his Vulgar Errors, [London, 1646], writes, "It hath seemed strange unto some, she [Eve] should be deluded by a serpent, or subject her reason to a beast, which God had subjected to hers."² This is a question which the great Puritan polymath, John Milton, addressed in his Paradise Lost, [London, 1667]. In Book IV, line 800, Satan approaches Eve in what has been seen as an erotic dream, echoing:

*"...the bought smile
Of harlots, loveless, joyless, unendeared,"³*

Even though the dream sequence is an assault on the rationality of 'man', Milton is at pains to explain philosophically why man could be deceived in such a dream.⁴ When we reach the eating of the apple in book IX, Milton is careful to stress that Satan approaches Eve with 'glozed' or false speech.⁵ Similarly, for Charnock in his A Discourse of Divine Providence, "The sun in the heavens is a shadow of God, which doth not disdain to communicate its natural goodness, and emit its beams to the meanest creatures...and would it not be a disparagement to an

1. Charnock, Works. I. p.9.
 2. Ibid. I. p.1.
 3. IV. 465-6.
 4. V. 100-021.
 5. IX. 549.

infinite goodness to be outstripped by a creature, which he hath set up for a natural communication of good to the rest of the world."¹ "What an orderly motion is therein the natural actions of creatures, which evidenceth a guidance by an higher reason, since they have none of their own."²

By the time of the Restoration period the Puritans were relying on a scholastical definition of theology, as a mixture of Special and Natural Revelation. Urian Oakes, [1631-1681], in his New England Pleaded With, [1673], explains the role of Natural Theology in this: "Rational application of general Rules of Scripture to our selves and to our conditions, and in the production of particulars, and due Reasoning from it."³

'Golden Chain' epistemology developed as new men came to the fore. Yet we should not think that there was any clear search for a scientific, naturalistic synthesis. The real impetus was one of wishing to synthesise all knowledge. However, whilst Puritans such as Baxter and Owen laid great emphasis upon pastoral faith, many post-Restoration Puritans were far more concerned with developing a stable epistemology.

Accordingly they outlined a 'Chain of Being' which demonstrated God's creation and His nature. To deny this was demonstrable was to, "...go contrary to every creature and link in the

1. Charnock. Works, I. p. 11.

2. Ibid. p. 15.

3. Urian Oakes, New Engalnd pleaded With, 1673; in Bass, op.cit. p.54.

chain of creation."¹ Charnock further writes in his Attributes of God, [London, 1682], "Every plant, every atom, as well as every star, at the first meeting whispers this in our ears, I have a Creator, I am a witness to a deity."² Like earlier Puritans they saw man as the apex of creation, with a temporal and spiritual nature.³ However, they tended to stress man's spiritual ability and affinities more than earlier Puritans. This led to them seeing man as having an innate and unlimited power of spiritual fulfilment. Howe writes in his Living Temple, [1676], "...every good and virtuous man hath or may attain a sort of...self-fulness, and be satisfied from himself [which yet is a stamp of divinity, and a part of the image of God, or such a participation of the divine nature as is agreeable to the state and condition of a creature...]"⁴ By self-fulfilment they meant infinite, intellectual development, "...the possibility on the creature's part can never actually be filled up; that it is a bottomless abyss in which our thoughts may still gradually go down deeper and deeper, without end..."⁵ This was combined with viewing God through reason⁶, and so religion became the rational discernment of good⁷, something they thought of man doing naturally.⁸ Indeed, "We cannot pay God a due and regular homage

1. Charnock, Works, I. p. 128.

2. Ibid. pp. 143-4; Howe, Works, I. pp. 132-3.

3. Charnock, Works, I. p. 162.

4. Howe, Works, I. pp. 171, 183.

5. Howe, Works, I. p. 183.

6. Ibid. I. p. 182; Charnock, Works, I. pp. 128, 158.

7. Charnock, Works, I. p. xliii.

8. Ibid. pp. xliiv, 155, 137.

unless we understand him in his perfections..."¹ This approach tended to set great store in the precision of Greek philosophy², so that the concept of God was expressed through such terminology as an idealistic first cause, "We must come at last to an infinite, eternal, independent being that was the first cause...."³ Their concept of God was expressed through the methodology and epistemology of what we have termed 'Golden Chain' theology. "If nature therefore uses counsel to begin a thing, reason to dispose it, art to effect it, virtue to complete it, and power to govern it, why should it be called nature rather than God?"⁴ In such a system knowledge is the basis of faith.⁵

Somewhat earlier John Owen wanted the Congregationalist Savoy Declaration, [1658], to act as an intellectual and practical rallying point. To some extent he was successful, but despite the obvious denominational differences, Congregationalism was very similar to Presbyterianism. Thomas Goodwin's pupil, Theophilus Gale, [1628-1678],⁷ worked towards a synthesis of Calvinism and Neoplatonism.⁸ There was

1. Charnock, Works, I. p. 129.

2. Howe, Works, I. pp. 87, 96.

3. Charnock, Works, I. pp. 150-1, 157; Howe, Works, I. pp. 178-83.

4. Ibid. I. p. 157.

5. Ibid. I. p. xl; Baxter, Practical Works, II. p. 404.

6. Savoy Declaration. "A statement of Congregational principles and polity... drawn up at a Conference held at the Chapel of the old Savoy Palace in 1658 by representatives of 120 churches." Cross, op. cit. p. 1219.

7. T. Gale. Oxford man. M.A. in 1652. "In ecclesiastical polity he was an Independent, and a member of Thomas Goodwin's church. His great work was The Court of the Gentiles, [1669], which attempted to trace all theology to its Hebrew roots. D.N.B. VII. p. 817.

8. Tudur-Jones, op. cit. p. 88.

also John Milton, [1608-1674], who had more in common with the Independents than the Presbyterians.' Works such as his famous Areopagitica, [1644], sought intellectual freedom. Harry Vane's work, [1613-1662], "...presupposes a profound sense of man's personal worth..."² Thomas Gilbert, [1613-1694], had, "...all the schoolmen at his finger-ends."³ We should also stress the continuing intellectual excellence and dominance of John Owen with works such as Animadversions on a Treatise entitled 'Fiat Lux', [1662]⁴

Despite being banned from Oxford and Cambridge, the Independents set about the education of their children. In doing this they retained scholastical views about education. Old syllabi were changed in favour of modern courses for subjects such as mathematics and modern languages, but there was no attempt to introduce courses that squared with their faith. We see this at John Flavell's Academy at Dartmouth in 1668, or with Charles Morton, [1627-1698]⁵, whose academy in London offered, "... classics, logic, divinity, mathematics, modern languages, science...", subjects closely alligned to a Natural Theology epistemology.⁶

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1. A. Peel, [ed], Essays Congregational and Catholic, pp. 285-7; Tudur-Jones, op.cit. p. 64.
 2. Peel, op.cit. p. 64; also David Clarkson, see: Charnock, Works, I. p. xliii.
 3. Tudur-Jones, op.cit. p. 64.
 4. Peel, op.cit. p. 297; Bass, op.cit. pp. 93-4.
 5. C. Morton, Oxford man. M.A. in 1652. 1662 ejected. Began school for dissenters. Defoe was a pupil. 1686 arrived in New England because of persecution. Became minister at Charleston, got a post at Harvard. D.N.B. XIII. p. 1046.
 6. Ashley-Smith, op.cit. pp. 56-61; Tudur-Jones, op.cit. p. 88.

These trends peaked in the work of those Independents who combined an emphasis upon the worth of man with a wish for a scholastic synthesis of the faith. This led to something close to an intellectual works righteousness. We see the seeds of this in Owen's Truth and Innocence Vindicated, [1669], where he venerates reasonable virtue.¹ But it was with such men as John Locke, who is seen as having close ties with the Puritans, and Roger Williams, that these trends reached a peak.² "...Williams had in effect replaced his faith in the living God of the Scriptures by another faith in his own inner light and reason."³ But in doing this he was not out of line with mainstream Puritanism. Theophilus Gale and Stephen Charnock were both students of Thomas Goodwin. John Locke was tutored by John Owen and Thomas Cole.⁴ One of Gale's students, Thomas Rowe, taught Cartesianism. "This significant widening of the intellectual horizons of Nonconformist thought can be exemplified...by Samuel Cradock's academy which was one of the channels by which the influence of the Cambridge Platonists reached Dissenters."⁵ All this implies a dominance of 'Golden Chain' epistemology within the ranks of the Independents.⁶

By the 1690's the traditional Congregationalism, known as High Calvinism, had so developed a scholastic view of Federalism that it had changed into Hyper-Calvinism.⁷ "...a system of theology, or a system

1. Owen, Works, XIII. p. 416.

2. Horton Davies, op. cit., p. 137.

3. Taylor, op. cit., p. 521.

4. Tudur-Jones, op. cit., p. 88.

5. Ibid.

6. Taylor, op. cit., shows the background and implications, idem. pp. 197-8.

7. Toon, Hyper-Calvinism, pp. 144-5.

of the doctrines of God, man and grace, which was framed to exalt the honour and glory of God and did so at the expense of minimising the moral and spiritual responsibility of sinners to God."¹ Looking back over the history of Congregationalism we would not have expected Hyper-Calvinism to have become such a dominant force. Mainstream Puritanism had strongly blocked the anti-reason movement of Webster and Dell in the 1640's and 1650's.² Persecution might well have been a key factor which changed the movement. Many might have been frightened off by the sometimes fatal consequences of being a Nonconformist in the Restoration period.³ There is also the strong possibility that Hyper-Calvinism has little to do with Webster and Dell's movement. That it was in fact the apex of a scholastisation of Congregationalism. There is no doubt that aspects of the theology of Congregationalists such as Owen and Thomas Goodwin were highly complex, and scholastical. By the 1680's we have a movement which no longer has these men of great ability, but which none the less relies on their work, and is itself caught up in the universal, contemporary emphasis on Natural Theology as the basis of epistemology. Added to this we have a Congregationalist movement depleted by persecution, which might have contributed to the low educational standard. In the 1680's and 1690's the High Calvinists could have either relied too heavily on scholastical systems they didn't completely understand, or reject them. Bearing in mind the traditional

1. Toon, Hyper-Calvinism, pp. 144-5.

2. Miller, The New England Mind, pp. 74-9.

Congregational denial of Natural Theology, and the scholastical development of their theology, it was inevitable that they would do both.'

Against this background the New England Congregationalist John Norton, [1606-1663], constructed a synthesis of the entrenched Congregationalism of Cotton with the more humanistic outlook of Thomas Hooker. His Orthodox Evangelist, [1652], has been called, "...an extremely technical exposition of the Puritan system of theology."² His theology retained the structure of traditional Congregationalism, whilst developing a high valuation of man. Thereby emphasising the ability of a reasonable man to ascend to God as first cause.³ Like the Presbyterian emphasis upon a moralistic works righteousness, this rationalistic subjectivism reduced the role of Christ.⁴ The result of this was a self-contradicting theology, which expressed man's ability to effect his own salvation against a background of traditional supralapsarian, double-predestination.⁵

New England Congregationalists increasingly rebelled against total submission to the traditional concept of God.⁶ All knowledge and soteriology had been combined within 'Golden Chain' epistemology. In the process they had stressed man's natural ability, minimised the historic Fall, and promoted the concept of God which tallied with

1. Toon, Hyper-Calvinism, pp. 146-7; Horton Davies, op.cit. pp. 450-3.
 2. Toon, ibid. pp. 147-8.
 3. J. Jones, op.cit. p. 11.
 4. Ibid. p. 26.
 5. Ibid. p. 31.
 6. Ibid. pp. 35-9.

the individual's perception of his own happiness.'

An Analysis of Puritan 'Golden Chain' Epistemology.

In the 'Introduction' we

saw that if Puritanism is definable it was probably a revivalist movement, centred on the needs of the individual, and carried out by a number of well educated men who reacted against what they saw as the inadequacies of the Church. It certainly was a great deal more than this by the end of the seventeenth-century. Whilst allowing for socio-politico-economic developments, we should look upon Natural Theology as a major force for change within the movement. There is no doubt that a synthesis of Natural and Special Revelation began to emerge at the earliest times.

Physical Structure.

The Puritans had 'atoms' at the base of their 'Golden Chain', the building blocks of temporality. There was some discussion about whether atoms could be further sub-divided into intelligent and non-intelligent, as we read in Howe's Living Temple, [1676].² It was most important to them that atoms were, "...contradistinguished to mind and spirit."³ Here we see a clear hierarchy between heaven and earth,

1. Jones, op.cit. pp.39ff.
 2. Howe, Works, I. pp.47-9.
 3. Ibid. I. pp.146-7.

between the temporal and spiritual, more precisely between man and the rest of creation.' Within this structure the linking of 'contrary qualities together' was seen to point to an intelligent creator. "Yet we see them chained and linked one with another..."² For Charnock, man and nature are closely integrated in an imposing unity.

In terms of the 'golden Chain' they saw clear parallels between man and the rest of the chain. Lowest of the life forms were the plants³, as Baxter explains in his The Reasons of the Christian Religion, [London, 1666], "A power of mere growing motion, common to plants."⁴ They demonstrate the law of God⁵, and more precisely his teleological hand, as Charnock writes in his Attributes of God, "There is a natural as well as a revealed knowledge, and the book of creatures is legible in declaring the being of a God..."⁶

Above plants they set 'brute creatures', as we see in Owen's A Discourse Concerning the Holy Spirit, [London, 1674].⁷ Discussing the 'inanimate part' of nature Owen writes, "That which concerned the inanimate part of it in general, with the influence it had into the production of animated or living but brute creatures..."⁸ In his Review of the Annotations of Grotius, [London, 1656], Owen writes, "Of Creatures,

1. Charnock, Works, I. p. 154; Owen, Works, III. pp. 97, 95.

2. Charnock, Works, I. p. 152.

3. Baxter, Practical Works, II. p. 7, IV. p. 69; Charnock, Works, I. p. 154.

4. Baxter, Practical Works, IV. p. 69; Charnock, Works, I. p. 155.

5. Ibid.

6. Charnock, Works, I. pp. 143-4.

7. Owen, Works, III. p. 95.

8. Ibid.

one general division is into intelligent and brute or irrational..."¹
 Baxter writes of a vast and synchronised system in which, "...we find
 that the grossest things are the basest..."² These were seen as being
 with which man has some links, but to which man is profoundly superior:

*"Each in their several active spheres assigned,
 Till body up to spirit work, in bounds
 Proportioned to each kind. So from the root
 Springs lighter the green stalk, from thence the leaves
 More aery, last the bright consummate flower
 Spirits odorous breaths: flowers and their fruit,
 Man's nourishment, by gradual scale sublimed,
 To vital spirits aspire, to animal,
 To intellectual; give both life and sense,
 Fancy and understanding; whence the soul
 Reason receives, and reason is her being..."*³

Within this system man is separated into "The rational or intelligent
 part of creation..."⁴ Owen termed the whole of creation a host of order
 and beautiful disposition, "A host properly is a number of men put into
 a certain order, for some certain end or purpose..."⁵

Creatures, more commonly called beasts, were associated with
 sin. In his Living Temple, Howe believes creatures to be without souls
 to direct their actions, he sees them, "...as a sort of machine made by
 the hand of God..."⁶ More pointedly he quotes the Neoplatonist Philo
 and underlines, "That they who have no hope towards God, have no part or
 share in the rational nature."⁷ He sees the atheist as one

1. Owen, Works. XII. p.487.

2. Baxter, Practical Works. IV. p.69.

3. A. W. Verity, (ed), Milton. 'Paradise Lost'. Cambridge, 1910. V. 477-85.

4. Owen, Works. III. p.95.

5. Ibid. III. p.96.

6. Howe, Works. I. p.140.

7. Ibid. I. p.99.

who charms his reason with sensual softness.' Thomas Goodwin writes in his A Discourse of the Glory of the Gospel, [1680], "If you would ask now what is the substantial glory of a man, that is the foundation of all his parts and wit, and makes him capable of the glory the world puts on him, without which he would lose all in an instant, what is it? It is his soul that dwelleth in his body; take it away and he is a beast; nay, take it away and he is a dead carcass..."² Such a view should be balanced against Thomas Goodwin's Of Creatures, and the Condition of their state by Creation, [London, 1682]. This work has a more positive view of creation. But we should be aware that it is more concerned with man as a creature, rather than creation in the broad sense. Also, whilst Goodwin sees a strong 'theologia naturalis' for prelapsarian man, he still emphasises the necessity for a super-added grace.³ In his Of Election, [1682], Goodwin emphasises that the folly of nature lies in its mutability.⁴ It is significant that in his Mother's Catechism, [London, 1682], Baxter associated bestial behaviour with ignorance, "Those that do not learn that which God would have them learn, are all naught, and miserable worse than beasts."⁵ Whilst the term 'beast' was an expression of sin, the Puritans stressed their links with all creation through the 'Chain of Being'. The Presbyterians had a more positive view of creation because they did not stress total

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1. Howe, Works, I. p.91.
 2. Goodwin, Works, IV. p.327.
 3. Ibid. VII.p.45, IX. p.5.
 4. Ibid. IX.p.4.
 5. Baxter, Practical Works, IV.p.34

depravity as much as the Congregationalists. Hence Baxter stressed, "It is not true to say that beasts do not have souls. They have a different soul, and are made to serve man."¹ Accordingly beasts were generally seen as imperfect shadows of men.

We should stress that Puritan 'Golden Chain' theology was a mixture of Reformed Theology and scholasticism. If they had been thoroughly scholastic they might have gone as far as Descartes and seen a rigid philosophical divide between 'man' and physical creation. Descartes saw animals as soul-less, mindless machines. Puritans disagreed. 'Golden Chain' theology was dominated by their concept of God, and they saw it as axiomatic that His imprint was on all creation. Also since God was viewed as Spirit, it was logical that all creation has a basic spirituality, and that beasts have souls.² Howe in his Living Temple, (London, 1676), criticises Descartes' lack of understanding of creation or intelligent spirituality.³ The emphasis was upon a linked ascent through temporality until man emerged as a mixture of the temporal and the spiritual. Owen describes this view in his Discourse Concerning the Holy Spirit, [1674], "The works of God being thus finished, and the whole frame of nature set upon its wheels, it is not deserted by the Spirit of God...there are particular operations of the Holy Spirit in and about all things, whether merely natural and animal,

1. Baxter, Works, IV. p. 35.

2. Ibid.

3. Howe, Works, I. pp. 139-140.

or rational and moral."¹

Therefore the Puritans saw close parallels between man and beasts. Man was viewed as the apex of the creatures.² The highest point of, "...the pure lump of creatureship..."³ Even so, creatures were regarded as doomed, created in imperfection, for even man needed super-added grace⁴, as we see in Thomas Goodwin's Of Election, [1682]: "Were I as perfect as Adam, I promise you I would for my part betake myself to that of election, that super-creation privilege, [rather] than adventure my eternal condition in any free-will holiness, were it never so perfect."⁵ Therefore in his The Knowledge of God the Father, physical creation was seen as created by God in imperfection.⁶ At best creatures were seen as attaining a shadow of spiritual being⁷, and so it was vanity to expect anything from them.⁸

Such a view of creatures saw the essence and glory of man in his atemporal soul, "...by which he differeth from the beasts."⁹ More especially they regarded man's reason as separating him from brute creatures, who only have instinct to guide them.¹⁰ This view meant that man is closest to beasts when he neglects the power of reason, as Owen

1. Owen, Works, III. p. 103.

2. Goodwin, Works, IX. p. 100; Charnock, Works I. p. 161.

3. Goodwin, Works, IX. p. 97.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid. p. 7.

6. Ibid. IV. p. 544, 466. V. p. 40. VII. p. 7.

7. Ibid. VII. p. 18.

8. Owen, Works, XIX. pp. 107, 204.

9. T. Goodwin, Works, IV. p. 327; Baxter, Practical Works, IV. pp. 34, 69.

10. Howe, Works, I. pp. 99-100; Owen, Works, IV. p. 82.

writes in his Mortification of Sin, [1656]¹, and Baxter in his Catechising of Families, [London, 1682]. More serious is their view that in reason man confronts life, and in creaturely 'unreason' death, as we see in Howe's Living Temple, [1676].² Hence it is God's reason that animates the 'lump of creatureship'.³ This compounded their view that stable existence is super-temporal. Therefore reason was not seen as making the temporal spiritual, rather as allowing man to get above the beasts to spiritual existence.⁴

Accordingly man was set within an order of creation, caught in a tension between the spiritual and temporal.⁵ Like the beasts man is conversed with and sustained by God⁶, and like them his body demonstrates a maker.⁷ Hence man holds his place in the 'Golden Chain' as the apex and epitome of all creation.⁸

1. Owen, Works, VI. p. 178; Howe, Works, I. p. 91.

2. Baxter, Practical Works, IV. p. 69.

3. Howe, Works, I. p. 91; Charnock, Works, I. pp. 126, 162.

4. Charnock, Works, I. p. 158.

5. T. Goodwin, Works, V. p. 42; therefore man is set at a certain rank in creation, see: Howe, Works, I. pp. 100, 133.

6. Ibid. p. 219.

7. Ibid. pp. 129-133, 124.

8. Charnock, Works, I. pp. 154-5, 161-2.

Chapter Three.Puritan Concepts of 'Man' and Sanctification.The Place of 'Man'.

We now turn to the most significant section of 'Golden Chain' theology: the Puritan view of 'man'. Even for the earliest Puritans the concept of the individual had been centrally important.¹ We can view this approach as either the result of the traditional Reformed duty of ministering Christianity to the individual, or as part of the development of an anthropocentric epistemology. Breward comments on Perkins' concern with casuistry: "It is a difficult question to decide how much this is due to the Puritans's concern with the pathology of conscience and how much this is due to a shift in theological emphasis towards anthropocentrism."²

In his Discourse Concerning the Holy Spirit, [London, 1674], Owen saw creation in two parts, "That which concerned the inanimate part of it in general, with the influence it had unto the production of animated or living but brute creatures,"³ and, "The rational or intelligent part of it..."⁴ Although they saw man as distinct, they regarded all the levels of creation as a synchronised system.⁵ On earth

1. Breward, art. cit. p. 10.

2. Ibid. p. 14.

3. Owen, Works. II. p. 95

4. Ibid.

5. Baxter, Practical Works. IV. p. 69.

man is the apex of creation,¹ with all other creatures being subservient to him.² But whilst man was seen as the apex of creation, his links with the lower levels were recognised.³ Because of this, man as the epitome of all nature, was understood to be the clearest demonstration of the hand of God, as we see in Charnock's Attributes of God.⁴ Hence the Puritans could not understand any argument which saw man as, "...an anomolous sort of creature, reducible to no certain rank or order in the creation."⁵

Looking at creation in general and man in particular, the Puritans saw clear evidence of God's work.⁶ Superficially there was the proof of the human body, as Howe explains in his Living Temple, "Could you have made such a thing as the stomach, a liver, a heart, a vein, an artery?"⁷ They thought such examples of God's handiwork clearly showed his wisdom.⁸ To deny this is to go against the testimony of every level of creation. It would also undermine their 'Golden Chain' cosmology, as Charnock explains in his Attributes of God, "...every atheist is a grand fool. If he was not a fool, he would not imagine a thing so contrary to the stream of the universal reason in the world, contrary to the rational dictates of his own soul, and contary to the testimony of

1. Charnock, Works, I. p. 150.

2. Ibid. pp. 152-3.

3. Baxter, Practical Works, IV. pp. 34, 69.

4. Charnock, Works, I. pp. 161-2.

5. Howe, Works, I. pp. 99, 199.

6. Ibid. p. 100.

7. Ibid. pp. 126, 132-3.

8. Ibid. p. 124.

every creature and link in the chain of creation."¹ We should be aware that Charnock is tying various strands of knowledge together into a neat epistemology. Hence to question God's teleological role seemed to them to undermine man's epistemological position. For all temporal creation was linked to man, and man was seen as the best source of evidence of God's teleological and ontological imprint.²

But we have to remember that the Puritans tended to lodge 'humanity' in the soul, and so they conceived 'man' as being above temporal creation. This is why many Puritans had a high regard for the work of Descartes and Locke. They admired their idea of nature as 'mechanism', with the soul as 'super-mechanism'.³ Despite this they looked to the mechanism of nature as a basis for their view of God and man. The Puritans were part of a trend which, "...refused to accept the possibility of God's willing conformity to a standard of goodness beyond nature and for those who equated metaphysics with principles of causation, supralapsarianism and determinism seemed to be the only logical conclusion."⁴ But not even this was clear-cut. the Puritans relied heavily on Aristotelianism, and so there is often an appreciation of the sufficiency of the temporal in their work. The result was that whilst focussing upon Neoplatonic 'goodness', they also relied on the Aristotelian emphasis upon sense-perception. Charnock writes of this in

1. Charnock, Works, I. pp. 128, 12-17.

2. Baxter, Practical Works, IV. pp. 36, 39.

3. Howe, Works, I. pp. 139-141.

4. Boughton, art. cit., p. 96.

his Attributes of God, [1682], "Whatsoever is a natural perfection in creatures, is eminently an infinite perfection...[Referring to the created]...They are all good, for he pronounced them so..."¹ Hence they tended not to see grace destroying nature, rather as completing it.² They saw no incongruity in this combination of the natural and the supernatural,³ and emphasised how important it was for men to receive natural information in order to rationalise.⁴ In his The Catechising of Families, [London, 1682], Baxter wrote, "...even faith and reason suppose our senses, and their true perception; and if the first perception be false, faith and reason can be no truer."⁵ By the Restoration most Puritans had abandoned the Neoplatonic contempt for the physical which we saw in the work of Thomas Goodwin. For them nature was stable, and the full implications of the Fall were no longer fully developed. Increasingly nature was viewed as having the latent capacity to achieve perfection. Even if this was doubted by some, all saw nature as a mirror of God. For Baxter nature demonstrated God's goodness, "And could God make the world good, if he were not good?"⁶ He also saw nature proving the existence of heaven.⁷ In his Discussion Concerning the Holy Spirit, [London, 1674], Owen pointed to the order of providence in the harmony of nature.⁸

1. Charnock, Works I. pp. 10-11.

2. Miller, op. cit. pp. 288-9, 280; Platt, op. cit. p. 12.

3. Miller, op. cit. p. 289.

4. Charnock, Works I. pp. xxxviii, 158; Owen, Works, IV. p. 84.

5. Baxter, Practical Works, IV. p. 69.

6. Ibid. p. 36.

7. Ibid. p. 69.

8. Owen, Works, III. p. 96.

The Puritans did not believe in pure matter as Aristotle did.¹ For them physical creation was finite and attributed to a Neoplatonic, supernatural, first-cause.² They recognised that as a second cause man is less powerful than God³. In particular that man is not in possession of a comprehensive knowledge.⁴ These were the positions which God and man held within their system. However, they so developed their concept of man, that it began to overlap with the position of God. We see this in Howe's Living Temple, "God converses with all creatures, culminating in men...and if God doesn't he insults man as temple and doesn't deserve to be called God."⁵ Much of this grew out of the value they set upon Natural Theology. Balanced against this was the super-temporalism which we have already touched upon.

Because of the dialectical implications of temporality, and the scriptural account of the Fall, the Puritans by-passed physical creation and set manhood in the super-temporal soul. "The glory of man is his soul, by which he differeth from beasts...", according to Thomas Goodwin's A Discourse of the Glory of the Gospel, [London, 1682]⁶, or his An Immediate State of Glory, [London, 1657].⁷ Whilst this lifted man above the mechanisms of nature⁸, it was still a part of the 'Golden Chain'. "...we find that the grossest things are the basest, and the

1. Taylor, op. cit. p. 92.

2. Charnock, Works, I. pp. 10, 191; Howe, Works, I. p. 112.

3. Charnock, Works, I. p. 146

4. Ibid. I. p. xli.

5. Howe, Works, I. p. 219.

6. Goodwin, Works, IV. p. 327, XII. pp. 3ff.

7. Ibid. XII. pp. 3ff.

8. Howe, Works, I. p. 140.

most invisible the most powerful and noble; as our souls are above our bodies..."¹ Paradoxically, spiritual being headed the 'Golden Chain', whilst being opposite to the physical part of it. They overcame this by conceiving of the super-temporal as a vast mind. In his Animadversions, [London, 1662], Owen saw physical creation as mindless.² In the same terms they understood man's soul to rule the body, as God rules the world.³

It was in the soul, and especially in the higher faculties, that the Puritans set humanity.⁴ Hence they believed that if a man abandoned his reason he undermined his humanity.⁵ In his On the Mortification of Sin, [London, 1656], Owen stressed that it was a great sin to have a carnal mind against God.⁶ Accordingly he saw the loss of reason as inverting "...the order of nature, dethroning the soul, and causing it to follow the faculties that have no light..."⁷ Reason became their means of attaining a knowledge of God, and in its operation it was understood to be atemporal.⁸ Hence reason was clearly associated with grace in such works as Owen's Truth and Innocence Vindicated, [London, 1669].⁹ If we look at Owen's The Reason of Faith, [London, 1677], "God by his Holy Spirit doth secretly and

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1. Baxter, Practical Works, IV. p. 69.
 2. Owen, Works, XIV. pp. 74, 76.
 3. Charnock, Works, I. p. 10.
 4. Ibid. pp. 142, 136.
 5. Owen, Works, XIV. p. 74.
 6. Ibid. VI. p. 178.
 7. Ibid. XIV. p. 74; Baxter, Practical Works, IV. p. 34.
 8. Owen, Works, X. p. 128; Charnock, Works, I. p. 10.
 9. Owen, Works, XIV. p. 74, XIII. pp. 416ff.

effectually persuade and satisfy the minds and souls of believers in the divine truth and authority of the Scriptures..."¹ For Owen such revelation is reasonable. Even though the Holy Spirit operates internally, better than any science, it is clear it fulfils the highest faculty of rational souls, which is the ability to accept testimony. Hence the mind and will of God satisfies the mind and will of man.² In such terms revelation frees the mind from darkness and ignorance.³ In his The Trinity, [1669], Owen emphasises that even though the Trinity is scoffed at by philosophy, it is nevertheless reasonable to, "...the soul which the Holy Spirit has opened."⁴ Accordingly man was viewed as having to shake off temporality, thereby achieving spirituality through reason⁵, as we see in Baxter's The Saint's Everlasting Rest, [London, 1651].⁶ This theme represents a strong Neoplatonic contempt for the temporal. It presents the harsh side of deterministic theology, implying that man needed salvation because of his temporality. We see this in Thomas Goodwin's A Discourse of Election, [London, 1682].⁷

We can understand that their view of man's nature in relation to the 'Golden Chain' was contradictory; that there was a, "...contradiction, between its physical and spiritual aspects."⁸ They

1. Owen, Works, IV. pp. 99-100.

2. Ibid. IV. p. 102; Bass, op. cit. pp. 99-100.

3. Ibid. IV. p. 7.

4. Ibid. II. p. 411.

5. Ibid. XIII. p. 416, XIV. p. 74.

6. Baxter, Practical Works, III. p. 65.

7. Covenant theology was a major unifying agent. See: Miller, Errand into the Wilderness. Cambridge, Mass. 1956. pp. 48ff; See: T. Goodwin, Works, IX. p. 106; Bass, op. cit. p. 117; Owen, Works, IV. pp. 84-5, 416ff; XIV. p. 74;

Baxter, Practical Works, III. p. 65.

8. Miller, New Engalnd Mind, p. 286.

accepted the ability of nature to feed knowledge to man's senses, which in turn led to grace, but when dealing with man's soul they tended to dismiss nature. In philosophical terms this is a flawed approach, and in this sense the Puritans were 'bad' philosophers, because they never completely resolved their epistemology into any one of the genres of thought they used.¹ Nevertheless, there was enough ascriptural philosophy to compromise Scripture, which also tends to mean that they fall short as theologians. The Puritans were convinced, "It is but one truth in philosophy and divinity, that what is false in one cannot be true in another...", as Charnock writes in his Attributes of God.² Most notably the brilliant John Owen's philosophy is seen as flawed because he failed to integrate the basic grounds of his knowledge.³ Within Puritan theology there are strains of historic scripturalism and scholastic philosophy. Their concept of 'man' helped them to overcome the apparent contradiction. They did this partly by developing the Federal concern with the individual, and also by associating elect or 'natural' man, with the qualities of grace, or more precisely with the qualities of reason. 'Man' emerged as the great exemplar and mind which centred this system, as we see in Charnock's Attributes of God, "In his soul...[man]...partakes of heaven, in his body of the earth. there is the life of plants, the sense of beasts, and the intelligent nature of

1. Miller, New England Mind, p. 378; Charnock, Works, I. p. xlv.

2. Charnock, Works, I. p. 131; Bass, op. cit., p. 154.

3. Bass, op. cit., p. 154.

angels."¹

The Concept of Soul within Man.

We have seen how the Puritans saw the soul as man's divine glory within, as we see in Thomas Goodwin's The Glory of the Gospel, [London, 1682].² In his Reason of Faith, [London, 1677], Owen regarded the soul as the image of God within man.³ The mind of man emerges as the ruler of man's soul, in a parallel fashion to the mind of God ruling the world: "Man is a creature composed of mind [nous], which is the ruling faculty of the soul, and the understanding which is the directive, discerning and judging faculty. The heart is the practical principle of operation, and includes the will."⁴ In this sense man's soul was understood to perform functions similar to God's, which in fact brings man closer to God.⁵ The soul was associated with mind, and so not to move towards God was seen as unreasonable.⁷ Sin was associated with unreason, and the Fall was seen as a loss of morality within the mind, as we read in Owen's Vindiciae Evangelicae, [London, 1655].⁸

Humanity was set within the soul.⁹ In his Salvation

1. Charnock, Works, I. p. 162.

2. T. Goodwin, Works, IV. p. 327.

3. Owen, Works, IV. p. 84.

4. Ibid. III. pp. 250-2; Charnock, Works, I. pp. 10-11.

5. Baxter, Practical Works, IV. p. 69.

6. Owen, Works, IV. pp. 82-4.

7. Ibid. pp. 83, 93-4, 101, XII. p. 487; Howe, Works, VIII. p. 355;

T. Goodwin, Works, XII. p. 26.

8. Ibid.

9. Owen, Works, XII. p. 487. IV. pp. 93-4; Howe, Works, VIII. p. 355.

By Hope, [London, 1691], John Howe writes, "...inward man is strictly the soul with its graces, set in opposition to our outward man..."¹ Even Aristotelian ethics were minimised when they concentrated on a super-temporal soul cloistered within a finite body, and meagerly fed with reason by the senses.² Therefore reason was equated with grace, which in turn brought Neoplatonism's contempt for the flesh.³ In these terms Christian and philosophical concepts of sin and atemporalism seem to be parallel. It was in philosophical terms that they tended to view man's earthly existence as a temporary alienation of, "...these intelligent, immortal spirits of ours."⁴

Therefore the Puritans tended to view the soul as a 'demi-god', and as profoundly atemporal. In his A Discourse of the Holy Spirit, [London, 1674], Owen insisted that man was created in order to conform reasonably to God.⁵ In his The Unreasonableness of Infidelity, [London, 1655], Baxter saw sin as intellectual error.⁶ In A Brief Vindication of the Non-Conformists, [London, 1682], Owen wrote, "The practice of virtue consists in living suitably to the dictates of reason and nature."⁷ Their rational view of the soul tied in with viewing God as 'first cause', or absolute reason as in Owen's 1662 Animadversions.⁸

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1. T. Goodwin, Works, XII. p. 3; Howe, Works, VIII. p. 355.
 2. Baxter, Practical Works, IV. p. 69; Howe, Works, I. pp. 195-8; Haller, op. cit. pp. 334, 337, 348-9.
 3. T. Goodwin, Works, XII. p. 26.
 4. Howe, Works, VIII. p. 156.
 5. Owen, Works, IV. pp. 84-5, III. pp. 101-103.
 6. Baxter, Practical Works, II. p. 383, III. p. 65.
 7. Owen, Works, III. p. 416.
 8. Ibid. XIV. p. 74; Baxter, Practical Works, IV. p. 70.

In his A Saint or a Brute, [London, 1662], Baxter looked to, "Full proof...from reason itself that there is a life to come..."¹ The soul became a key component in this epistemological view of man. It was the means of underlining affinities with God as the ground of being. So that, "...the notion of a God seems to be twisted with the nature of man, and is the first natural branch of common reason..."² They never lost sight of the fact that man's soul is created by God, but they invested man's soul with so many independent powers that the dependence upon God was lessened. One of the main ways in which they could do this was by representing God as an ideal within their systems. In his The Reason of the Christian Religion, [London, 1662], Baxter wrote, "Though God, or the first cause, is to be searched after in all his works, yet chiefly in the chief of them within our reach; which is man himself."³ Therefore their concept of soul was defined as reasonable and atemporal, which tied in with their view of God. The result was that both man and God were expressed in dialectically idealistic terms, and though none of the Puritans saw man as God, in using these means to describe man and God, it was inevitable that they would do so. Hence in his The Reason of the Christian Religion, [London, 1662], Baxter wrote, "...I found that truth must be so long retained and faithfully elaborated, by a diligent and willing mind, till it be concocted into a clear methodological understanding."⁴ So that towards the end of the seventeenth-

1. Baxter, Practical Works, II. p. 711.

2. Charnock, Works, I. p. 137.

3. Baxter, Practical Works, II. pp. 3, 11-12.

4. Ibid. II. p. 3.

-century the Puritans found most of the answers to spiritual problems within man. The implications of using as scriptural 'Golden Chain' theology is that they had been doing this from the earliest times.

Accordingly their pathology of soul associated it with the mind, especially wisdom. Its creation demonstrated wisdom, and it needed a continuation of this to function, as we see in Owen's Doctrine of the Holy Spirit, [London, 1677].¹ They saw temporality as compromising the basic nature of the soul.² Despite this the soul functions, albeit imperfectly, and as such is the only intelligent mechanism within the whole of man, and therefore of nature.³ Thus the soul was viewed as purely intellectual, a "...substance which thinketh, understandeth, and willeth..."⁴ So that to be alienated from God, was to be alienated from ultimate reason.⁵

We should underline that the Puritans were not trying to immerse the concept of 'man' in God, or even attempting to call man God. In his Living Temple, [London, 1676], Howe opposed those who, "...have spoken of the souls of men as parts of God, one thing with him; a article of divine breath...to give them his very name, and say in plain words they were God."⁶ 'Golden Chain' theology was very rigid,

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1. Owen, Works, IV. pp. 82-3, III. pp. 101ff; Howe, Works, I. p. 160, VIII. p. 355.
 2. Howe, Works, VIII p. 385; Owen, Works, XIV. pp. 62, 74; T. Goodwin, Works, IX. pp. 5, 95, XII. p. 26.
 3. Owen, Works, XIV. p. 74; Baxter, Practical Works, IV. pp. 69ff; Howe, Works, I. p. 140.
 4. Baxter, Practical Works, IV. p. 69.
 5. Owen, Works, VI. p. 178; Baxter, Practical Works, III. p. 65; Howe, Works, I. p. 91; Charnock, Works, I. p. 128.
 6. Howe, Works, I. p. 143.

each stage of creation kept to its own level. The great change came in concentrating all knowledge on man as 'natural man', rather than putting man into the place of God. Clearly their concept of man's soul was a key part of this. It was viewed as a court within man, as the ruler of the world in microcosm within the body.¹ Significantly, they tended not to believe that the soul had been blighted by the Fall. This, combined with their atemporal, dialectical view of the essence of the soul, became a key part of the powers they gave to natural man. In doing this they moved away from the basic Reformed concept of a free God, to that of a free man.²

Their Concept of Sin.

"In a century wracked by plague, fires, and in the middle decades, civil war, suffering was believed to be an integral part of God's plan..."³ Against such a background it is understandable that the Puritans have been seen as obsessed with the problems of sin. We should underline that for them sin was a practical problem. In his The Tryall of a Christians Growth, Thomas Goodwin saw sin's positive side in promoting fellowship with Christ.⁴ Even though they had a vivid sense of election, the Puritans saw the mission of Christ as removing the

1. Howe, Works, I. p. 143; Charnock, Works, I. pp. 10-12; Owen, Works, XIII. p. 416, IV. p. 84, III. pp. 101ff; Baxter, Practical Works, II. p. 404, IV. p. 69.

2. H. R. Niebuhr, quoted by Taylor, op. cit. p. 499.

3. McGee, op. cit. p. 18.

4. T. Goodwin, The Tryall of a Christian's Growth. London, 1641. p. 88.

guilt of sin, rather than sin itself. Within this situation Owen emphasised the central role love plays in overcoming sin. We read this in his Declaration of 1679, "Love is capable of a constant exercise, is a spring unto all other affections, and unites the soul with an efficacy not easy to be exercised unto its object."¹

They were acutely aware of the need to associate themselves with the workings of sin. In his An Exposition, [London, 1647], Joseph Caryl explains, "...considering the times we live in threaten us with a common deluge, or an overflowing scourge, which may sweep away both the good and the bad together."² Against this background we should be aware of the Puritans' determination to minister to the troubled soul. In doing this they stressed the need to be aware of sin, as we see in the work of Richard Baxter, The Mischiefs of Self-Ignorance, [London, 1661], "Be acquainted with the root and remnant of your sins: with your particular inclinations and corrupt affections; with their quality, their degree, and strength; with the weakness of every grace; with your disability to duty; and with omissions or sinful practices of your lives. Search diligently and deeply; frequently and accurately persue your hearts and ways, till you certainly and thoroughly know yourselves..."³ With man, "...in a state of wrath and condemnation...for the Scripture telleth you that 'We are conceived

1. Owen, Works, I. p. 150.

2. J. Caryl, An Exposition with Practical Observations Upon the Book of Job, quoted by: McGee, op. cit. p. 54.

3. Baxter, Practical Works, II. p. 845.

in sin', Psal.11. And 'that by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God,' Rom.III.23..."¹ In his The Aggravation of Sinne and Sinning Against Knowledge, Mercie,[London, 1650], Thomas Goodwin stressed, "The subject therefore as necessary as any other, because if ever we be saved, sin must first appear to us all, as it did here to him..."²

We have introduced this section by trying to stress the personal role of sin in the lives of the Puritans. However, sin also had a key role to play in their use of Natural Theology, and it is this we are primarily concerned with.

In standard Puritan works such as Owen's Death of Death, [London,1647], and Thomas Goodwin's An Exposition of the Epistle to the Ephesians, [London,1682], sin was associated with the historic Fall.³ Whilst accepting this, we also have to note their tendency to marry the Adamaic Fall with philosophical disorder, or a contempt for the temporal, as we see in Owen's Dissertation of Divine Justice, [London,1653].⁴ Hence their views on sin were often narrowly connected to the Scriptural Fall.⁵ Accepting this we need to realise that depravity was a very dominant theme within all Puritan groups. In

1. Baxter, Practical Works, II. p. 845.

2. T. Goodwin, Works, IV. p. 153.

3. Owen, Works, X. p. 399, XIX. p. 103; T. Goodwin, Works, I. pp. 7, 48, 58, 87, 340, 344-5.

4. Owen, Works, X. p. 619, XII. p. 127; T. Goodwin, Works, XII. p. 26.

5. Miller, op.cit., p. 22.

his The Doctrine of Justification by Faith, [London, 1677], Owen emphasised the depravity of nature.¹ Whilst in his The Nature of Apostasy From the Profession of the Gospel, [London, 1676], Owen pointed to the depravity of the mind.²

Since they tended to concentrate religious experience in the higher faculties, it is not surprising that the Puritans saw sin as a dislocation of intellectual clarity, or the loss of first principles. Hence for Charnock in his Attributes of God, a sinner is, "...not one that wants reason, but abuses his reason..."³ The cosmos was viewed in dialectical terms as reason or 'goodness'. Any man denying the dialectical basis of life was seen as effectively unmanning himself, thereby, "...dethroning the soul, and causing it to follow the faculties that have no light...", according to Owen in his Animadversions, [London, 1662], and Baxter in his Mother's Catechism, [London, 1682].⁴ Hence to deny dialectical analysis and method implies that the 'first cause' is unworthy of being, and undermines 'Golden Chain' epistemology.⁵ So sin was viewed as a disruption of man's dialectical position within the 'Golden Chain'. Baxter wrote in his The Reason of the Christian Religion, [London, 1666], "...[sin is]...a

1. Owen, Works, V. p. 26.

2. Ibid. III. pp. 242, 238, VII. p. 127; Baxter, Practical Works, II. p. 561; Lamont, op. cit. pp. 137-8.

3. Charnock, Works, I. pp. 127-8; Owen, Works, XIV. pp. 62, 74, 76, XIII. p. 439, IV. p. 82; Baxter, Practical Works, III. p. 65, II. pp. 711, 404.

4. Charnock, Works, I. p. 162; Owen, Works, XIV. pp. 74, 76; Baxter, Practical Works, IV. p. 34.

5. Charnock, Works, I. pp. 187, 191; Owen, Works, X. p. 619.

breach in the moral harmony and order of the world...as the dislocation or rejection of some parts of a clock or watch is a disordering of the whole..."¹

Accordingly sin was viewed as a dislocation of the faculties of the soul. This implied that perfection within natural man remained, although they admitted that it was inhibited.² So that no matter how firm the Puritans were on total depravity when referring to such ideas as the Fall, they mellowed when they dealt with man's intellectual abilities. This is especially important when we bear in mind the way they associated the soul with dialectic, and salvation with rational method. Against this background sin was seen as a cloudiness of understanding that only salvation could clear. In Owen's Reason of Faith, [London, 1677], sin is intellectual darkness which doesn't comprehend God's light.³ Baxter uses the same terms of reference in his The Saint's Everlasting Rest, [London, 1651].⁴ In a complex mixture of Scripture and scholasticism, 'Golden Chain' theology pictured Satan hindering man from discovering the mind of God.⁵ In similar fashion the Holy Spirit was seen to fulfill the role of purging error from the minds of men. In his Reason of Faith Owen saw the Holy Spirit aiding man because, "Our rational faculties in their utmost improvement in this world, and under the highest advantage they are capable of by spiritual

1. Baxter, Practical Works, II. p. 63; Miller, op. cit., p. 184; Owen, Works, I. p. 619.

2. Miller, op. cit., p. 186.

3. Owen, Works, IV. pp. 182-5, 175-8, 178-81; Miller, op. cit., pp. 280-1.

4. Baxter, Practical Works, III. p. 125.

5. Owen, Works, IV. p. 83.

light and grace, are not able with all their searchings, to find out the Almighty unto perfection in these things."¹ Hence they had no doubt that man's scholastical disciplines were a shadow of God.²

It followed that when referring to sin the Puritans saw it as something to be avoided, equating it with intellectual error.³ They believed that free-will could be aided by the discipline of dialectical method.⁴ In his The Protestant Religion Truly Stated, [London, 1692], Baxter associated the loss of free-will with a pollution of the intellect.⁵ Therefore sin was seen as all the more unpardonable because it could have been avoided.⁶ This was compounded by their epistemological trend of not developing fully the scriptural implications of the Fall. Real sin became expressed and associated with a dislocation of the dialectic. In his A Discourse of Election, [London, 1682], Thomas Goodwin stresses that salvation is only for intelligent creatures.⁷ Reason thus became the ground-motive in a basically super-temporal view. Since they also saw man as super-temporal, because of the way they lodged humanity in the soul, reason was understood to be one of the central components of manhood. Hence temporality was seen to pollute man, as was evident from the poor

1. Owen, Works, IV. pp. 184-5, 194, 224.

2. Ibid. p. 224.

3. Ibid. p. 178; Baxter, Practical Works, IV. pp. 34, 36-7, II. p. 63, III. p. 65; Charnock, Works, I. pp. 126-7.

4. Charnock, Works, I. p. 130; Owen, Works, XII. p. 122.

5. Baxter, The Protestant Religion Truly Stated, . . . p. 87; Owen, Works, XIII. p. 416.

6. Baxter, Practical Works, II. pp. 267, 845, III. p. 65.

7. T. Goodwin, Works, IX. p. 94;

Breward, op. cit. p. 189; Owen, Works, XII. p. 487, IV. pp. 83-4.

information man received through sense-impression. As we read in Baxter's The Reason of the Christian Religion, [London, 1666], "It is...[viz. sin]...a setting up of our senses above our reason, and making ourselves in use as beasts, by setting up the lower bestial faculties to rule."¹

In his Of the Mortification of Sin, [London, 1656], Owen expressed sin as grounding one's principles on erroneous facts.² The affront was to absolute reason, rather than to the scriptural God.³ In epistemological terms it was to ultimate reason that they looked.⁴ Salvation and God were seen as intellectual standards and goals, so that Owen in his Brief Vindication, [1680], balanced reasonable virtue against spiritual grace.⁵ Hence sin was understood to be intellectual error, not a destruction of the gifts and position of natural man.⁶

This explains why the Puritans always had a great regard for 'great minds', even if they were atheists. In his Attributes of God, Charnock wrote that Socrates had perceived the mind of God.⁷ They could do this because they associated the mind with the soul, and divorced reason from temporality.⁸ Like the Greek philosophers

1. Baxter, Practical Works, II. p. 63, III. p. 10;

T. Goodwin, Works, XII. p. 26; Owen, Works XIV. pp. 74, 76; Howe, Works, I. p. 91; Toon, John Owen, p. 166.

2. Owen, Works XIV. p. 74, III. p. 65, IV. p. 178, XII. pp. 126-8.

3. Charnock, Works, I. pp. 127, 187.

4. Owen, Works XIV. p. 74, IV. pp. 179-181, 184, 205-6; Charnock, Works, I. pp. 158, 155, 150, 130; Baxter, Practical Works, IV. p. 36.

5. Owen, Works XIII. pp. 413ff; Charnock, Works, I. p. 131; Baxter, Practical Works, IV. p. 69.

6. Haller, op. cit. p. 83; Bass, op. cit. p. 93; Charnock, Works, I. p. 95; Howe, Works, I. p. 87.

7. Ibid.

8. Owen, Works III. pp. 101ff; T. Goodwin, Works XII. p. 26; Howe, Works, I. p. 140.

they regarded man as higher than physical creation.' Hence, despite sin, man concentrates on the hypothetical perfections or character of God. For Owen in his Animadversions, [1662], God emerged as absolute reason.² In conceiving God in this way, Howe in his Living Temple thought man could achieve a perfection proportional to that of the 'first cause'.³ Accordingly sin was viewed as turning away from the reason of God, and then applying man's rational nature to fallacious grounds.⁴ Therefore in Baxter's The Catechising of Families, [1682], "We must learn to love best that which is best in itself...and choose the means by which it must be attained..."⁵

Often Puritanism's concept of sin was termed man's inability to give credence to an ultimate philosophical ideal. We see this in Owen's early work, A Display of Arminianism, [London, 1642], and his Animadversions, [1662].⁶ In this way sin was associated with attacking the good god of reason.⁷ This was regarded as the product of man's place in the 'Chain of Being', and was seen as most relevant to the higher faculties.⁸ The most serious consequence of this was

1. T. Goodwin, Works, IX. p. 100.

2. Owen, Works XIV. pp. 59, 74; Howe, Works I. p. 170; Charnock, Works, I. p. 132.

3. Howe, Works, I. p. 183.

4. Owen, Works, IV. p. 82, VI. p. 178, XIV. pp. 74, 76; Baxter, Practical Works, III. p. 65; Charnock, Works, I. pp. 126-8.

5. Baxter, Practical Works, IV. p. 68; Owen, Works XIV. pp. 74-6; Charnock, Works, I. pp. 128, 150.

6. Bass, op. cit. pp. 113-4; Owen, Works X. p. 70, XIV. p. 74.

7. Charnock, Works, I. pp. 191, 187; Owen, Works, XIV. p. 74; Baxter, Practical Works, IV. p. 36.

8. Bass, op. cit. pp. 112-115, 115-120; Miller, op. cit. p. 184.

man sinking down towards the beasts,' where according to Baxter in his The Catechising of Families, [London, 1682], "Those that do not learn that which God would have them learn are all naught, and miserable worse than beasts."² It is true that in his Display of Arminianism, Owen wished to grant man, "...as much power, freedom and liberty as a mere created nature is capable of."³ Even so, man is distinguished by his rational nature from, "The very senseless creatures..." who fulfil their role in creation through instinct.⁴

We should stress that the Puritans never believed that sin destroyed the 'Golden Chain'. In his Attributes of God, Charnock wrote that there is enough of the 'Golden Chain' intact to convert man,⁵ "...every visible object which offers itself to our sense presents a deity to our minds, and exhorts us to subscribe to the truth of it...Men that will not listen to Scripture, as having no counterpart of it in their souls, cannot easily deny natural reason, which riseth up on all sides for the justification of truth. There is a natural as well as a revealed knowledge, and the book of creatures is legible in declaring the being of a God, as well as the Scriptures are in declaring the nature of a God; there are outward objects in the world, in common principles in the conscience; whence it may be inferred...Faith

1. Owen, Works, XII. pp. 122ff, X. p. 169; Baxter, Practical Works, IV. p. 34.

2. Baxter, Practical Works, IV. p. 34.

3. Owen, Works, X. p. 116.

4. Ibid. VIII. p. 109.

5. Charnock, Works, I. pp. 129-130; Baxter, Practical Works, II. pp. 845, 62, III. p. 65, IV. pp. 37, 68; Miller, op.cit. p. 184.

supposeth natural knowledge, as grace supposeth nature."¹ For the concept of God in man, "...is so perpetual, that the nature of the soul must be dissolved before it be rooted out, nor can it be extinct whilst the soul endures."² Looking at the elements of nature, "...we see them chained and linked one within another in every body upon the earth..."³ Upon consideration of this, "It is natural to arise from a view of those things to a concept of a nature more perfect than any other...from a corporeal or bodily substance joined with an incorporeal [as man is an earthly body and spiritual soul], we ascend to a conception of a substance purely incorporeal and spiritual, so from a multitude of things in the world, reason leads us to one choice being above all."⁴

Against this background sin was seen to dislocate man's position in the 'Golden Chain'; it compromised his position as a creature of spirit, and undermined his rationality. They could do this because sin was associated more with philosophical concepts than the Scriptural Fall. Sin was linked with universalist concepts of man being a contingent being, as we see in Howe's Living Temple, [London, 1676], "Whatever is not necessary...[being]...is caused, for not having been of itself, it must be put into being by somewhat else."⁵ Accordingly they saw man as a second

1. Charnock, Works. I. pp. 129-30.

2. Ibid. p. 136.

3. Ibid. p. 152.

4. Ibid. p. 150.

5. Howe, Works I. pp. 178-9; T. Goodwin, Works, IX. pp. 5-7, XII. p. 26, V. p. 40, VII. p. 18.

cause', acted rather than acting, and herein lies the epistemological basis for sin. So that salvation lay in the overcoming of this basic flaw. In his The Reason of Faith, [London, 1677], Owen overcomes the problem whilst retaining reasonableness for the individual, "...thus the mind doth assent unto the principles of God's being and authority, antecedently unto any actual exercise of the discursive faculty of reason, or any other testimony whatsoever."² Man must be brought under the authority of God by understanding of God as necessary being because, "Every created will must have a liberty by participation which includeth such an imperfect potentiality as cannot be brought into act without some promotion...of some superior agent..." according to Owen in his Display of Arminianism, [London, 1642].³ So that in his Dissertation on Divine Justice, [London, 1653], Owen wrote, "...whatever declares the glory of the creator, also expresses the disgraceful fall of the creature."⁴ These themes were linked with an atemporalism which saw man as spirit, and physical creation as profoundly flawed before the Fall.⁵ Indeed, the Fall became irrelevant. In his Dissertation on Divine Justice, [London, 1653], Owen associated sin with God conforming all existence to his being.⁶ Against this background Thomas Goodwin even

1. Bass, op. cit. p. 118.

2. Owen, Works IV. p. 85.

3. Bass, op. cit. pp. 118-120; Owen, Works X. p. 120.

4. Owen, Works X. p. 618.

5. T. Goodwin, Works, IX. p. 97.

6. T. Goodwin, Works, IX. p. 99; Owen, Works, X. pp. 507-512, 498-499; Baxter, Practical Works, II. pp. 267, 316, 561, 842, 845;

Wallace, op. cit. p. 152.

saw that Adam was in need of, "...a super-creation union with himself and communication of himself, and the highest and utmost end...that union with himself which is far above that oneness we had by the law or dues of our creation."¹ We have to remember that no one could live in the seventeenth-century without having a vivid sense of sin², but beyond this they constructed a philosophical atemporalism which was ascriptural³

Against this background of dialectical atemporalism Howe warned of foolish atheists in his Living Temple, who, "...charm their reason by sensual softness into a dead sleep..."⁴ By 'dead' Howe meant damned.⁵ He clearly associates reason with salvation. Hence the Puritans were wary of the influences of sinful nature.⁶ Salvation was seen to lead man to absolute reason, which according to Owen in his The Reason of Faith, [London, 1677], is, "...much higher than can presently be achieved by the force of external arguments or the credit of human testimony."⁷ In his Animadversions, [London, 1662], he regarded human testimony as polluted by the flesh.⁷ It followed that the doctrine of works never existed. For even pre-lapsarian man was not complete. Christ did not save as perfect man, but as God distributing super-added

1. T. Goodwin, Works, IX. p. 99.

2. McGee, op. cit. pp. 16-18, 34, 39, 50-4.

3. Owen had a vivid sense of sin, Owen, Works, VIII. p. 85; Haller, op. cit. pp. 140-72.

4. Howe, Works, I. p. 91; Baxter, Practical Works, II. p. 63.

5. Owen, Works, XIII. p. 353.

6. Owen, Works, IV. p. 94, XIV. p. 74.

7. T. Goodwin, Works, IX. pp. 78, 97; Owen, Works, XIV. p. 74.

grace, as we see in Thomas Goodwin's Of Election.¹

Whilst the Puritans dismissed the 'flesh' and the possibility of a works righteousness, they often sketched something akin to a rationalistic version. When Howe wrote that the creature's potential is directly proportional to God's being, he allowed great scope for personal advancement.² The Puritans looked to the atemporal and the dialectical quality of the soul, and especially its links with God as a means of escaping sin, as we see in Owen's The Reason of Faith, [London, 1677].³ This ability could either be seen as an innate quality of natural man, or as a super-added gift to elect man.⁴ Both are extremely similar in that they allowed the individual to embark upon a process of rationalistic empiricism that was based on personal assent through understanding.⁵ For Charnock in his Attributes of God, "God is the term turned from by a sinner; sin is the term turned to..."⁶ Hence while Scripture and philosophy couched their whole epistemology in the general setting of a 'supreme being', the actual motivation in understanding became profoundly personal; so that methodology if not epistemology became anthropocentric. We can understand the complexity of this approach by looking at Owen's The Reason of Faith. In a chapter entitled: 'The nature of divine revelations-Their self-evidencing power considered, particularly that of the Scripture as the word of

1. T. Goodwin, Works, IX. pp. 97-100.

2. Howe, Works, I. p. 183.

3. Owen, Works, IV. p. 82; Charnock, Works, I. pp. 191, 195.

4. Owen, Works, III. p. 102; T. Goodwin, Works, IX. pp. 97-100.

5. Owen, Works, IV. pp. 82-3; Charnock, Works, I. p. 129.

6. Charnock, Works, I. p. 187; Baxter, Practical Works, III. p. 65, IV. p. 37, II. p. 63.

God." [Ch. 6], he outlines, "...three ways whereby we assent unto any thing that is proposed unto us as true... [1] By inbred principles of natural light, and the first rational actings of the mind. This in reason answers instinct in irrational creatures... By rational consideration of things externally proposed unto us. Herein the mind exerciseth its discursive faculty, gathering one thing out of another, and concluding one thing from another; and hereon it is able to assent unto what is proposed unto it in various degrees of certainty, according unto the nature and degree of the evidence it proceeds upon... [3] By faith. This respects the power of our minds whereby we are able to assent unto any thing as true which we have no first principles concerning..."

Accordingly we see a contradictory dualism in the Puritan attitude to sin. At one level it is part of an eternal divine schema, with God responsible for sin and man's predicament part of this process. As early as Perkins' Armillæ Aurea, [London, 1590], he tells us, "For things do not come to pass because that God did foreknow them: but because he decreed and willed them, therefore they came to pass...." Also, "That which is evil hath some respect of goodness with God: first: in that it is the punishment of sin: and punishment is accounted a moral good, in that it is the part of a judge to punish sin; secondly, as it a mere action or act; thirdly, as it is a chastisement, a trial of one's

1. Owen, Works, IV. pp. 82-3, II. pp. 97, 101-2, 103, XIII. p. 416; Haller, op. cit. pp. 197-200, 202, 207, 208, 330, 331-4; Baxter, Practical Works II. p. 267.

faith, martyrdom, propitiation for sin, as the death and passion of Christ. And if we observe these caveats, God is not only a bare permissive agent, but a powerful effector of the same..."¹ If we look at Owen's The Doctrine of Justification by Faith, [London, 1677], we come across a great emphasis on imputed grace from God.² Such grace was seen as supralapsarian.³ It is very significant that in his Vindiciae Evangelicae, [London, 1655], Owen equates God's prescience with the rules of logic, "God certainly knows everything that is to be known; that is, everything that is scibile...[viz. logical]...If there be in the nature of things an impossibility to be known, they cannot be known by the divine understanding. If that thing be scibile, or may be known, the not knowing of it is his imperfection who knows it not. To God this cannot be ascribed [namely, that he should not know what is to be known] without the destruction of his perfection. He shall not be my God who is not infinitely perfect."⁴ We should also consider Owen's Of the Death of Christ, [London, 1650], which denies man any effect on the actions of God because of being a contingent being.⁵ In his Of Election, [London, 1682], Thomas Goodwin wrote, "Also the sin of Adam, no man must say that it was a means, but at the utmost of it, but an occasion, or rather indeed but a mere outlet or passage through which election wrought itself into a new enlargement or amplification

1. Breward, op. cit. p. 185.

2. Owen, Works, V. pp. 44-5; Wallace, op. cit. p. 154.

3. Toon, God's Statesman, p. 27.

4. Owen, Works, XII. p. 129.

5. Owen, Works, X. p. 454.

and magnifying of the grace of itself towards the elect..."¹ The other aspect was an anthropocentrism which stressed the abilities of natural man to avoid sin and develop towards the ultimate. Hence Baxter told the individual to fight for he has, "...an actual right to the benefits of Christ's death..."² In his Aphorisms of Justification he came close to advocating a works righteousness.³ In this sense Baxter denied that God is the author of sin.⁴ In these terms 'sin' was no obstacle between man and God, hence Owen in his A Discourse of the Holy Spirit, wrote, "...[for man's soul]...was made meet and able to live to God, as his sovereign lord, chiefest good, and last end."⁵ Such ideas were closely linked to a scholastical view of man and God, but they were also affected by the post-Restoration weakening of the idea of depravity.⁶ The tendency was one of balancing Natural Theology against Scripture. Therefore in his The Reasons of the Christian Religion, Baxter saw sin as a denial of the testimony of God and nature, "...[sin]...is a contempt of all the instruction and advice of wise and good men, who are required by God and nature, to warn men, and dissuade them from their sins."⁷ In his The Catechising of Families, [London, 1682], Baxter advised, "We must learn to love best that which is best in itself...and

1. T. Goodwin, Works, IX. pp. 85, 93-4, 97.

2. Lamont, op. cit. p. 145.

3. Ibid. p. 149.

4. Baxter, The Protestant Religion, Truly Stated, pp. 88-101.

5. Owen, Works, III. p. 102.

6. Jones, op. cit. pp. 30-1.

7. Baxter, Practical Works II. p. 63.

choose the means by which it must be attained..."¹ In his Truth and Innocence Vindicated, [London, 1669], Owen adds to this theme, "There is a pollution of the flesh and spirit which we are still to be cleansing ourselves from whilst we are in this world."²

In the vast system of 'Golden Chain' theology sin holds a dominant position. They saw it in Scripture, and its effects in contemporary life. But it was strongest in the philosophical systems they drew from. It was especially important as the infrastructure of Federal Theology. The resulting view of sin was a compromise between Scripture and scholastical philosophy. Their view of man as atemporal spirituality was coupled with the traditional scriptural emphasis on hope. These in turn were synthesised with a great emphasis upon the powers of natural man, and his ability to achieve intellectual goals which were equated with grace. This was especially true in the way they set sin and salvation in the mind, more precisely through rationalistic empiricism.

The Puritan concept of Sanctification.

The basis of Puritanism's attitude to sanctification was traditionally and scripturally Reformed. If we look at Owen's Truth and Innocence Vindicated, [London, 1669], we

1. Baxter, Practical Works IV. p. 68.
2. Owen, Works, XIII. pp. 416, 353.

read the same Reformed concern with the individual conscience and its relationship with sovereign God.¹ At face value this certainly negated any scholastical drift towards subjectivism.² But the tendency to resolve all soteriology to a scholastical epistemology was very strong. Basically their theory of regeneration began with an omnipotent God and an impotent man.³ When concentrating on this relationship, Owen in his Truth and Innocence Vindicated, dismissed, "All the books of the ancient philosophers..."⁴ Not even common grace was seen to be enough. It was a simple theory: man is fallen, and can only be saved by God through Christ; far too simple to be adequate to the demands of 'Golden Chain' theology. In the Catechising of Families, [London, 1682], Baxter represents sin as the disruption of a system, as the rejection of reason.⁵

We have already seen how the Puritans tended to set humanity in the mind. If humanity fell, the implication would be that the mind of fallen man is irrevocably corrupted. This certainly was not the case. If we look at Owen's Causes, Ways and Means of Understanding the Mind of God, [London, 1669], we read of sin as an assault on the mind, and how the spirit of God frees the mind.⁶ In Truth and Innocence Vindicated, [London, 1669], Owen ties in the intellectual duties

1. Owen, Works, XIII. p. 365.

2. Bass, op. cit. pp. 184-5.

3. Miller, op. cit. pp. 21-2, 28.

4. Owen, Works, XIII. p. 415, V. p. 179.

5. Owen, Works, XIII. p. 413; Baxter, Practical Works IV. p. 36, II. p. 63; Charnock, Works, I. p. 187.

6. Owen, Works, IV. pp. 182-4.

of natural and sanctified man, "Things evidently deduced and necessarily following the first principles and dictates of nature are of the same kind with themselves, and have the authority of God enstamped upon them than the other; and in respect unto them, conscience cannot by virtue of any inferior command plead an exemption." ¹ In doing this they put no effective restraints upon the will, especially when it operated through rationalism. They saw this as a common attribute of 'man' across the world. ² They regarded such attributes as divine, and hence to be a man was to be immovably aligned to God. ³ More especially to the mind of God. ⁴ As a consequence, in terms of sanctification, each man was viewed in individual terms, as a being aligned to God with properties of will and reason. Inevitably their approach became subjectivist. ⁵ Because of this sanctification became a happy goal which each man chooses, as we see in Giles Firmin's The Real Christian, [London, 1670] ⁶, and Owen's Truth and Innocence Vindicated ⁷, in which he saw man with innate characteristics which led him towards, "...natural light, and the dictates of that reason which is common to all, and speaks the same language in the consciences of all mankind." ⁸

1. Owen, Works, XIII. p. 439; Baxter, The Protestant Religion, Truly Stated, p. 87.

2. Howe, Works, I. pp. 96-8; Owen, Works, XIII. pp. 435, 465; Charnock, Works, I. p. xliv.

3. Charnock, Works, I. p. xl, 42.

4. Owen, Works, IV. p. 126, XIV. p. 74.

5. J. W. Jones, op. cit. p. 11.

6. Ibid. pp. 35-9.

7. G. Firmin, The Real Christian, London, 1670. p. 122;

Owen, Works, XIII. p. 416; Baxter, Practical Works IV. p. 68.

8. Owen, Works, XIII. pp. 432, 437, IV. pp. 82-3.

The will was closely associated with the soul and intellectual faculties¹, to form a debating forum or court within man.² Baxter wrote in his The Catechising of Families, "I find that my spiritual substance, as intellectual hath...a three-fold power in one; that is...Intellectual...Understanding...and will."³ A 'court' in which the sensorial and atemporal were judged by reason⁴, and pronounced upon by the will, as we read in Charnock's Attributes of God, "The choice of the will in all true knowledge treads upon the heel of the act of understanding, and men naturally desire the knowledge of that which is good in it."⁵ This court was set within the soul, in fact the soul was often another term for the higher faculties.⁶ We have seen that Puritans tended to regard manhood in terms of the soul, hence to be a man, is to possess a reason and will that can choose salvation⁷, as we read in Owen's Truth and Justice Vindicated, [London, 1669]⁸, and in his A Discourse of the Holy Spirit, [London, 1674].⁹ It followed that wrongful disposition of one's will and reason, coupled with the effect of being a contingent being, were the real causes of lack of sanctification or separation from God.¹⁰ We see this in work such

1. Charnock, Works, I. pp. xl-xli.

2. Sibbes, Works, pp. 210-211.

3. Baxter, Practical Works, IV. p. 69.

4. Ibid.; Charnock, Works, I. pp. xlii, 43.

5. Charnock, Works, I. pp. xliii, 43.

6. Breward, art. cit. pp. 13-14; Baxter, Practical Works IV. p. 69.

7. Miller, op. cit. pp. 182-3.

8. Owen, Works, XIII. p. 416.

9. Ibid. III. p. 102.

10. Haller, op. cit. pp. 197-207.

as John Goodwin's Imputatio Eidei, [London, 1642]. In his A Treatise of Conversion, [London, 1657], Baxter writes, "Supernatural light supposeth natural; the doctrine of faith supposeth reason; and he that would draw you to be everlasting happy, doth suppose you so much to love yourselves as to be willing to be happy...we...[preachers]...are sent to tell you where your happiness lieth, and where not, and to advise you to exercise your reason aright, and to know the way to happiness, and to take that course by which it might be obtained..."¹ Hence right reason was seen as the path to sanctification, as we see in Owen's Animadversions, [London, 1662].² The Puritans regarded natural man as inclined to 'goodness', so that man can only blame his unprepared mind for any estrangement from God or absolute reason, for the will is always inclined to the first cause, as we read in Baxter's The Reason of the Christian Religion, [London, 1677], "... I have an inclination to know the cause; not only the lower, but the very first...so that I perceive it is natural to man, to desire to know even the first cause, and highest excellencie."³ In his Reason of Faith, [London, 1677], Owen stresses, "The question is about sufficient evidence and efficacy to cause us to believe things divine and supernatural..."⁴

The Puritans termed the collective actions of the higher

1. Baxter, Practical Works, II. p. 400; Wallca, op. cit. p. 136.
 2. Owen, Works, XIV. pp. 74-6.
 3. Baxter, The Reason of the Christian Religion. London, 1667. pp. 2-3.
 4. Owen, Works, IV. pp. 75-6; Baxter, Reason of the Christian Religion, pp. 75, 85, 86-7; Lamont, op. cit. p. 140.

faculties 'conscience'. They regarded it as the most stable part of man, as the seat of humanity and closely associated it with the soul. In their 'Golden Chain' theology it was given great independence, and was also understood to have divine attributes. Howe underlined this in his Living Temple, when he stressed that only man and God meet in temples, and that in fact man is a living temple. ¹ It is true that they saw man testifying to God ², but the reverse was also the case. This is especially true in the way Puritans expressed God and man through scholastical epistemology. ³ Hence sanctification was seen to bring stability and rationality to the conscience, which in turn meant self-dependence. The implication was that God should take account of man. ⁴

Accordingly sanctified reason and will were the great divine and human characteristics for the Puritans. ⁵ Hence in Baxter's The Protestant Religion Truly Stated, [London, 1692], God completes features of man's abilities, rather than transforming them. ⁶ The implication was that God was within man, and man within God. Sanctification was viewed as the stabilisation of man, a turning away from the sensorial denying of reason. ⁷ Concerning such heavenly things, Owen tells us

1. Howe, Works, I. p. 98.

2. Charnock, Works, I. p. xlii.

3. Owen, Works, XIV. p. 74; J. Jones, op. cit. pp. 42-6.

4. J. Jones, op. cit. pp. 42-6.

5. Miller, op. cit. pp. 182-3.

6. Baxter, The Protestant Religion, p. 85; Wallace, op. cit. p. 140.

7. Baxter, Practical Works, II. p. 63.

in his Causes Ways and Means of Understanding the Mind of God, [London, 1678], "Our rational faculties in their utmost improvement in this world...are not able...to find out the Almighty unto perfection in these things." ¹ But it is significant that he infers they go some way. He saw perfect reason in God ², and denied that reason is an artificial art. ³ Even the mysteries of sanctification were understood to be rational, even if man could not understand because of sinful ignorance. ⁴

Another result of their view of conscience was the way they saw man accepting rather than receiving sanctification. An act of free-will was central to Baxter's theology. ⁵ they did this because of a basic belief in choice, especially rationalistic free-will. ⁶ In Howe's A Treatise of Delighting God, desire is described as wanting the, "...highest and most perfect excellency." ⁷ All the mainstream Puritans regarded the mind of man as innately predisposed to reasonable virtue, which in turn was associated with grace. ⁸ Therefore even traditional Christian faith was regarded as assent. ⁹ In his The Reason of Faith, [London, 1677], Owen writes, "He...[God]...doth it unto our reason in

1. Owen, Works, IV. p. 194.

2. Ibid. p. 224.

3. Ibid. p. 223.

4. Ibid. XIV. p. 74; Haller, op.cit. pp. 197-200.

5. Lamont, op.cit. p. 140; Bass, op.cit. pp. 181-2; Packer, art.cit. p. 7.

6. Owen, Works, XIII. pp. 416-7.

7. Howe, Works, II. pp. 13, 107-9.

8. Owen, Works, IV. p. 82, XIII. p. 416; Baxter, Practical Works, II. p. 63, III. p. 65, IV. p. 68; Charnock, Works, I. p. 162;

Howe, Works, I. p. 96.

9. Owen, Works, IV. p. 83.

its exercise, by proposing such things unto its consideration as from whence it may and cannot but conclude..."¹ So that a man must be willing to be converted, even humble submission was viewed as assent, as we see in Baxter's A Treatise of Self-Denial, [London, 1559]², and his Saint's Everlasting Rest, [London, 1649]³. The whole Presbyterian system of ecclesiastical polity was based on the premiss that man of his own volition could choose.⁴ Even the Congregationalist John Owen put forward the basis of an ecclesiastical polity in his Causes Ways and Means, [London, 1678]⁵. But because of the Independent's stress on personal, efficient election, the tendency was to minimise external religion and any constraints. The view surfaced that every man should be ruled by his own conscience.⁶ We see this in Owen's Two Discourses, [London, 1693].⁷

Hence sanctification was understood to perfect, rather than change man's innate abilities.⁸ Relying on reason, the will inclines towards goodness⁹. So that a voluntary act of the will was essential in their view of sanctification.¹⁰ So that for Baxter in his

1. Owen, Works, IV. p. 84.

2. Baxter, Practical Works, III. p. 379.

3. Ibid. p. 152; Owen, Works, IV. pp. 180-2.

4. Lamont, op. cit. pp. 161, 167, 173-180.

5. Owen, Works, IV. p. 178.

6. Haller, op. cit. pp. 197ff.

7. Owen, Works, IV. pp. 514-517; Horton Davies, op. cit. pp. 244-5; H.G. Plum, Restoration Puritanism. A Study in the Growth of English Liberty, Kennikat Press. 1972. pp. 6, 12.

8. Baxter, The Protestant Religion... p. 85.

9. Ibid.; Wallace, op. cit. p. 140; Lamont, op. cit. p. 128.

10. Wallace, op. cit. p. 140; Lamont, op. cit. pp. 140-1.

The Protestant Religion Truly Stated, [London, 1692], to be a man is to have free-will. ¹ In doing this they became systematically jealous of man's social, economic and political liberties. In the process they tended to devalue God in their outline of man's self-hood. We see examples of this in the way they thought truth should be proposed to the individual, as in Owen's The Reason with Faith, [London, 1677] ², and in the work of the New England Congregationalist Firmin. ³ They became increasingly anthropocentric, and sanctification was described in terms of Natural Theology. We see this in the lectures of Samuel Willard, [1640-1707], on the Westminster Catechism, which were later collected into A Complete Body of Divinity, [London, 1726]. In this work Willard's scholastical method led to empiricism. ⁴ This was part of the process by which pastoralism was systematised into a rationalistic empiricism. ⁵

In lodging sanctification in the higher faculties the Puritans also incorporated it into their platonic atemporalism. ⁶ In his An Immediate State of Glory, [London, 1657], Thomas Goodwin saw, "...inward man is strictly the soul with its graces, set in opposition to the outward man..." ⁷ They tended to divorce grace from the temporal,

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1. Baxter, The Protestant Religion..., p. 85.
 2. Owen, Works, IV. pp. 82-3.
 3. J. Jones, op. cit. pp. 45-6.
 4. Ibid. pp. 66-70.
 5. Ibid., pp. 42-83; Owen, Works, XIV. p. 74.
 6. Owen, Works, IV. pp. 82, 94; Charnock, Works, I. p. xliv.
 7. T. Goodwin, Works, XII. p. 83.

and associated the soul as manhood with innate rationality. ¹ Hence the conscience was set in the spiritual realm and seen as atemporal, 'good', reasonable and infinite. ² It was against this background that God was viewed as a collection of scholastic essences, as we see in Owen's Brief Declaration of the Doctrine of the Trinity, [London, 1669], where he sees God as necessarily, "...one in respect of his nature, substance, essence, Godhead or divine being; how, being Father, Son and Holy Ghost, he subsisteth in these three distinct persons or hypostases..." ³ Against this background they tended to have an essential view of man, and it was in these terms that they resolved faith to the authority and truth of God as absolute reason. ⁴ In brief, man as spiritual, contingent reason is attracted by absolute reason, as we see in Baxter's The Reason of the Christian Religion, [London, 1667]. ⁵ In his Discourse on the Attributes of God, [London, 1682], Charnock sees, "The impressions of a deity is as common as reason, and of the same age with reason." ⁶

We have already discussed the fact that 'Golden Chain' theology was not loyal to any one philosophical school. One result of this eclecticism was their tendency to represent sanctification through the notional and sense impression. ⁷ Depending on which was

1. Charnock, Works, I. p. xlii.

2. Owen shows this in his scholastical view of superadded grace. See: Bass, op. cit. pp. 136-9; Sibbes, Works, I. p. 339; Breward, art. cit. pp. 13-14; Baxter, Practical Works, IV. p. 69.

3. Owen, Works, II. pp. 378-9; Bass, op. cit. pp. 133-6.

4. Owen, Works, IV. pp. 69-70, XIV. p. 74.

5. Baxter, The Reason of the Christian Religion, pp. 2-3; Owen, Works, IV. pp. 82-3.

6. Charnock, Works, I. p. 137.

7. Miller, op. cit. pp. 288-9.

stressed, a natural or supernatural concept of sanctification emerged. This compromise saw supertemporal grace as the completion, rather than the destruction of nature. ¹ They regarded the sensorial as effective when combined with man's rationalism, and capable of coming close to seeing God in his perfection, as we read in Baxter's The Catechising of Families, [London, 1682]. ²

Sanctification was equated with individual intellectual development. Knowledge and justification were seen as parallel. ³ Hence they exhorted the individual to reason and understand as a religious exercise, thus gaining contact with God. In his Animadversions, [London, 1662], Owen writes, "That in our whole obedience to God we are to use our reason, Protestants say indeed, and, moreover, that which is not done reasonably is not obedience. The Scripture is the rule of all our obedience, grace the principle enabling us to perform it; but the manner of its performance must be rational." ⁴ Scripture was seen to be profoundly rational. ⁵ In stressing the individual's efforts to understand, they equated the individual's role with that of Christ's, as we see in Norton's Orthodox Evangelist, [London, 1654]. ⁶ Faith was expressed as elevated

1. Miller, op. cit. p. 289; Owen, Works, IV. pp. 193-4; Baxter, The Reason of the Christian Religion, p. 85; Charnock, Works, I. p. 137.
 2. Baxter, Practical Works IV. p. 69.
 3. Haller, op. cit. op. cit. pp. 198-202.
 4. Owen, Works, XIV. p. 74, IV. pp. 83-4; Powicke, op. cit. pp. 285-7; Baxter, The Protestant Religion, p. 85; Lamont, op. cit. p. 140.
 5. Owen, Works, XIV. p. 74, IV. p. 82.
 6. J. Jones, op. cit. pp. 14-17; Lamont, op. cit. pp. 140-1; Wallace, op. cit. pp. 136-7.

reason.¹ This further stressed the worth and independence of man in relation to God.² The only real obstacle in this schema was their view of temporality. Whichever way they constructed their epistemology, man's contingency was a very difficult concept to overcome³; and if God was ascribed any role, it was the overcoming of this.⁴ In his Of Election, [London, 1682], Thomas Goodwin underlines that creation is folly, because it has the potential to sin. So that whilst prelapsarian man is perfect, he needs a super-added grace to overcome this.⁵ Hence, "Of our persons, without the consideration of the fall, in massa pura, in the pure lump of creatureship, or as to be created; and under that consideration God ordained us unto that ultimate glory, under relation to him as an head...In his designment to advance us, considered purely as creatures, to an higher glory by his Christ than was attainable by the law of creation..."⁶ It is in a similar way that Charnock in his Attributes of God asks, "What ground could they have in nature, to imagine that the blood of beasts could expiate and wash off the stains of a rational Creature."⁷

1. Owen, Works, XIV. p. 74; Bass, op. cit. p. 204.

2. J. Jones, op. cit. pp. 40-83; Owen, Works, XIII. p. 432; Baxter, Practical Works, IV. pp. 68-9; Wallace, op. cit. pp. 135-9.

3. Owen, Works, X. p. 116; Baxter, Practical Works, IV. p. 69.

4. Owen, Works, IV. pp. 184-5; Baxter, Practical Works, IV. p. 68.

5. T. Goodwin, Works, IX. pp. 3-5.

6. Ibid., p. 97.

7. Charnock, Works, I. p. 139.

The Exaltation of 'Man' in the Puritan Concept of Sanctification.

To achieve sanctification the Puritans had combined their concept of limited deprivation in man ¹, with that of rationalistic works righteousness. ² This is most true in the way they combined reason with morality to produce a virtue which they equated with grace, as we see in Owen's Truth and Innocence Vindicated, [London, 1669], "The law of nature and reason is the rule; and their own nature, as acting or acted, consists in a suitableness unto rational beings acting to prepare themselves for the state of immortality and glory..." ³ Despite the widespread use of rationalistic works righteousness within Puritanism, they did not see man as in a position of ultimate reason. For this they looked to the good and perfect God ⁴, who would create a new mind of perfection in man. ⁵ They saw sanctification as a matter of having a new essence enter into the being of man ⁶. However, the new essence was not the scriptural view of sanctification, rather it was one of perfect reason.

Wherever the scholastic emphasis was laid, the rigours of post-Restoration life made the Puritans more subjective. ⁷ These

1. Owen, Works, IV. pp. 82-4, III. p. 101, XIV. p. 37, XIII. p. 439; Charnock, Works, I. p. 166, II. pp. 27-9; Howe, Works, I. p. 96.

2. Owen, Works, XIII. p. 416; Baxter, Practical Works, II. p. 63, IV. p. 68.

3. Owen, Works, XIII. p. 417; Bass, op. cit. pp. 186-7; J. Jones, op. cit. pp. 40ff; Miller, op. cit. pp. 280-2.

4. Charnock, Works, I. pp. 280, 288.

5. Howe, Works, III. p. 89; Owen, Works, XIII. pp. 414, 426, 428.

6. Bass, op. cit. pp. 127-8.

7. Toon, Hyper-Calvinism, pp. 8ff; Miller, op. cit. p. 297.

factors combined to produce an even greater concern for personal choice ¹, with the liberty which this implied ², as we see in Owen's A Brief Vindication of the Non-Conformists, [London, 1682]. ³ This is why they thought it important that a man should be convinced ⁴, so that the individual had a role to play in sanctification. ⁵ Liberty, like all other concepts was centred in the mind, being assent to what is most reasonable. ⁶ Hence the will constituted a major part in their view of sanctification. They saw it as divine in nature ⁷, and thus not totally fallen. This independence of man meant, "...spiritual regeneration was integrated with a concept of the physical powers of the soul through the vehicle of the sense impression." ⁸ Therefore sanctification became a matter of amassing sufficient evidence to make a man choose, so that an atheist was termed a fool, as we see in Charnock's Attributes of God, [London, 1682]. ⁹

We have already noted the balance in Puritanism between the notional and sense impression, this was reflected in their view of the will's role in sanctification. Some Puritans regarded the path to the will as notional ¹⁰, as we encounter in the work of the

1. Charnock, Works, I. p. xliii.

2. Ibid. pp. xlv-xlvii.

3. Owen, Works, XIII. p. 311.

4. Bass, op. cit. pp. 176-85.

5. Owen, Works, XIII. p. 41; Breward, art. cit. pp. 7, 12, 9.

6. Owen, Works, IV. p. 82, III. p. 102.

7. Miller, op. cit. pp. 186-190.

8. Ibid. p. 281; Baxter, Practical Works, III. p. 125.

9. Charnock, Works, I. p. 127; Lamont, op. cit. p. 141; Baxter, Practical Works, III. p. 145; Owen, Works, IV. p. 74.

10. Baxter, Practical Works, III. p. 125; Bass, op. cit. pp. 174-6, 184-5.

Restoration Presbyterian William Bates. ¹ In his Display of Arminianism, [London, 1642], Owen discusses the faculties of the soul. He condemned the actions of natural man, and dismissed a role for the temporal in sanctification because it is an inferior alloy, "...for ever such disposition...[viz. sanctification]...must be of the same order with the form that is to be introduced." ² Other Puritans saw a sensorial progression to sanctification as important. ³ Although the two outlooks seem very different, they are similar in that they are scholastical treatments of grace and nature.

As millennial excitement waned, and Restoration persecution took effect, subjectivism became more prevalent. Against a background of intellectual progress to sanctification, more effort was put on persuading a man to worship God "through the higher faculties" ⁴, as we see in the very scholastical treatment of Federal Theology in Elisha Coles', A Practical Discourse of God's Sovereignty, [London, 1678]. ⁵ We should also cite Thomas Brooke' A Golden Key to Open Hidden Treasures, [London, 1675], the four part, The Court of the Gentiles, [London, 1670's], by Theophilus Gale was significant. Although

1. W. Farmer, [ed], William Bates. The Whole Works. London, 1815. 4 vols. III. pp. 419-20; Miller, op. cit. p. 281.

2. Owen, Works, X. pp. 127-8.

3. Miller, op. cit. pp. 282-3; Bass, op. cit. p. 176.

4. Bass, op. cit. p. 256.

5. Wallace, op. cit. p. 128; Owen, Works, XIII. p. 432, III. p. 102.

6. Wallace, op. cit. p. 177; Elisha Coles. Lay man and Congregationalist. Influenced by T. Goodwin at Oxford. A follower of Owen, who wrote a preface to this work. He was one of the new generation of Congregationalists who were greatly concerned with scholastic Federalism.

leaders such as Owen and Baxter exercised a great influence on these later Puritans, the basis of their theology had changed. They emphasised a choice for man, with great emphasis on natural induction¹, as we see in Baxter's The Catechising of Families, "...the first in time known by man, or the lowest step where our knowledge beginneth, are the sensible things near us...even faith and reason suppose our senses..."² There was great emphasis upon the regenerate mind.³ Accordingly they developed such a high opinion of man that sanctification became a self-fulness which was proportional to God's.⁴

Sanctification Completed on Earth.

All these trends led to them seeing sanctification being completed on earth. The basis of this was the original Reformed concept of common grace which had been developed into one of innate, common reason.⁵ It was these connatural conceptions of the ultimate which laid down the infrastructure of 'Golden Chain' epistemology, and it was in terms of this that they expressed sanctification.⁶ They understood sanctification as a fulfilling of the moral law, or the law of nature, as we read in Owen's Truth and Innocence Vindicated, [London, 1669], "...the law written in the hearts

1. J. Jones, op. cit. pp. 40ff.

2. Baxter, Practical Works, IV. p. 69; Miller, op. cit. p. 282.

3. Miller, op. cit. p. 281.

4. Howe, Works, I. pp. 183, 191.

5. Charnock, Works, I. p. xliv, II. pp. 27, 33, 133; Wallace, op. cit. p. 179.

6. Charnock, Works, I. p. xliv; Owen, Works, IV. p. 84.

of all men by nature; which is resolved partly unto the nature of God himself, which cannot but require most of the things of it from rational creatures..."¹ Appealing to the noble nature of natural man, they asked the individual to choose goodness.² This meant granting full liberty, the implications of which can be seen to peak in the work of Bunyan³, and Roger Williams⁴. This attitude is present in Owen's A Brief Vindication, [London, 1680]⁵. Inevitably this led to clashes between Reformed concepts of God, and their emerging concept of man, as we see in the work of the New England Congregationalist John Norton⁶. Hence in his Living Temple, Howe saw man's potential as proportional to the ultimate ideal termed 'god'.⁷ Indeed, because of his own divine attributes, "...every good and virtuous man hath or may attain a sort of self-fulness from himself..."⁸ Sanctification became a matter of personal intellectual development, and was increasingly divorced from the historic Fall.⁹ Therefore they saw the possibility of an earth-based progression towards perfection.¹⁰ When they referred to the traditional scriptural covenant, it was in terms of man accepting and

1. Owen, Works, XIII. p. 413.

2. Ibid; Packer, art. cit., pp. 7-8; Bass, op. cit., pp. 174-6, 184.

3. M. Furlong, 'Bunyan in Prison'. History Today. August, 1975. pp. 537-8.

4. S. D. Goulding, 'Roger Williams of Rhode Island'. History Today. Nov., 1975. pp. 741-747.

5. Owen, Works, XIII. p. 311.

6. J. Jones, op. cit., pp. 14ff.

7. Howe, Works, I. p. 183.

8. ibid, p. 171.

9. Miller, op. cit., pp. 280-1, 288; J. Jones, op. cit., pp. 14, 30-1.

10. Bass, op. cit., pp. 176, 242-52; Miller, op. cit., pp. 282-3.

fulfilling, rather than receiving. ¹ Restoration persecution, coupled with other factors we have discussed, heightened such subjectivism. ² So that the certainty of the elect was not based on the unconditionality of justification or sanctification, but on the basis that they would fulfil them. The elect became synonymous with natural man ³, as we see in Baxter's The Unreasonableness of Infidelity, [London, 1655]. ⁴ Hence sanctification became the perfection of man's innate, divine nature. ⁵ This inevitably led to an undermining of the concept of the Trinity, and especially of Christ. For whilst within Puritan 'Golden Chain' epistemology man could never assume the role of God, the perspective was anthropocentric. Within these terms 'man' didn't need a historic Messiah, the Fall was devalued, and the conditions of sanctification were systematised into an epistemology which could be fulfilled by man. ⁶

1. Bass, op. cit. pp. 184, 193-4; Packer, art. cit. pp. 7, 9, 12; J. Jones, op. cit. pp. 20ff; Baxter, Practical Works, IV. pp. 34, 69.

2. Miller, op. cit. p. 297; Horton Davies, op. cit. pp. 438-51; Toon, Hyper-Calvinism, pp. 52-3; Owen, Works, XIII. pp. 416, 437-8, IV. pp. 82, 84, 94; Wallace, op. cit. p. 140; Lamont, op. cit. pp. 141, 241,

3. Lamont, op. cit. pp. 143-5.

4. Baxter, Practical Works, II. p. 297.

5. Bass, op. cit. pp. 127-9; Miller, op. cit. pp. 280-1.

6. Bass, op. cit. pp. 193, 199; Miller, op. cit. pp. 282-3; Baxter, The Protestant Religion Truly Stated, p. 85.

Puritan Sanctification as Overt Anthropocentrism.

The most profound consequence of 'Golden Chain' sanctification was its move towards anthropocentrism. The basis of this was a belief in the abilities of natural man, as we read in Owen's Truth and Innocence Vindicated, [London, 1669]', "...[virtue]...may be obtained and acted without special assistance of grace evangelical."² Therefore the highest sin became the abuse of one's innate ability to achieve sanctification. Sanctification was seen to lie in man's ability to perceive and understand absolute reason³, rather than in scriptural Christianity.

Accordingly sanctification was viewed as the attainment of a completeness by man.⁴ They saw man as qualitatively close to God⁵, and thus drawn to the dictates of reason which were understood to be divine.⁶ This was further developed by the post-Restoration emphasis on interiority in worship.⁷ It was for this reason that they attacked Anglican ceremonial⁸, and minimised the efficacy of the sacraments⁹. "Puritans were expected to live as angels, as bodiless spirits, using

1. Owen, Works, IV. pp. 83, 206; Baxter, Practical Works, II. p. 267; Miller, op. cit. pp. 182-90, 280.

2. Owen, Works, XIII. p. 414.

3. Ibid., XIV. p. 74, IV. pp. 179-82; Baxter, Practical Works, IV. p. 68.

4. Owen, Works, IV. pp. 510-20; Howe, Works, I. pp. 141, 160, 164.

5. Horton Davies, op. cit. p. 7; Howe, Works, I. p. 98; Owen, Works, XIII. p. 415.

6. T. Goodwin, Works, IV. p. 304; Owen, Works, XIV. p. 74, XIII. pp. 416-417, 432, 438-9; Howe, Works, I. pp. 94-5.

7. Horton Davies, op. cit. pp. 452ff.

8. Ibid., pp. 528-9.

9. Ibid., pp. 530-1.

their ears, but neglecting their senses. They seemed to think that heaven and earth, grace and nature, form and spirit, structure and freedom were antithetical."¹

Such interiority led to the equating of moral virtue with Christian faith.² This was especially true of New England Congregationalists.³ The important issue for us to grasp is that great emphasis was put on the testimony of inner reason.⁴ Nearly all the Puritans went as far as being rationalistic, works righteous, empiricists, when philosophy led them that far.⁵ Philosophical empiricism gave them great freedom to deal with the sensorial and super-sensorial.⁶ In his The Reason of the Christian Religion, Baxter writes, "...the certainty of my judgment by sensation and reflexive intuition...nature would not suffer me to doubt...By my actions I know that I am; and that I am a sentient, intelligent and operative being."⁷ This viewpoint has been seen to have been taken to its logical conclusion by Roger Williams when 'liberty' was divorced from God and centred in man.⁸ It was for these reasons that many Puritans

1. Horton Davies, op. cit. pp. 532-533.

2. Baxter, Practical Works, II. pp. 409-410; Bass, op. cit. pp. 185, 262; Cragg, op. cit. pp. 88-92; Taylor, op. cit. pp. 504-5.

3. J. Jones, op. cit. pp. 20ff.

4. Owen, Works, XIV. p. 74; Toon, Hyper-Calvinism. pp. 28-34.

5. Owen, Works, XIV. p. 74; Baxter, Practical Works, II. p. 63.

6. Owen, Works, XIII. pp. 435, 437, 414.

7. Charnock, Works, I. p. xliii; Haller, op. cit. pp. 96-8; McKim, art. cit. pp. 229-232; Owen, Works, XIII. p. 311; Miller, op. cit. p. 297.

8. Goulding, art. cit. p. 747; Taylor, op. cit. pp. 510-

21; J. Jones, op. cit. pp. 20ff; John Redwood, Reason, Ridicule and Religion. The Age of Enlightenment in England. London, 1976; Horton Davies, op. cit. pp. 439-53.

found Locke's rationalistic empiricism an intellectual centre of gravity.¹

Accordingly Puritanism resolved everything to its conception of man, his equity, reason, liberty, innate rationality, atemporality, etc. God became consonant with this, and their view of religion tended to be altered to suit this. In political terms the Presbyterian Alexander Henderson summed up this trend in his The Unlawfulness and Danger of Limited Prelacy, [London, 1641], "Here is Superiority without Tyranny...Here is parity without confusion or Disorder...And lastly, Here is subjection without slavery."² In the movement's progress from the Civil War to the Hyper-Calvinism controversies of the 1680's individual conscience was pitted against the religious, social, and political status quo.³

1. Lamont, op. cit. pp. 241-2.

2. Drysdale, op. cit. p. 279.

3. Owen, Works, XIII. p. 396; Lamont, op. cit. pp. 133, 145, 161; Plum, op. cit. pp. 96-100; Horton Davies, op. cit. pp. 170-1, 438, 454; Taylor, op. cit. p. 499; W. H. Goold, 'John Owen on Toleration and Church Government'. Banner of Truth. Issue 44. Sept/Oct 1966. p. 15.

Chapter Four.Puritan Concepts of Politics, Rationalism and God.Politics and 'Golden Chain' Theology.

There is no doubt that Puritanism had a profound affect upon Anglo-American politics.¹ As theologians they approached man as either elect or potentially elect; all Puritans had little time for the sinful or the reprobate. In effect, this standpoint meant they wished to coerce men into moral action befitting the elect, or allow them to choose action as moral men.²

The Presbyterian Approach.

We have already seen that Presbyterians tended not to see depravity as total. They also believed Natural Theology to be efficacious. Because of this their political outlook was communal rather than concentrating on the elect individual.³ This is why Baxter and Howe could be generous in the ecumenical discussions with the Episcopalians and Congregationalists.⁴ Baxter regarded Owen's lack of enthusiasm for ecumenism as Congregationalist introspection, a rationalistic development of the spirit.⁵ Hence in his Christian Directory, [London, 1673], Baxter wanted the Congregationalists to, "...shut up about free grace...and be less pessimistic

1. Taylor, op.cit. p. 498.

2. Ibid., p. 499.

3. Ibid., p. 504.

4. Lamont, op.cit. pp. 171, 182-6.

5. Ibid., pp. 171-3.

about the number of godly in a parish."¹ To Baxter they seemed to be hiding themselves from the real world.² His own attitude was more optimistic because of his belief in sufficient rather than efficient grace.³

This attitude had been forged in the Apocalyptic excitement of the earlier seventeenth-century. During this period pastoral concern for the individual was combined with a scholastical view of natural man. When Millennialism declined in the 1650's and the 1660's⁴, pastoralism waned to leave a scholastical view of man which we have already discussed. Relying on empirical rationalism, they resolved all their doctrines to their view of man. Therefore the Presbyterians had little time for sects which concentrated on what they saw as peripheral doctrines which caused division.⁵ They regarded man as high in the 'Golden Chain', and by nature able to achieve moral excellence. Because of this they saw no real division between Church and State. This is why they wanted to extend the powers of the magistrate. Such a stance was not populism⁶; they saw the magistrate as the preserver of society through God's reasonable laws.⁷ In his Attributes, Charnock stressed that such law exists in the minds of men⁸, and hence men

1. Lamont, op. cit. p. 231.

2. Ibid., pp. 182-3.

3. Ibid. pp. 187-9; Charnock, Works, I. pp. xli-xlii, IV. pp. 92-3.

4. Horton Davies, op. cit. p. 184; Bass, op. cit. pp. 227-31; Wallace, op. cit. p. 158.

5. Lamont, op. cit. pp. 166, 182.

6. Ibid., p. 246.

7. Charnock, Works, II. pp. 353, 475-7.

8. Ibid. I. p. 166.

should submit', "because moral law is suited to his nature."² Such law cannot be other than good.³ The magistrate rules in virtue of his powers as a natural man, and is closely linked to God.⁴

We can hardly discuss Presbyterian attitudes to a theocracy without comparing it to an 'ecclesiastical polity'. But whereas this was traditionally conceived as the secular serving the spiritual, for Presbyterians the two were combined. The magistrate held such an important position in their political schema because they believed that natural man could conform to God's law.⁵ Therefore Baxter did not believe in tolerance.⁶ For the Presbyterians the prince governed from God, by God and for God, "...the linchpin of an aggressive protestant imperialism that most immediately needed to sweep Roman Catholicism back to hell."⁷ This attitude is seen in Baxter's Holy Commonwealth, [London, 1658]. When John Rogers asked if the destruction of personal liberty was the best means of destroying Popery, Baxter said it was.⁸ Constantine was a useful person to Owen and Hobbes because he kept order, but he was revered by Prynne, [1600-1669],⁹ and Baxter

1. Charnock, Works, II. p. 95.

2. Ibid, II. pp. 27-9, III. p. 120, II. p. 464.

3. Ibid, II. p. 386.

4. Ibid, II. pp. 27, 330, I. p. 8.; Sibbes, Works, III. p. 299.

5. Lamont, op. cit. pp. 182-8, 246.

6. Ibid, p. 166.

7. Ibid, pp. 210-213, 112-116.

8. Ibid, pp. 194-5.

9. William Prynne. Oxford man. "As a strong and unbending Puritan he was soon in conflict with the High Church party." Imprisoned. In his The Sovereign Power, [1643], he defended attacking the monarchy. He believed in the supremacy of the state, in works such as 12 Considerable Sermons, [1644]. He was imprisoned during part of the Interregnum. [1650-3]. With the Restoration he again came into conflict with the Anglicans, though Charles II appointed him keeper of the Tower. See: Cross, op. cit. pp. 1119-1120.

because he enforced a discipline' which man could achieve.² In doing this they tended to lose sight of the historic Fall, as well as the minister's basic role in correcting sin. Presbyterianism's whole outlook was structured around the 'Golden Chain' evaluation of man. During the persecutions of the Restoration period, the Presbyterians were forced to adopt many of the disciplines of the Congregational Church, but this was not in character, and only masked the profoundly different ways they viewed man in his political role³, as we see in Baxter's A Treatise of Episcopacy, [London, 1681].⁴

Baxter attempted to retain the central, evangelistic ground, whilst developing his theology. However, his scholastical theology and doctrine of man inevitably drew Presbyterianism into a dependence on Natural Theology. Because of this it became progressively legalistic.⁵ It was this legalism that they so intolerantly imposed during this brief time in power, [1648].⁶ This is not to say that they were scripturally legalistic, we have already seen how varied the sources of their theology were. It was man's natural ability to effect sanctification which they upheld.⁷

1. Lamont, op. cit. pp. 189-95, 210-214, 252; Miller, op. cit. pp. 70-1.
 2. Lamont, op. cit. pp. 141, 267; Wallace, op. cit. p. 140.
 3. Lamont, op. cit. pp. 220-221; Toon, God's Statesman, p. 113.
 4. Lamont, op. cit. pp. 240-7.
 5. Taylor, op. cit. pp. 504-5; Horton Davies, op. cit. pp. 525-6.
 6. Drysdale, op. cit. pp. 349-51.
 7. Lamont, op. cit. pp. 173-92.

The Congregationalist Approach.

The Congregationalists did not have such optimism about the whole of mankind, only the elect. However, their view of the elect was vivid, as we see in their idea about the role of the elect in contemporary English history, as Thomas Goodwin wrote in his Discourse of Election, [London, 1682], "...let me tell you, it is the declining of election that undoes a nation, when election grows low, and ceases in an age..."¹ Without the need to strive for justification, the elect person only needed to explore his own character for a clear discovery of God and right reason.² This is the reason why the opinion of the individual was always central to them.

When we note the original differences between their views on efficient and sufficient grace, it is remarkable how similar Presbyterian and Congregationalist conceptions of 'man' were. Like the Presbyterians they saw man in possession of, "...the light and law of nature..." according to Owen in his Truth and Innocence Vindicated, [London, 1669].³ Hence the truth as viewed by the individual, merited a stand against any magistrate who denied, "...the light of human nature, that common reason and consent of all mankind wherein and whereon all government is founded..."⁴ So that the magistrate was seen as an inferior authority when compared to the conscience of man.⁵

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1. T. Goodwin, Works, IX. p. 39; Owen, Works, XIII. p. 308.
 2. Taylor, op. cit. p. 509; Owen, Works, XIV, p. 74.
 3. Owen, Works, XIII. pp. 346, 416.
 4. Ibid., pp. 346, 393, 414-416.
 5. Ibid., p. 393; Tudur-Jones, op. cit. pp. 20ff.

Man deserves liberty in this system because his conscience resolves itself to obey ultimate authority.' By the 'ultimate' they basically meant reason.² So that the rational judgement of the conscience became an act of worship.³ This naturally developed into the application of the conscience of the elect man to politics.⁴ Great emphasis was placed on the mind, as we see in Owen's Animadversions, [London, 1662].⁵ But this in turn developed into the principle of government by assent.⁶ In the work of Roger Williams we see a conscious development of the Congregationalist concept of man.⁷ He divorced their idea of 'man' from religion, and demanded liberty. In formal terms theology still had a free God as a premiss⁸, but increasingly a free man became the starting point.⁹ In these terms the concept of contract became very important in their view of church and state: being an agreement between parties based on right reason, natural justice and utility.¹⁰ The basis of their approach was that certainty lay in truth, which must be sought in and through the thinking conscious.¹¹

1. Owen, Works, XIII. pp. 377, 395.

2. Ibid, XIV. p. 74, XIII. pp. 314, 439.

3. Ibid; Taylor, op. cit. pp. 420ff; J. Jones, op. cit. pp. 20ff.

4. Lamont, op. cit. p. 182; Taylor, op. cit. pp. 506-514.

5. Owen, Works, XIV. p. 74; J. Jones, op. cit. pp. 20ff; Solt, art. cit. p. 20; Miller, op. cit. p. 376; Taylor, op. cit. p. 514.

6. Taylor, op. cit. pp. 514-519.

7. Goulding, art. cit. pp. 517ff; Taylor, op. cit. pp. 510-21.

8. J. Jones, op. cit. pp. 11, 26-31.

9. Goulding, art. cit. p. 741; Taylor, op. cit. pp. 506, 517-519.

10. Taylor, op. cit. pp. 516-519.

11. Ibid, pp. 503, 514; Owen, Works, XIV. p. 74.

Therefore like the Presbyterians they equated spiritual with intellectual growth. 'Right reason' became their yardstick, and they demanded that the magistrate should reflect this', for true authority was seen to lie in the conscience.² This is not to say that the Congregationalists were populists, they were fully prepared to frame repressive laws to uphold the authority of the elect conscience.³ In 1652 Owen told parliament, "Know that error and falsehood have no right or title from God or man to any privilege...or any good thing you are entrusted withall."⁴ Congregationalism's political view was based on a demand for religious and political liberty for the elect conscience. For Baxter denominational divisions weakened Christianity, but for Owen it was good if the difference was the product of, "...their own choice, liberty and judgement."⁵ They could see no real difference between the setting up of a church, trading corporation or government.⁶

The Common Puritans Attitude to Politics.

Since 'Golden Chain' theology attempted to resolve all knowledge into Christian faith, the Puritans saw politics as a central part of their religion.⁷ The

1. Owen, Works, XIII. p. 395.

2. Ibid, pp. 435-8.

3. Drysdale, op.cit. pp. 309-314.

4. Ibid, p. 352.

5. Owen, Works, XIII. pp. 310, 308.

6. Ibid, p. 304; Taylor, op.cit. pp. 514-5.

7. Taylor, op.cit. pp. 514-21; Ahlstrom, op.cit. p. 97.

Congregationalists's belief in individual conscience has been seen to lead, "...on directly to the assertion of the Rights of Man in the Constitution of the North American States and the rise of political democracy..."¹ "The modern western beliefs in progress, in the rights of man, and the duties of conforming political action to moral ideas, whatever they might owe to other influences, derive ultimately from the moral ideas of Puritanism and its faith in the possibility of the realisation of the Holy Commonwealth on earth by the efforts of the elect."²

Whatever their stance, all Puritans strove for a Holy Commonwealth. For the Presbyterians it was constructed externally; for the Congregationalists it was centred within the individual. For both of them such a reliance on the individual was a valuable defence against the persecutions of the Restoration period.³ But coupled with scholastical trends this had important implications. Significantly, the concept of the 'elect' was expanded to include all who understand. The whole moral law was internalised⁴, with reason as its framework⁵. It was because of what they saw as man's innate ability to fulfil the moral law that they demanded liberty for individual conscience.⁶ They believed in God being within man regardless of the Fall⁷, which allowed man to conceive the unity of knowledge through

1. C. Dawson, quoted by: Taylor, op. cit. p. 498.

2. Ibid.

3. Horton Davies, op. cit. p. 171.

4. Charnock, Works, I. p. 166; Baxter, Practical Works, IV. p. 69.

5. Owen, Works, XIV. p. 74, XIII. p. 432; Charnock, Works I. pp. xlii-xliii.

6. Owen, Works, XIII. p. 311; Goulding, art. cit. p. 741; Haller, op. cit. pp. 197ff.

7. Haller, op. cit. pp. 197ff; Owen, Works, XIV. p. 74; Baxter, Practical Works, IV. p. 69.

reason.' Hence for Milton the exaltation of Scripture meant the exaltation of individual reason and private judgement.²

"As the Reformation involved the rejection of the doctrine of the visible unity of the church under one infallible head, it of necessity introduced a change in relationship between the state and the church."³ For Puritanism it meant the exaltation of the individual conscience. This was especially evident after the Restoration, when the developing scholasticism had lost the restraining influence of millennialism.⁴ The calibre of preaching decreased⁵, and religious controversy was increasingly frowned upon.⁶ This was a time of social, political and academic ferment, and man was placed at the centre of all these, which were all in turn resolved into the 'Golden Chain'.⁷

Puritanism as an Intellectual Force.

By the 1660's Puritanism had become an intellectual tour de force, dominated by great minds. This in itself caused a crisis, because for various reasons the next generation tended not to be so

1. Ibid.

2. Haller, op.cit. pp. 337-8; Tudur-Jones, op.cit. pp. 83-7; Drysdale, op.cit. p. 275.

3. C. Hodge, The Relation of the Church and the State, London, 1960. p. 109.

4. Howe, Works, V. p. 239.

5. Horton Davies, op.cit. p. 184.

6. Howe, Works, V. p. 86; Lamont, op.cit. pp. 231-2.

7. Miller, op.cit. pp. 90-2.

academically able. So what happened when following Puritans did not match up intellectually to the likes of Owen, Baxter or Howe? One serious possibility was that they would be trapped within some aspect of 'Golden Chain' theology which they didn't understand. There is also the other side of the coin to consider, when men could have great ability without the faith. Without faith, they had the intellectual ability to conceive the vast Puritan 'Golden Chain', but they could never understand what lay behind it. It is important that we have already pointed out that it was faith which allowed the Puritans to live with the contradictions within their system.

Conceptions of a 'Chain of Being' were not new, but Puritan 'Golden Chain' theology was. Professor Miller tells us that the Puritans were only tenants of a vast mansion of theology created by the Continental Reformers, so that they could add little to it.' After touching on some of the complexities of their doctrine of 'man', and how they combined this into a 'Golden Chain', we have gone beyond Miller's thesis. For the Puritans constructed a vast 'Golden Chain' theology which went leaps and bounds beyond other epistemologies. In the process they destroyed much of the scriptural infrastructure. But it is important to stress the theoretical and practical aspects of their faith. The great 'Golden Chain' theologians never lost their faith, it spurred them on to create a synthesis of theology and knowledge. In the process they often sacrificed one on the altar of the other, but never totally. This is probably why their work is littered with

1. Miller, *op. cit.* pp. 90-2.

which might make them lesser theologians, but perhaps greater Christians.

However 'faithful' 'Golden Chain' theologians were, 'Golden Chain' theology had its own methodological drives and disciplines which steadily took them away from the 'simple' Puritanism of earlier years. No component was more important to 'Golden Chain' theology than reason. It was the life-blood of their system, man's parallel with God, and the ultimate goal of sanctification. We have already highlighted some aspects of 'reason' in their work, now we need to discuss more of its implications.

Puritanism's links with, and development of Classical Rationalism.

English education during the seventeenth-century was solidly classical.¹ The vast majority of leading, mainstream Puritans came out of this tradition.² During their time of power during the Commonwealth period, they made a conscious effort to protect and develop classical education.³ Even after the Restoration Puritan Academies continued and improved traditional education rather than incorporating Reformed theology.⁴ Because of this they had a very strong grounding in scholastic Natural Theology.⁵ Hence it was natural for them

1. Haller, *op. cit.* p. 83; Breward, *art. cit.* p. 6.

2. Haller, *op. cit.* p. 83; in relation to Owen see: P. Toon, [ed], The Correspondence of John Owen, 1616-83. Cambridge, 1970. p. 5; McKim, *art. cit.* p. 202. For Baxter's lack of training see: Cross, *op. cit.* p. 143.

3. Toon, God's Satesman, p. 108.

4. Horton Davies, *op. cit.* pp. 454-5.

5. Miller, *op. cit.* p. 190.

to articulate the traditional Christian emphasis on virtue through humanistic concepts of good behaviour. Aristotelianism was especially important in this.¹ So that virtue became associated with right reason, and thus was attainable through the same, as we see in Owen's Truth and Innocence Vindicated, [London, 1669].²

Traditional English Aristotelianism was greatly modified by Ramus' 'practical' interpretation of Neoplatonism.³ William Perkins found that Ramism allowed room for Aristotelian ethics, whilst furnishing the philosophical stability of Neoplatonism. A balance between physics and piety, or between physics and metaphysics.⁴ Ramism focussed on super-temporal truth, and gave 'man' a step-by-step analysis or method of attaining it.⁵ Hence 'spiritual', Neoplatonic concepts of regeneration were integrated with Aristotelian concepts of the physical powers of the soul.⁶ The result was that grace was understood to enter the soul through sense-impression.⁷ Grace was seen as truth overcoming ignorance or temporality. There was no room for the historic Fall in this system.⁸

1. Breward, art. cit. p. 6; Taylor, op. cit. pp. 88-92.

2. Owen, Works, XIII. p. 414, XIV. p. 74; Howe, Works, IV. p. 22.

3. Breward, op. cit. pp. 71-2; McKim, art. cit. pp. 196-7; Toon, Hyper-Calvinism, pp. 20-22.

4. Toon, Hyper-Calvinism, pp. 23-4; Miller, op. cit. p. 286; Breward, art. cit. p. 6; Boughton, art. cit. pp. 84-5.

5. Boughton, art. cit. p. 84; McKim, op. cit. pp. 202-7; Breward, art. cit. p. 6; Breward, op. cit. p. 171.

6. Boughton, art. cit. p. 84.

7. Miller, op. cit. p. 281.

8. Ibid., pp. 17-21.

Such a methodology needs an ascriptural, scholastical base. Although Puritanism's undoubted scripturality impeded its development, scholastical methodology became more important. Men such as John Preston and William Ames used Ramism as a base.¹ The next generation was faced with the option of developing this scholasticism even more. Therefore Puritans such as John Owen found themselves at a cross-roads.² He could have abandoned scholasticism and followed the 'uneducated' spirituality which Webster and Dell advocated; or there was the option of developing the concept of the internal, elect spirit as much as Eyre's supralapsarianism. He could have combined logic and contemporary humanism with religion like John Goodwin or Milton. Owen took the significant step of buttressing the traditional roots of his Federalism, whilst retaining scholasticism.³ He believed that ascriptural Natural Theology could have no place in soteriology, as we see in his Causes, Ways and Means, (London, 1678).⁴ However, his education or religious outlook led him to emphasise man's ability to know the eternal truth through scholastic empiricism.⁵

If we look at the work of Richard Baxter, it is apparent that either he did not grasp the implications of 'Golden Chain' theology as firmly as Owen, or that as a pastor he may not have been as interested

1. Boughton, art. cit., pp. 88-94.

2. McKim, art. cit., p. 207; Bass, op. cit., p. 154.

3. Bass, op. cit., pp. 153-4.

4. Miller, op. cit., pp. 19-22; Owen, Works, X. p. 128, IV. p. 194.

5. Bass, op. cit., p. 154; McKim, art. cit., pp. 196, 207.

in philosophical and theological consistency. Although his position lacked consistency, Baxter valued reason and man's ability to achieve faith as elevated reason.¹ Like Owen he can be viewed as a Puritan schoolman.²

All the other Puritans drew just as heavily on scholasticism to express their faith. John Howe, Theophilus Gale and Peter Sterry relied on Neoplatonism. Charles Morton was one of the few Puritans to be a committed Aristotelian. All these men can be seen as a step on from the more practical theology of Owen or Baxter. If we look at the work of the New England Congregationalist John Norton, we see a concept of man as an autonomous, reasonable entity with free-will, who demands respect from God.³ The work of John Howe and Stephen Charnock demonstrates that on both sides of the Atlantic scholastical methodology was assuming a central role.⁴ Whereas men such as Perkins, Ames, Preston, Owen and Baxter used philosophy to articulate personal faith, Restoration Puritans were doing the opposite. In doing this they asserted the unity of truth in terms of knowledge, reason and private judgement.⁵

1. Bass, *op. cit.* pp. 194-208.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 206.

3. J. Jones, *op. cit.* pp. 11-17.

4. Redwood, *op. cit.* pp. 9-14, 27-29; Bass, *op. cit.* pp. 233-242.

5. Miller, *op. cit.* p. 281; Haller, *op. cit.* pp. 348-62.

The Concept of God within 'Golden Chain' Epistemology.From Nature.

Puritans regarded God as the apex of the vast natural system. From an examination of nature they saw God as clearly discernible, as Charnock tells us in his Attributes of God, "Every plant, every atom, as well as every star, at the first meeting whispers this in our ears, I have a creator, I am a witness to a deity."¹ Hence much more than inanimate matter or brute creation, man questions, and thereby finds God everywhere. Indeed, to deny God is to deny the essence of man.²

By sense impression man recognises that all creatures borrow life from God³, and from these impressions God's, "...being stands out from all the works of his hands, as transcending the scale of their entity..." according to Thomas Goodwin in his A Discourse of Election, [1682].⁴ So that the very essence of God shows through his creation.⁵ Reason demands this view⁶, for they saw it as logical that the perceived rational order of nature should have a ground mover.⁷ Applying a scholastical methodology to nature and to their concept of man, they were able to augment these basic observations.⁸ Reason taught

1. Charnock, Works, I. p. 168; Owen, Works, XIII. p. 439.

2. Charnock, Works, I. pp. 137, 142, xlv; Miller, op. cit. pp. 28-33.

3. Howe, Works, I. p. 146.

4. T. Goodwin, Works, IX. p. 100.

5. Ibid. p. 105; Charnock, Works, I. p. 150.

6. Ibid.

7. Howe, Works, I. p. 121; Charnock, Works, I. p. 150.

8. Baxter, Practical Works, II. p. 11, IV. p. 70; Charnock, Works, I. p. 150.

that nature could not produce such order without an orderer, 'chance' was not constant enough.¹ There had to be a dialectically understandable cause, and they termed this motive 'God'.²

'Golden Chain' theology developed established Reformed and scholastical uses of ontology and teleology³, and concluded that Natural Theology is enough to make man worship God.⁴ This was a very dominant theme within Puritanism, and it is significant that the Hyper-Calvinist Joseph Hussey was converted by Charnock's Attributes of God.⁵ By this they meant a type of intellectual works righteousness.⁶

Their own ordered 'Golden Chain' showed God as the creator of a harmonic system, "Wherefore how inexhaustable a fountain of life, being, and all perfection, have we here represented to our thoughts!", according to Howe in his Living Temple, [London, 1676].⁷ Man's rational ability perceived the wisdom and knowledge behind creation.⁸ The premiss that God is reasonable developed their theology.⁹

Sovereign reason became the ground of their view of God, and they associated this rationalism with virtuous goodness.¹⁰ God, who

1. Charnock, Works, I. pp. 8, 155.

2. Ibid, pp. 155, 144, IV. p. 69; Howe, Works, I. pp. 144, 180; Bass, op. cit. pp. 184-6.

3. Platt, op. cit. pp. 13-51; Miller, op. cit. pp. 186-90. 234.

4. Bass, op. cit. p. 256; J. Jones, op. cit. pp. 59-70; Redwood, op. cit. pp. 24-34.

5. Toon, Hyper-Calvinism, pp. 72-3.

6. Bass, op. cit. p. 256; Owen, Works, XIV. p. 74; Charnock, Works, I. pp. xlv-xlvii.

7. Howe, Works, I. p. 180.

8. Ibid, pp. 169, 122, 116, 128, 130, 132.

9. Owen, Works, X. pp. 238-9; J. Jones, op. cit. pp. 62-70.

10. Owen, Works, XIII. p. 416.

according to Charnock in his Attributes of God, "...by an unconceivable wisdom, who fills the heavens with the glory of his majesty, and the earth with the influence of his goodness."¹ They represented creation and God in terms of this rational goodness which was associated with grace, and seen as an attraction and goal for man.² It followed that creation is 'good' and so is God for, "...would it not be a disparagement to an infinite goodness to be outstripped by a creature..." especially when the creature is a manifestation of divine perfection.³ Therefore the Puritans set God within a matrix of rational goodness. This had many ramifications, one of the most important was the way philosophical idealism squeezed the Trinity into monotheism; another was an ascriptural view of God. Scripturally God is a 'person' who is good, powerful, merciful etc. For 'Golden Chain' theology God was a cluster of ground motives. Hence he is not so much reasonable as 'reason', not good but 'goodness'.⁴

For the Puritans God is the chief 'good',⁵ whose unchanging perfection was the basis of the great system of Covenant Theology.⁶ According to Charnock in his Attributes of God, the unchanging order of philosophy and the world testifies that God must, "...necessarily exist...be infinitely perfect..."⁷ God is the metaphysical

1. Charnock, Works, I. p. 132.

2. J. Jones, op. cit., pp. 44ff; Baxter, Practical Works, IV. p. 36.

3. Charnock, Works, I. pp. 11-13; Howe, Works, I. p. 165.

4. Howe, Works, I. p. 177.

5. Charnock, Works, II. p. 280.

6. Howe, Works, I. p. 118; Owen, Works, XIII. p. 35; Bass, op. cit., pp. 177-81; Wallace, op. cit., p. 151.

7. Charnock, Works, I. p. 151; T. Goodwin, Works, IX. p. 117; Howe, Works, I. p. 168.

first cause', above all he is the perfection of man, as we see in Howe's Living Temple, "...the necessary being hath actuality answerable to the utmost possibility of the creature..."²

Idealistic Views of God.

'Golden Chain' theology demanded a working definition of God which Scripture could not give them, "...such an account we shall have of what we are inquiring after, if we have the conception in our minds of an eternal, uncaused, independent..."³ The question was not whether there was a first cause, but what it was.⁴ To construct a definition of God they turned to Protestant scholasticism with its vast philosophical heritage.⁵

Philosophy taught them that the order of creation meant there had to be a ground source orderer.⁶ In doing this they effectively put God on trial.⁷ The result was a spiralling philosophy of God, which was based largely on Natural Theology, and which was basically a philosophy of man..⁸

One result of relying on philosophy was the viewing of God as a super-temporal, Neoplatonic ideal.⁹ In his Discourse

1. Howe, Works, I. pp. 177-9.

2. Ibid, p. 182.

3. Ibid, p. 102.

4. Charnock, Works, I. p. 134.

5. Ibid, I. p. 131.

6. Ibid, p. 158.

7. Baxter, Practical Works, II. p. 12; Howe, Works, I. pp. 176, 179; Owen, Works, IV. pp. 73-4; Toon, Hyper-Calvinism, p. 104.

8. Howe, Works, I. p. 219; Miller, op. cit. p. 12.

9. Charnock, Works, I. pp. xlv-xlvii, 8-9.

of Election, Thomas Goodwin writes, "...I understand the sublimity and transcendency of his divine nature and essence, as being of an higher differing kind, infinitely above that being which all creatures have by participation from him..."¹ Accordingly God was a super-temporal first cause possessed of ultimate attributes, and acting as a fountainhead for the whole of creation.² "God must necessarily exist...be infinitely perfect...The conception of a nature more perfect than any other...from a corporeal or bodily substance joined with an incorporeal and spiritual...one choice being above all."³ Such a rarefied concept of God led to scholastical views of his actions, and this in part explains the philosophical rigour of Federal Theology.⁴ The implication was that all physical creation is unstable regardless of the Fall.⁵ Hence physical creation was seen as animated by a super-temporal philosophical ground motive.⁶

God as Sovereign Goodness.

The Puritans saw man as assenting to the reasonable goodness of God, "...God is as good as he is great and wise...the first in being and excellency."⁷ Ontology and

1. T. Goodwin, Works, IX. pp. 105, 117.

2. Ibid., pp. 48, 106; Bass, op. cit., p. 153; Baxter, Practical Works, II. p. 12, IV. p. 70; Charnock, Works, I. pp. 148-50.

3. Charnock, Works, I. p. 150; Howe, Works, I. pp. 175-6.

4. T. Goodwin, Works, IX. p. 106; Owen, Works, XIII. p. 435.

5. T. Goodwin, Works, IX. p. 7.

6. Howe, Works, I. p. 179.

7. Baxter, Practical Works, IV. p. 36; Owen, Works, IV. pp. 60-70.

teleology were a strong source of such conceptions.' In doing this they moved away from the scriptural principle that God is good, to the idealistic concept that Good is god.² So that, "We are led...to consider a fountain which bubbles up in all perfection, and which distributes these several degrees of being and perfection to what we see."³ Much of the scriptural notion of justification was lost, religion became man's gravitation towards reason away from unreason.⁴ Again the historic Fall was minimised for, "...under the notion of God...[as]...the chiefest good, and of truth...[as]...the proper object and rest of the understanding, none can willingly depart..."⁵

The Puritans saw God as good because he is the one necessary being, but most of all because he is sovereign reason. 'Reason' was the great innate bridge between God and man.⁷ Sanctification became a matter of purging error from the minds of men⁸, with the reason of faith assuming a seminal position.⁹ God was viewed as the highest philosophical perfection¹⁰, with his authority centred in the fact of his rationality¹¹. Hence all the traditional characteristics of God were measured against reason.¹² In his Attributes of God, Charnock

1. Baxter, Practical Works, IV. p. 69.

2. Howe, Works, II. p. 9, I. pp. 169-70, 180; Bass, op. cit. p. 32.

3. Howe, Works, I. p. 170.

4. Owen, Works, XIV. p. 74; J. Jones, op. cit. pp. 20ff.

5. Ibid.

6. Owen, Works, XIV. p. 62; Bass, op. cit. pp. 204, 271.

7. Baxter, Practical Works, IV. p. 36; T. Goodwin, Works, VI. p. 498;

Howe, Works, I. pp. 169-70; Owen, Works, IV. pp. 192-5

8. Howe, Works, I. p. 194; Owen, Works, IV. pp. 181-5.

9. Owen, Works, XIV. p. 74.

10. Charnock, Works, I. pp. 8-11; Bass, op. cit. pp. 169, 271.

11. Owen, Works, XIV. p. 74; Charnock, Works, I. pp. 131-2.

12. Charnock, Works, I. p. 137.

writes, "The impression of a deity is as common as reason, and of the same age with reason."¹ This was why they insisted upon the reasonableness of something as unfathomable as supralapsarian-double-predestination.² They did this because they associated God's action with his nature as 'reason', "...we know how little knowledge and purpose, in God do differ."³ In expressing the character of God through scholasticism, the harsher aspects of Federalism were avoided. We can see this in the way 'Golden Chain' theology avoided the implications of the angry, sin-revenging, atemporal 'Dominus', who left man no room for works righteousness.⁴ So they constructed another view of God in parallel to the former, a rectorial God, who beckoned to man to help himself to attain grace.⁵

This in turn supported their rational concept of man, and their close alignment of man and God.⁶ Hence they looked to man for an image of God. Even when allowing for the Fall, Charnock tells us in his Attributes of God, "The impressions of a deity were so strong as not to be struck out by the malice and power of hell."⁷ "Nature within man, and nature without man, agree upon the first meeting together to form this sentiment, that there is a God."⁸ This is the rational thread that runs through the world, and is the foundation of man's perception.⁹

1. Charnock, Works, I. p. 137; Howe, Works, I. pp. 191-2.

2. Miller, op. cit. p. 12.

3. Baxter, Practical Works, III. p. 10.

4. Lamont, op. cit. pp. 141-3; Miller, op. cit. p. 36.

5. Ibid.; Baxter, Practical Works, IV. p. 36.

6. Charnock, Works, I. p. 137.

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid.; Howe, Works, I. p. 183; P. Toon, God's Salesman, p. 170; Baxter, The Reason of the Christian, pp. 16-17.

Accordingly common reason drove every creature to God.¹ Man as the apex of physical creation, seeks to achieve God through divine reason.² This in turn underlined the similarity between divine and human conscience³, or soul.⁴ From the ability of man they saw, "...a proportionable infinite actuality of power on the Creator's part."⁵ They also used a vivid contemporary sense of sin to develop the concept of an atemporal God. The result was God as an intelligent, immortal, atemporal, dialectical spirit.⁶

The Puritans regarded reason as the most important parallel between God and man.⁷ By this they meant a spiritual bond, which was linked to their placing manhood within the soul. Therefore sin was seen as an abuse of the soul as intellect, as in Baxter's The Reason of the Christian Religion, [London, 1666], "It is a setting up of our senses and appetites above our reason."⁸ This does not mean that salvation lay in relying on God, rather in examining oneself, and then re-aligning the soul to reason.⁹ In the process they were forming notions of man rather than of the scriptural God.¹⁰ This betrays a strong

1. Charnock, Works, I. p. 191.

2. Ibid, p. 137; Owen, Works, XIV. pp. 74-6, XIII. p. 439.

3. Owen, Works, XIII. p. 437; Charnock, Works, I. pp. xliii-xliii.

4. Howe, Works, I. p. 219; T. Goodwin, Works, IX. pp. 20-22.

5. Howe, Works, I. p. 183.

6. Owen, Works, XIV. p. 74; Howe, Works, VIII. p. 355; T. Goodwin, Works, IX. pp. 22, 26; Charnock, Works, I. pp. 10-12.

7. Charnock, Works, I. p. xliiv.

8. Baxter, Practical Works, II. p. 63, IV. p. 34.

9. Ibid, Howe, Works, I. pp. 141, 160, 163-4; Charnock, Works, I. p. 12.

10. Solt, art. cit. pp. 20-22.

anthropocentrism within Puritan 'Golden Chain' theology.' "The very list of attributes that they came up with are not attributes of God but of the human intellect..."²

The role of the Trinity in 'Golden Chain' Theology.

We have already discussed how 'Golden Chain' theology had a unified view of God.³ This concept of God is the focus of their system. As a result God is atemporal, ahistorical, and indivisible in essence. Hence the 'Golden Chain' theologians were uneasy about the Trinity. Of course there was no way they could drop such a centrally scriptural concept, and this in turn threw a spanner into the cogs of their epistemology.⁴

Nowhere is this shown better than in their comparison of the Trinity and reason. Time and again we are told how reasonable the operations of God are, how in fact he is ultimate reason.⁵ But when discussing the Trinity they admitted, "...there being scarce the footsteps of them distinctly to be seen in the works of creation or in the law."⁶ At times they tried to have their cake and eat it,⁷

"Do not consult with reason in it...[viz. the Trinity]...which yet is

1. Solt, art. cit. pp. 20-22; McKim, art. cit. pp. 197ff; Miller, op. cit. p. 12; J. Jones, op. cit. pp. 11ff.

2. Miller, op. cit. p. 12.

3. T. Goodwin, Works, IX. pp. 29, 48, 105, 117.

4. Howe, Works, I. p. 192.

5. Owen, Works, XIV. p. 74; Charnock, Works, I. p. 132.

6. T. Goodwin, Works, IV. p. 263.

7. Ibid., p. 361.

not contradictory to it...," according to Thomas Goodwin in his The Knowledge of God the Father.¹ This contradiction highlights how the Trinity had become superfluous to their epistemology. The actions of the Trinity had collapsed into one indivisible, philosophical ground.

Therefore within Federal Theology it was God who chose a man for grace, with Christ was a tool in the means of achieving that.² It followed that God created Adam less perfect than He could have, and that temporal man always needed super-added sanctification.³ Hence the supreme atonement of Christ was undervalued, He became a means of making man a fit temple for God to dwell in, thereby realising man's godlike characteristics.⁴ So that it is God who sanctifies according to Charnock in his Attributes of God, "God descends to man by this in acts of wisdom and grace, man ascends to God in acts of faith and love."⁵

This was the result of seeing man and God as the dominant foci of their epistemology. Thus they saw justification and sanctification as something God created man for.⁶ This was the inevitable conclusion of a theology which was dominated by Neoplatonic atemporalism. In epistemological terms, Natural Theology had become more dominant than the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Owen recognised this in his 1669 Truth and

1. T. Goodwin, Works, IV. p. 361.

2. Ibid, IX. pp. 5, 29, 97, 111, 113; Owen, Works, X. pp. 242-5; Lamont, op. cit. p. 143.

3. Ibid, IX. pp. 97-99.

4. Ibid, IX. pp. 106-7, IV. p. 544; Charnock, Works, I. pp. 331, 336, Howe, Works, I. p. 332.

5. Charnock, Works, I. p. 336.

6. T. Goodwin, Works, IX. p. 97; Charnock, Works, I. p. 191.

Justice Vindicated, "...that if all religion and the worship of God consisted in morality only, there was neither need nor use of Christ nor the gospel..." But this does not sit very easily with statements he makes in such works as his Animadversions, [1662].² In his Discourse on God's being, Charnock sums up the Puritans' view, "Christ was not the moving cause... God was the first author of this propitiation, appointing this method of restoring the creature, and this person, or Jesus, to do it."³ Salvation became a matter between man and a unified God.⁴

One important result of this minimising of Christ and elevation of man, was a changing view of the sacraments. They no longer accepted the mystery of the Eucharist as Calvin had.⁵ They preferred to see it as a seal of the covenant between God and man.⁶ "Covenant emerged as an individual promise of great strength, demonstrating man's worthiness to uphold his part of a pact. Hence a church was made up of church fellowship covenants."⁷ The sacrament was now based upon the concept of corporate consensus, rather than on the historical consensus of Christ.

1. Owen, Works, XIII. p. 419.

2. Ibid, XIV. pp. 60-76.

3. Charnock, Works, III. p. 337.

4. T. Goodwin, Works, IX. p. 105, XII. pp. 5, 20.

5. Horton Davies, op. cit. p. 310.

6. Ibid, p. 312; T. Goodwin, Works, IX. p. 117.

7. Taylor, op. cit. pp. 510-21.

Therefore the Eucharist was a clear internal and external seal, highlighting a mutually binding contract.¹ Thereby continuing the thought of the Westminster Shorter Catechism, "A sacrament is a holy ordinance instituted by Christ, wherein by sensible arguments, Christ and the benefits of the new covenant are represented, sealed, and applied to believers..."² Hence they could not accept the Roman Catholic view of Christ giving sanctification, rather God gives Christ as the seal of a God-man agreement.³ The worth of man and the qualities of God were the dominant factors within Federal Theology.

1. Horton Davies, op. cit., pp. 312-313.

2. Ibid., p. 314.

3. Ibid.

Chapter Five.An Outline of Puritan Federal Theology.The Role of Man.

Federal or Covenant Theology was by no means limited to the Protestant churches. For Roman Catholicism it meant, "...the conception of God as lawgiver and judge, the expression of Christ's work in terms of satisfaction and equivalence, the conception of the Christian Church as the inheritor of the rights and privileges of the Jewish Church..." However, it was with the Reformation that we have the beginnings of Covenant Theology as we know it. "The idea of the covenant or testament is used by all the Reformers to express God's gracious revelation to His people, both before and after Christ."² It was John Calvin who especially emphasised the coherence of God's dealings with His people. But as early as 1585 in his De Substantia Foederis, Olevianus expressed the first technical Federalism, stressing the Divine Covenant with the Church, the believer's mystic union with Christ, and the perseverance of the saints: "Here we see the covenant idea given structural significance and made a comprehensive

1. Hastings, op. cit. vol. 3. p. 219.

2. Ibid.

conception under which the whole content of Christian faith and practice may be brought."¹

To some extent Puritanism grew out of these movements, but in comparison it was vastly more developed, and Federal Theology as we know it is their creation.² They took the radical step of expressing soteriology through a philosophy of history, unlike Calvin who had not gone this far.³ Calvin perceived that Federal Theology makes legalistic logic the basis of God's action, rather than love.⁴ Also, that it makes Christ a tool, and alienates the majority of mankind from God.⁵

To construct this legalised version of history⁶, the Puritans looked to Calvin's contemporaries and followers.⁷ These men had radically developed aspects of Calvin's work, such as the suggestion that his theology was a statement of Christian truth in terms of divine purpose, and that the operations and person of God were equated with a philosophical ground motive.⁸ They made a significant change in resolving these concepts to and from man's perception.⁹

Using various strands of Reformed Theology and scholastical

1. Hastings, *op. cit.* p. 230.

2. Miller, *op. cit.* p. 366.

3. Toon, *Hyper-Calvinism*, pp. 16-17, 23-4.

4. See: G. J. Postema, 'Calvin's Alleged Rejection of Natural Theology.' *Scottish Journal of Theology*, vol. 24. pp. 423ff.

5. J. B. Torrance, 'The Contribution of McCleod Campbell to Scottish Theology.' *Scottish Journal of Theology*, vol. 26. pp. 299-305.

6. Miller, *op. cit.* p. 378.

7. Lane, *art. cit.* p. 97; Miller, *op. cit.* pp. 190-1.

8. McKim, 'The Puritan view of History', *art. cit.*, pp. 215-220.

9. *Ibid.*, pp. 219, 229-232.

method¹, the Puritans produced a synthesis of free-grace and intellectual works righteousness within a framework of providence.² This can be seen to have had little basis in Calvin's work or in Scripture.³ Justification and sanctification became concepts within an all-embracing determinism, theologically formulated as a doctrine of predestination.⁴ This was the result of a strong emphasis upon rationalism, which is underlined when we note that Puritan theological works sometimes doubled as academic text-books.⁵ By this we should not mean that their religion was a faith in logic, rather that their faith was structured around providential, divine grace and a logical order of salvation.⁶

Federal Theology became the infrastructure of 'Golden Chain' theology. It explained the mysteries involved in a man's salvation, and also resolved the arbitrary nature of God and His grace into the 'Golden Chain'.⁷ Knowledge of God was treated like any other knowledge, and therefore resolved into a stable epistemology. This continued throughout the seventeenth-century, and in this sense all mainstream Puritans were Federalists.⁸ Even more significant is that such

1. Toon, Hyper-Calvinism, pp. 16-19.

2. Miller, op. cit. pp. 384, 394.

3. D. Macleod, 'Federal Theology. An Oppressive Legalism. Banner of truth. Issue 125. Feb 1974. p. 21.

4. Haller, op. cit. pp. 83-88.

5. Ibid, Knappen, op. cit. pp. 342, 437; Bass, op. cit. p. 62; J. Jones, op. cit. p. 70.

6. J. Jones, op. cit. p. 70; Toon, Hyper-Calvinism, p. 182; Owen, Works, XIV. p. 74.

7. Lamont, op. cit. pp. 144-5; Miller, op. cit. pp. 394-5; Haller, op. cit. pp. 83-4; Wallace, op. cit. pp. 150-1.

8. Bass, op. cit. pp. 290-3.

Federalism must be seen as a physics rather than a metaphysics.¹

Whilst all mainstream Puritans were Federalists, not all approached from the same standpoint. The great difference centred on sufficient and efficient grace. Efficient grace stated that Christ settled an exact debt for the elect; whereas sufficient grace saw Christ as generating enough grace for all mankind to have the opportunity to be saved, or that Christ's death was tokenal.² Both were basically similar in their concern for the individual, but there were important differences.

The Presbyterian view of Sufficient Grace.

We have already touched on contradictions in Presbyterianism, and this largely came out of their approach to Federalism. They saw man as fallen as we see in Charnock's Attributes of God.³ But whilst they regarded man as wholly corrupted, they also thought each individual had a personal responsibility in the process of salvation which concurs with Christ's role.⁴ Baxter expressed this through the sufficient grace theology of the Amyraldianism of the Synod of Dort, [1618-1619].⁵ Hence he constructed a theology of latitude, which he regarded as avoiding the doctrinal excesses of the High Calvinists.⁶ This does not mean that Baxter

1. Boughton, art. cit. pp. 63-4.

2. Toon, Hyper-Calvinism, pp. 50-7.

3. Charnock, Works, I. pp. xlvi-xlvii.

4. Wallace, op. cit. p. 136.

5. Synod of Dort. "The assembly of the Dutch Reformed Church...to deal with the Arminian controversy..." A moderate Calvinist conference, with delegations, including English. See: Cross, op. cit. p. 417; Wallace, op. cit. p. 139; Lamont, op. cit. pp. 126-130.

6. Lamont, op. cit. pp. 137, 146-7.

overtly supported moralistic Arminianism. He was a Federalist, and as such constructed a complex Dominus-Rector theory to accommodate these two aspects of Covenant Theology.¹ This meant that he could exhort men to reform and choose the merciful Father, whilst addressing, "The elect shall obtain it, though the rest are hardened..." when pressed Baxter could be as extreme as Eyre or Crisp.² Hence Baxter described two kinds of righteousness: law ful-in Christ, and personal.³

Like the Congregationalists, Baxter referred to the penal substitution of Christ, but he differed in what he saw as man's ability to choose.⁴ In his The Catechising of Families, [London, 1682], he tells us. "We must learn to love best that which is best in itself...and choose the means by which it must be attained..."⁵ It was for this reason that he preached hell-fire sermons, giving men a glimpse of what would happen if they did not turn to God.⁶ There were many other hypothetical-universalists who like Baxter believed in sufficient grace. They differed in laying more stress on an intellectual path to salvation, whereas for Baxter it was an evangelical choice.⁷ Hence all Presbyterians relied on the formal structure of Federalism.⁸ They differed from the Congregationalists in that they saw Federalism as

1. Lamont, op. cit. pp. 137, 146-7.

2. Ibid., pp. 130-40.

3. Ibid., p. 140.

4. Ibid.

5. Baxter, Practical Works, IV. p. 68.

6. Lamont, op. cit. p. 142.

7. Wallace, op. cit. p. 136.

8. Ibid., pp. 133-4.

internal and external; viz. that one could uphold it through works righteousness. For this reason they deplored the emphasis on arbitrary free-grace, along with the internalism of the Antinimians and Hyper-Calvinists.¹ They could not accept anything which compromised man's innate ability to use his intellect to achieve salvation or grace.²

In the early years of the Restoration, Presbyterianism had an uneasy balance in its theology. There was a strong emphasis on works righteousness balanced by a weaker concept of sin. Various factors emerged to make the former characteristics even more powerful; 'reason' and 'will' became the key components in man's achievement of sanctification. We could discuss factors such as the fall of millennialism and the effects of persecution. Such changes were very important in the effect they had on the movement, especially on the next generation. They were hypothetical-universalists like Baxter, but they increasingly expressed this through humanism rather than evangelism.

God was stereotyped into a set of scholastical formulae. He was viewed as 'necessary being', with man as a contingent cause in need of salvation.³ Hence sin was explained in Neoplatonic terms as base temporalism.⁴ Election was seen as a super-sensorial elevation of man through the good God.⁵ An elevation of man to a more perfect

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1. Wallace, *op. cit.*, p. 134-5.
 2. Baxter, *Practical Works*, IV. p. 68.
 3. Charnock, *Works*, I. pp. 151, 144.
 4. Howe, *Works*, III. pp. 306, 292, 133.
 5. Charnock, *Works*, I. p. 150.

condition than Adam had before the Fall.' Empirical rationalism explained all this through the individual's personal development, so that election was set more with man than with God.

Accordingly by the latter seventeenth-century Federal Theology meant much less to the Presbyterians, although it was still the infrastructure of their epistemology.² Their emphasis on personal choice and reason developed into a moralism, which equated the constancy of right reason with the providence of God.³ We see this in the work of John Howe, especially when he insisted that God would not predestine anyone to damnation in his The Reconcilableness of God's Prescience, [London, 1677].⁴ By the time of the Hyper-Calvinist disputes of the 1690's, election meant even less to the works righteousness of Daniel Williams.⁵

The Congregationalist view of Efficient Grace.

To the Congregationalists of the 1640's and 1650's election was linked to man's depravity and inability to earn grace. Their Federal Theology reasoned to and from the idea of man's sin and God's arbitrary election. This approach was not new. Earlier Puritans such as William Perkins in his Aurea Armilla,

1. Charnock, Works, II. p. 345.

2. Wallace, op. cit. p. 189.

3. Ibid, p. 179; Bass, op. cit. pp. 285-6.

4. Bass, op. cit. pp. 285-6; Wallace, op. cit. p. 179; Toon, Hyper-Calvinism, pp. 53-7.

5. Toon, Hyper-Calvinism, pp. 53-7.

[London, 1589], had seen election like this at times, "...the decree of God by which he hath ordained all men to a certain and everlasting estate..."¹ The difference lay in the steady disappearance of evangelical pastoralism from Congregationalism. Hence Thomas Goodwin wrote of an internalised election which is completed on earth in his A Discourse of Election, [London, 1682].² Man and Christ became pawns in a supralapsarian system³, which elevated man higher than the prelapsarian Adam.⁴ Indeed, man was created to be saved or damned.⁵

Whilst approaching Federalism from a different direction, like the Presbyterians they laid great stress on reason. They took it for granted that Federalism was rational, and dismissed other soteriological systems because of what they understood to be inherent rational weaknesses.⁶ Because of this God became something like a philosophical constant to them, as we see in Owen's Animadversions, [London, 1662].⁷

John Owen dominated the development of Congregationalism after the mid 1640's. By any standards he was a very capable theologian. Because of this he came closest to dropping supralapsarianism, for unlike Thomas Goodwin, he saw Adam's prelapsarian righteousness as sufficient.⁸ But there was a strong philosophical rigour in his

1. Bass, op. cit., pp. 184-5.

2. T. Goodwin, Works, IX. pp. 9-10.

3. Ibid, pp. 5, 46-7.

4. Ibid, pp. 97, 100, 106.

5. Ibid, p. 97.

6. T. Goodwin, Works, IX. p. 17.

7. Owen, Works, XIV. pp. 74-6; T. Goodwin, Works, IX. p. 76; T. Jones, op. cit., p. 88; Wallace, op. cit., p. 185.

8. Wallace, op. cit., p. 152; Owen, Works, XXIV. p. 388.

approach to Federalism. Like Thomas Goodwin he tended to see man and Christ as pawns in a divine scheme.¹ His reliance of philosophy drove him to see election as supralapsarian.² Reflecting his Neoplatonism³, Owen showed a contempt for man's contingent being, so that he described election as a matter of having a new essence enter the being of man.⁴ Such themes are woven through Owen's Of Communion with God the Father, [London, 1657], Meditations and Discourses, [London, 1684], and his Christologia, [London, 1679]. Hence whilst Owen recognised the great dangers of philosophy⁵, there is a basic scholasticism in his work.⁶ Federalism provided an intellectual framework for his views on God, God's relationship with man, and man's place in cosmology.⁷ He regarded reason as the key component in this system, with God as absolute reason⁸, and election as reasonable.⁹ It was solely by the use of reason that Owen came closest to outlining a rationalistic works righteousness.¹⁰

Therefore the same contradictory elements are present in Owen's work as we saw with the Presbyterians, although they are often less obvious. In the generation that followed Owen there emerged man

1. Wallace, op. cit. pp. 150-6; Owen, Works, X. pp. 236-237.
2. Bass, op. cit. pp. 105-9; Wallace, op. cit. p. 146; Toon, Hyper-Calvinism. p. 15.
3. Bass, op. cit. pp. 99-100.
4. Ibid., pp. 128-139; Owen, Works, I. pp. 52, 139-40, 169-72.
5. Owen, Works, IV. p. 209.
6. S. B. Ferguson, 'John Owen On Christian Piety.' Banner of Truth. Issue 191. Aug/Sept 1979. pp. 47-9; Bass, op. cit. pp. 109-111.
7. Toon, God's Statesman. p. 170.
8. Owen, Works, XIV. pp. 74-6.
9. Ibid., XIII. p. 439.
10. Owen, Works, XIII. p. 416, IV. pp. 242-5.

who lacked his intellect and pastoral faith. As a result the perception and role of Federalism began to change.

Two distinct movements began to emerge: those who expressed Congregationalist Federalism through empirical rationalism, and those who expressed it through empirical anti-rationalism. The former movement developed most steadily amongst the Congregationalists of New England. Whilst retaining strict Federalism they also developed the autonomy of man, as well as the ability and will of rational man. Increasing emphasis was put upon how God should take account of the character of man.¹ Men such as Giles Firmin, [1663-1728], Samuel Willard, [1640-1707], and Cotton Mather, [1663-1728], were all part of a development of rationalistic, empirical Federalism. This was expressed in traditional supralapsarian terms, which was nonetheless, rationalistic works righteousness.² They could do this because the term 'supralapsarian' became a denotation of man's immortal, innate and divine character. In effect they made man his own electing agent. Intellectual choice was the touchstone of this movement, and it clearly had a counterpart in England. Aspects of this type of theology can be found in the work of Owen, Thomas Goodwin, Jeremiah Burroughs or any of the others. It never achieved the strength of New England partly because of Owen's moderation, and partly because with the fall of the Commonwealth Congregationalism was besieged. Despite this strong

1. J. Jones, *op. cit.* pp. 11, 17, 35-39, 44-6, 56.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 35-9, 41-2, 48-53.

parallels are evident. We see this in the scholastical outline of the Atonement by Thomas Brooks.¹ Edward Polhill was praised by Owen for his scholastic and 'Golden Chain' view of election.² Theophilus Gale turned out scholastical concepts of election whilst seeing no incongruity between Christianity and Platonism.³

All these factors combined to change Congregationalism into High Calvinism. This was a further refinement of Federal Theology, relying on the certainty of election.⁴ In the Restoration period, even this intellectual certainty changed under the strains of persecution and rationalism.⁵ In such an environment Congregationalism became even more introspective, and for this reason they moved closer to the Antinomians. Antinomialism had long been regarded as a serious perversion of Calvinism because of its subjectivism and lack of interest in evangelism. However, its introspection became a source of strength to the High Calvinists, and was central to its progression towards Hyper-Calvinism.⁶

Another important factor in the rise of Hyper-Calvinism was the growing emphasis on reason within Congregationalism. This was dangerous because after Owen's death in 1683 the movement was characterised by, "...sincere men of average intelligence..." so that the highly scholastical theology of Sterry or Gale had no relevance to them.⁷

1. Wallace, *op. cit.* p. 177.

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.* p. 178; T. Jones, *op. cit.* p. 88.

4. Toon, *Hyper-Calvinism*, pp. 145, 63-5; T. Jones, *op. cit.* p. 103.

5. Toon, *Hyper-Calvinism*, p. 146.

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 25-8, 50-1, 147.

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 147-8.

In fact there was a reaction against scholasticism, and in the movement against 'reason' they were in danger of rejecting or absorbing it, or indeed of doing both.,¹

The result was a system of theology which exalted the concept of God, whilst minimising the moral responsibility of the elect to God or their fellow men.,² Moderate High Calvinists such as Isaac Chauncy,³ were eclipsed by men such as Richard Davis and Joseph Hussey. These men had gone back to Tobias Crisp for a rigid exposition of supralapsarian Federal Theology.⁴ Election for them meant eternal justification by God, with Christ as a means of attaining this.⁵ The Richard David controversy hardened the exclusive, internalistic nature of this providence dominated approach.⁶ Ironically it was the very scholastical Joseph Hussey who was the greatest exponent. He enshrined it in a scholasticism which regarded God as a collection of philosophical stereotypes, whilst limiting personal evangelism.

1. Toon, Hyper-Calvinism, pp. 147-8.

2. T. Jones, op. cit., pp. 115-116; Toon, Hyper-Calvinism, pp. 145, 65-6.

3. Toon, ibid., p. 63.

4. Ibid. pp. 49, 53; T. Jones, op. cit., pp. 115-118.

5. Toon, ibid., pp. 60-2.

6. Ibid., p. 65; T. Jones, op. cit., p. 65.

The Puritans' view of the role of God within Predestination.

There is a balance between foreknowledge and foreordination in Scripture, and this is reflected in the early Puritan writings.¹ As Puritanism developed it was the Presbyterians who expressed their Federalism in terms of foreknowledge, whilst the Congregationalists used foreordination. At its extreme, Presbyterianism used foreknowledge as the basis of a works righteous moralism.² Whereas Congregationalism could go to the other extreme with supralapsarian foreordination.³ Supralapsarianism embarrassed most Congregationalists, but they did tend to stick to it.⁴ It is very important that we realise that Congregationalist supralapsarianism when combined with scholasticism could develop into a rationalistic moralism.⁵

We have seen that Presbyterianism had just as high a regard for rationalism, which was combined with a great respect for natural man and predestination as foreknowledge. Hence the Presbyterians had an optimistic view of creation and man's abilities.⁶ Baxter believed that persevering believers would achieve sanctification.⁷ Therefore man has to use free-will and choose God, as we read in Baxter's The Reason of the Christian Religion, (London, 1666).⁸ They demanded scope for man to

1. Perkins, Aurea Armilla, in Breward, op. cit. pp. 179, 197.

2. Toon, Hyper-Calvinism, pp. 53-4.

3. Bass, op. cit. pp. 121-3.

4. Ibid., pp. 105-9.

5. Wallace, op. cit. p. 178; J. Jones, op. cit. pp. 17ff.

6. Wallace, op. cit. p. 140; Lamont, op. cit. p. 141.

7. Baxter, Practical Works, III. pp. 10-12.

8. Baxter, The Reason..., p. 85.

achieve virtue, and so denied supralapsarian foreordination.¹ Baxter regarded Federalism as a 'Golden Chain' linking God and man. Whether man developed enough to ascend was seen as a matter of personal choice.² In doing this they placed great emphasis on intellectual development³, and hence saw Antinomianism as the product of natural ignorance.⁴

Baxter dominated Presbyterianism until the late seventeenth-century. However, there were other important Presbyterians who lacked his traditional links with millennial Federalism. Men such as Howe and Charnock certainly acknowledged foreknowledge⁵, but the idea of eternal covenant meant less to them. Increasingly all decisions were set within man, so that by the time of Daniel Williams' Truth and Peace, [London, 1698], we see a theology of works righteousness moralism which effectively made election a record of the fruition of man's innate virtue.⁶

The Role of Christ in Federal Theology.

Generally all Puritans understood Christ's role to be a link in the successive order of salvation⁷, with Christ either undergoing a measured

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1. Baxter, The Reason of the Christian Religion, p. 85.
 2. Wallace, op. cit., p. 140; Lamont, op. cit., p. 141.
 3. Baxter, The Reason of the Christian Religion, pp. 85-7.
 4. Lamont, op. cit., p. 128.
 5. Charnock, Works, I. p. xlvi.
 6. Toon, Hyper-Calvinism, pp. 53-4.
 7. Wallace, op. cit., p. 152.

punishment', or a tokenal act which allowed man to effect the change.² Despite a strong Christocentrism in his work, Owen's scholasticism devalued Christ's role.³ Instead of Christ purchasing all of salvation for man, he was seen as a symbol⁴ towards which man could work.⁵ So that when Baxter said Christ's grace is sufficient, he meant that it enabled men to develop their innate capacity to achieve virtue.⁶

Whether Congregationalist or Presbyterian, the emphasis was placed on the individual's role in providential election. Election was understood as a tension between God and man as the only foci in soteriology.⁷ Latterly, Presbyterians such as Daniel Williams minimised the call of Christ, in favour of the dictates of reasonable virtue.⁸ Others such as Crisp and Hussey also minimised the evangelical calling of Christ, whilst setting salvation in a rigid system of providence that internalised grace, and denied God to all but the elect.⁹

The Role and Nature of God within Federalism.

The 'God' of Puritan

Federalism emerges as the one, true necessary ground motive.¹⁰ In doing this they were going much further than Calvin's philosophical view of

1. Wallace, *op. cit.*, p. 152.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 140; Lamont, *op. cit.*, pp. 141, 156-7.
3. Wallace, *op. cit.*, pp. 150-1.
4. Bass, *op. cit.*, pp. 190-3.
5. Wallace, *op. cit.*, pp. 136-7.
6. Wallace, *op. cit.*, pp. 136-9; Lamont, *op. cit.*, pp. 139-40; Bass, *op. cit.*, p. 184.
7. J. Jones, *op. cit.*, pp. 17ff.
8. Toon, *Hyper-Calvinism*, pp. 53-4; Owen, *Works*, XIII. p. 416.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 60-6.
10. Charnock, *Works*, I. pp. 148-51; J. Jones, *op. cit.*, pp. 59-60; Wallace, *op. cit.*, pp. 151-4.

sovereign God. Their system accepted God's sovereignty only so far as it could explain it, so that even supralapsarianism was set within a rational system. Reason became the touchstone of their view of God.¹ It was the method of Federalism as conditional covenant, rather than conditional election.² The abiding theme of Federalism was a rational, good and above all consistent first cause, as we see in Owen's Animadversions.³

These themes were not obvious, partly because of the scripturality of major Puritans such as Owen and Baxter. These men were scholastics, but scholasticism formed only part of their outlook. The situation changed after 1660 when millennialism waned and the practical ministry of Puritanism was curtailed. As a result scholasticism gained a more central position and Federalism became even more rarified.⁴

Hence for Restoration Puritans the God of predestination was a super-temporal, rational goodness.⁵ God was seen as infinitely consistent, "Providence is a great clock, keeping time and order, not only hourly, but instantly to its own honour," as we read in Charnock's A Discourse on Divine Revelation, [London, 1682].⁶ A balance of, "...his present revealed mind and future judgement..." according to Owen in his Truth and Innocence Vindicated, [London, 1666].⁷ At the apex of the

1. Miller, op. cit., pp. 17, 101-2, 125.

2. Wallace, op. cit., pp. 150-1; Lamont, op. cit., pp. 139-40; Miller, op. cit., pp. 384-94.

3. Miller, op. cit., p. 17; Owen, Works, XIV. pp. 74-6; Charnock, Works, I. p. 191.

4. Toon, Hyper-Calvinism, pp. 74-9; J. Jones, op. cit., p. 70.

5. Charnock, Works, II. p. 20.

6. Ibid., I. p. 17.

7. Owen, Works, XII. p. 388.

providential chain of goodness we see an essentially idealistic ground principle, drawing man to salvation even before the Fall.' In fact the Fall became irrelevant, because there could never be any temporally based works righteousness in this system.² This is true of the Presbyterians and the Congregationalists. Both lodged humanity in what they saw as man's super-temporal soul, and so both had a methodological contempt for the temporal. Hence it was against this background that they centred Federalism on an ascriptural, philosophical, first-cause, which contemporary trends made them call 'God'.

It was this 'god' which they made author and mover of election, as we read in Charnock's A Discourse of God's Being.³ But even the dialectical stability of philosophy caused a tension between achieving sanctification in spite of the world⁴, or through the world.⁵ Whilst appearing to be contradictory, both these views are similar in their use of dialectic, and the emphasis they placed on human nature.⁶ Whether one viewed Federalism as a seal of efficient⁷, or sufficient grace⁸, both relied on God as the first mover.⁹ Baxter made

1. T. Goodwin, Works, IX. p. 97.

2. Haller, op. cit., pp. 83-92.

3. Charnock, Works, III. p. 337; T. Goodwin, Works, IX. pp. 41-7; Wallace, op. cit., pp. 151, 177; Toon, Hyper-Calvinism, pp. 60-63.

4. T. Goodwin, Works, IX. p. 14; Howe, Works, VIII. p. 355.

5. Miller, op. cit., p. 281; Baxter, Practical Works, IV. p. 69; Charnock, Works, I. pp. 161-2.

6. Packer, art. cit., p. 7; Bass, op. cit., p. 185; Toon, Hyper-Calvinism, pp. 143-6.

7. Owen, Works, IV. pp. 263-9.

8. Lamont, op. cit., pp. 129-30.

9. Ibid., pp. 136-8.

God a merciful 'Rector' or a sin-revenging 'Dominus'², and then balanced this against the role man can play.³ Accordingly we can see that the Federalistic God/Man relationship was becoming inverted in the latter seventeenth-century.⁴

Therefore Federalism was resolved into 'god'⁵, and structured around a 'Golden Chain' order of grace which found the historical Fall and Atonement less relevant.⁶ At most Christ was a penal substitution⁷, or a spur to individual morality.⁸ For Owen whether or not grace is sufficient or efficient was resolved by God's reasonableness, rather than Christ's actions, as we see in his Death of Death, [London, 1647].⁹ Hence Christ was understood to be predestined as much as man.¹⁰

Federalism as a Covenant between God and Man as Equals.

At best

Federalism was an agreement whereby both parties pledged to fulfil the terms of a covenant.¹¹ They did not doubt that God had fulfilled his promise. Accordingly man must for his part be faithful. The great question was how far could a man be faithful, how far could he attain

1. Lamont, op. cit., p. 137.

2. Ibid., p. 241.

3. J. Jones, op. cit., pp. 17ff; Wallace, op. cit., p. 140; Lamont, op. cit., p. 141.

4. Ibid.; Wallace, op. cit., pp. 139-40.

5. Wallace, op. cit., pp. 150-1.

6. Ibid., pp. 139-40; Bass, op. cit., p. 185.

7. Wallace, op. cit., pp. 145-6.

8. Ibid., pp. 139-40.

9. Owen, Works, X. pp. 238-40.

10. Ibid., XX, pp. 481-2; T. Goodwin, Works, IX. p. 106

11. Miller, op. cit., p. 375; Horton Davies, op. cit., p. 6.

virtue?

However, again and again the Puritans stress free-grace, and whilst we emphasise their legal perception of covenant, we must balance the two. For Vavasor Powell in his Christ and Moses Excellency, [1650], the emphasis was on a 'free covenant' which carefully excludes legalistic categories.¹ This is very much the drift of Howe in his The Blessedness of the Righteous.² Even so, Federal Theology was also very much a legal concept to them, and this is our main concern.

In the Puritans' legal conception of Federal Theology the value of the individual promise was equal to God's. Hence the Puritans criticised any religious practice which undervalued the individual.³ It was seen as based on the same agreement as a corporation, marriage or legal contract. Hence God had to perform His role⁴, as does each man.⁵ Covenantism became a legal agreement with God giving and man accepting.⁶

We have already discussed how the Puritans tended not to view God as a 'person' in the scriptural sense. He was sovereign will and ultimate reason, necessary being or the first cause. Accordingly their contract tended to be with this first cause. God was regarded as a constant in the philosophical sense, always there for man to choose.⁷

1. V. Powell, Christ and Moses Excellency. London, 1650. pp. 53-7.

2. Howe, Works, III. pp. 207-9.

3. Horton Davies, op. cit., pp. 272, 313.

4. Wallace, op. cit., p. 152.

5. Breward, op. cit., p. 10; Charnock, Works, I. pp. xliv-xlv.

6. Miller, op. cit., pp. 375-380.

7. Baxter, Practical Works, III. pp. 10-13; Lamont, op. cit., p. 244.

Although they retained the provision of faith being needed for election¹, faith was increasingly seen as an assent, as moralism.²

Many or all of the conditions of Federalism were understood to be performable, either by works righteousness, or internalised as an innate link with God. In the latter case preparation for sanctification collapsed into the moment of election³; even the historical Atonement was regarded as secondary to this act. So that it is an innate capacity for virtue which leads man to grace.⁴ This movement peaked in the Hyper-Calvinism of the late seventeenth-century. Characterised by a move away from evangelism⁵, and separation from those outside an innate covenant with God.⁶ They were obsessed with the law of grace, rather than the grace of law.⁷ Thereby internalising the original Reformed covenant between God and His people.⁸

Although we have to take the scholasticism of Hussey into account, it is correct to see Hyper-Calvinism as an anti-intellectual movement. It is significant that Hyper-Calvinism came after the great mind of Owen, and also that subsequent High-Calvinists were intellectually less able⁹, or less faithful. But Hyper-Calvinism

1. Lamont, *op. cit.*, p. 149.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 138-9, 241.

3. T. Goodwin, *Works*, XII. p. 11.

4. Owen, *Works*, XIII. p. 426; J. Jones, *op. cit.*, pp. 30-1.

5. Toon, *Hyper-Calvinism*, p. 65.

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 82-3; Lamont, *op. cit.*, p. 138.

7. Toon, *Hyper-Calvinism*, p. 58.

8. Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 504-6.

9. Toon, *Hyper-Calvinism*, p. 148.

was a small movement, and for most Puritans man's innate links with God were not a platform for anti-evangelical introversion, rather it was made the basis of a rationalistic works righteousness.

They stressed that man must labour to know God', intellectually to assent to God.² Hence election was centred in the higher faculties³, and was made subject to the dictates of reason.⁴ At most, Christ's death was a satisfaction⁵, but as far as the new covenant was concerned, man had to fulfil it.⁶ Accordingly moralism was equated with grace.⁷

Sanctification became worldly, and so evidential faith assumed greater prominence.⁸ This increasingly meant faith in one's own gracial abilities.⁹ The emphasis on man's innate abilities tended to obscure any demarcation between pre and post-regeneration. This suggested that natural man is elect.¹⁰ Hence election was seen as a life-long moral endeavour.¹¹ All men were regarded as capable of attaining

1. Charnock, *Works*, IV. p. 96.

2. *Ibid*, I. pp. xlii-xliii.

3. Owen, *Works*, XIII. p. 439, XIV. p. 74; Charnock, *Works*, I. p. xliii.

4. Bass, *op. cit.*, pp. 177-9.

5. *Ibid*, pp. 193-4.

6. *Ibid*, pp. 193-4; Wallace, *op. cit.*, pp. 136-7; Lamont, *op. cit.*, pp. 139-40.

7. J. Jones, *op. cit.*, pp. 17ff.

8. Toon, *Hyper-Calvinism*, pp. 83-6.

9. Wallace, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

10. Lamont, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

11. Wallace, *op. cit.*, pp. 138-9, 151-2.

grace as we see in Baxter's A Treatise of Conversion.¹ Ignorance was regarded as the biggest obstacle.² Covenant Theology was no longer a historical agreement, no longer a free gift; rather the fulfilment of the dictates of natural reason.

1. Baxter, Practical Works, II. p. 406; Lamont, op. cit., pp. 144-5.
2. Lamont, op. cit., p. 128.

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Chapter Six.A Detailed Examination of Stephen Charnock's Attributes of God

Stephen Charnock, [1628-1690], does not rank as one of the outstanding leaders of the Puritan movement, but he is seen as one of the most eminent divines. His greatest work, On the Existence and Attributes of God, was published posthumously by Richard Adams and Edward Veal in 1691-2. The work was extremely influential; Joseph Hussey would list it as the means of his conversion. It is also very representative of Puritan thought at this time. We have already seen that the prominent Restoration Puritan minister, Joseph Alleine, is said to have been producing a scholastic systematic theology. Three centuries later we can wonder why this great pastoral minister would put his efforts into such an enterprise. The short answer is that contemporary thought demanded that 'faith' should be expressed systematically in this way. In this sense we can set Charnock's Existence and Attributes amongst other such works such as Alleine's Theologia Philosophia, Theophilus Gale's Court of the Gentiles, and John Howe's Living Temple. It is upon this basis that we shall examine his use of Natural Theology within his Existence and Attributes.

He entered Emmanuel College at an early age. The college was renowned for its Puritan character, and although it was smaller than Trinity and St John's, its pupils were no less eminent. As far as his

Because of difficulties in getting hold of a complete version of Charnock's Attributes of God, three editions had to be used, those by M'Cosh, Clark, and Parsons.

academic progress was concerned Charnock entered in 1642, then proceeded B.A. in 1645-6, commencing M.A. in 1649. No one who has ever dealt with the life or work of Charnock has ever doubted the importance of this period in his life. Later we shall look at his conversion, but equally we should stress the scholastic training that he received at Cambridge. The Puritans saw no conflict between scholasticism and Reformed Theology. Sir Simonds D'Ewes lists some of the set books at St John's [presumably they would have been much the same at Emmanuel]. "We went over all Seton's Logic exactly, and part of Keckerman and Molinaeus. Of ethics or moral philosophy, he read to me Gelinus and part of Pickolomineus; of physics, part of the Magorus; and of history, part of Florus...I spent the next month [April 1619] very laboriously in the perusal of Aristotle's physics, ethics, and politics; and I read logic out of several authors." For all Francis Bacon's dissatisfaction with the scholastic system, as expressed in his Novum Organum, a complaint reiterated by Milton, scholasticism continued. It is true that things had changed with the rising importance of Platonism. But for all that, it was still a scholastical system which sat ill at ease with the fundamentals of Puritanism; as Robert Browne was saying [and being ignored] just about this time. The hold of scholasticism is demonstrated by the Cambridge Platonists. Whilst they rebelled against the strictures of Puritan dogma, they were nonetheless seen as typical of Cambridge scholars. This was recognized by their promotion during the Commonwealth period. That they were within the 'Puritan fold' is further demonstrated by the influence they passed on to eminent Puritans such as John Howe,

who entered Christ Church in 1647. Charnock can be set within this mould. He quotes More and Culverwell, and is obviously very familiar with Greek philosophy, the medieval schoolmen, and contemporary philosophers such as Gassendi and Voetius. Charnock could pursue these studies in the original tongue. Johnson tells us that he was fluent in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Arabic, French, Dutch, Italian and Spanish. Such erudition grew out of his training at Cambridge, and especially the Puritan belief that God is served through hard work. Therefore throughout his life Charnock was accustomed to spending twelve hours a day at his desk. In view of this, and with the obvious testimony of works such as The Existence and Attributes, we are dealing with a scholar of rare ability.

The Background to Charnock's Thought.

We have already noted the ability of Charnock and the time he devoted to his academic studies. Today these qualities can be obscured if we think that the length and profundity of Puritan writings made them boring to contemporaries. Some scholars have pointed out that we need to approach Puritan writings knowing that they have an 'unsettled quality'. "In most of the writings of the Puritans, there is a movement, and in many of them a restlessness, which shew that they were composed for hearers or readers who were no doubt to be instructed, but whose attention required also to be kept alive. Their profound discussions and their erudite disquisitions, . . . , are ever mixed up with

practical lessons and applications which interrupt their argument, and at times give a strain and bias to the interpretation of a passage. In this respect their discourses, written with the picture of a mixed auditory before them, are very different from the essays or dissertations, philosophic or critical, of certain of the Anglican or German divines, who, themselves mere scholars or thinkers, wrote only for the learned..." This is an issue which should send us to the Puritan writings with a wish to see how they related their gospel to the contemporary situation. It also raises the question of how Puritans developed the means of presenting their argument to ordinary people. In particular it can make us wonder how they used the English language. There does not seem to have been any work on this. It seems very difficult to believe that a movement which dominated the academic scene for over a century did not contribute a great deal. We can justifiably draw an analogy with John Calvin's brilliant French translation of his Institutes in 1546. For all his reputation for boring scholarliness, his work is today acknowledged as a seminal and creative contribution to the development of the French language. We could also point to the immense contribution of Bishop William Morgan's translation of the Bible into Welsh. The same is true of the Authorised Version of the Bible in 1611. Not to labour the point, we need to be aware of a tremendous and communicative creativity within Reformation circles, and the Puritans must be included within this.

Charnock divides his discussion of the nature of God into fourteen main chapters. We shall examine three main areas in relation to his use of Natural Theology:

[i] The Chain of Being.

[ii] The Doctrine of God.

[iii] The Doctrine of Man.

The Chain of Being.

Charnock looked upon creation as made up of different basic elements. He sees the hand of God in the act of creation, whereby these different elements are ordered in an interrelated chain.

*"In the linking contrary qualities together. All things are compounded of the elements....we see them chained and linked one within another in every body upon the earth...."*¹

This is a chain of purpose as well as order:

*"All the members of living creatures are curiously fitted for the service of one another, destined to a particular end, and endued with a virtue to attain that end, and so distinctly placed, that one is no hindrance to another in its operations."*²

This being destined to attain, is in effect a Natural Law, a purpose and regularity by which all creation moves:

*"All the content any creature finds is in performing its end, moving according to its natural instinct...What content can any man have that runs from his end, opposeth his own nature, denies a God by whom and for whom he was created, whose image he bears, which is the glory of his nature, and sinks into the very dregs of brutishness?"*³

Therefore Charnock links the regularity in creation, with man's

1. Existence and Attributes. M'Cosh. p.152.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid. p.175.

perception of God as Creator. The perception is rational, and by implication the Laws of Nature are rational also. In this way he closely associates the 'law of creation', with the mind of man.¹

Apart from being the rational perceiver of the order of creation, man is also the centre of temporal creation. The whole chain of creation centres on him. Charnock emphasises that this is a relationship of regularity, with man being a refinement of all the steps that lead to him:

"All this subserviency of creatures centres in man. Other creatures are served by those things as well as ourselves, and they are provided for their nourishment and refreshment as well as ours; yet both they and all creatures meet in man, as lines in their centres. Things that have no life or sense are made for those that have both life and sense, and those that have life and sense are made for those that are endued with reason."²

All this means that each creation fits in to the Chain of Being. Such ideas are reminiscent of classical Cosmological arguments. Everything has its place, serving the natural order, and above all aligned to the rational Law of Nature which holds the whole chain in tension up to the highest perfection:

"All things have something without them, and above them as their end. All inferior creatures act for some superior order in the rank of creation; the lesser animals are designed for

1. *Ibid.* p. 155.

2. *Existence and Attributes*, M' Cosh. p. 154.

*the greater, and all for man. Man therefore is for something nobler than himself. To make ourselves, therefore, our own end, is to deny any superior, to whom we are to direct our actions. God alone being the supreme being, can be his own ultimate end"*¹

This is even true of man. With the implication that the Law of Nature is God himself. It therefore follows that man as the supreme manifestation of natural law in temporal creation, is a means by which God communicates more of himself:

*"God did create intellectual creatures, angels and men, that he might communicate more of himself, and his own goodness and holiness to man, than creatures of a lower rank were capable of."*²

Therefore a preimposed balance emerges. A Chain of Being that is wholly designed to declare the wisdom of God. By 'wisdom' Charnock means a rationalism that is akin to the essence of God, and which in turn is perceivable by the mind of man:

*"The whole creation is a poem, every species a stanza, and every individual creature a verse in it. The creation presents us with a prospect of the wisdom of God, as a poem doth render with the wit and fancy of the composer."*³

1. *Ibid.*, p. 228.

2. *Ibid.* I. p. 254.

3. *Ibid.* Clark, . p. 279.

The idea of God is dominant. The concept of the Chain of Being is reasoned from and to this all-encompassing God:

*"The whole world is a stage; every creature in it hath a part to act, and a nature suited to that part and end designed for; and all concur in a joint language to publish the glory of divine wisdom, they have a voice to proclaim the glory of God."*¹

It is well worth noting that Charnock is here developing the argument from Design. Later we shall discuss the implications of this for his concept of God. It is enough now that we realise that in treating God as a philosophical constant, Charnock gets perilously near to treating God as a synonym for Natural Law:

*"In making the creatures subservient in their natural order to his gracious ends and purposes, He orders things in such a manner as not to be necessitated to put forth an extraordinary power in things.... Miraculous productions would speak his power; but the ordering the natural course of things, to occasion such effects they were never intended for, is one part of the glory of his wisdom. And that his wisdom may be seen in the course of nature... Thus doth the wisdom of God link things together according to natural order, to work out his intended preservation of a people."*²

1. Existence and Attributes. Clark, p. 284.
2. Ibid. I. p. 307. 3.

The being and purpose of God are said to prove the sufficiency of Natural Law. Therefore Charnock is looking upon the Chain of Being as a natural mechanism:

*"Though God hath a power to furnish every creature with greater and nobler perfections than he hath bestowed upon it, yet he hath framed all things in the perfectest manner, and most convenient to that end for which he intended them."*¹

This natural mechanism is in its turn reasoned back to God as the fountain of all² Therefore the idea of creation as a Chain of Being is basic to Charnock's approach. Even 'sin' is expressed in terms of this Chain, being understood as a disruption:

"We cannot think that any creature was blemished with a principle of disturbance as it came first out of the hand of God. All things were certainly settled in a due order and dependence upon one another; nothing could be ungrateful, and unuseful to man by the original law of their creation; if it had, it had not been goodness, but evil and baseness, that had created the world...[633]...When we see, therefore, the course of nature overturned, the order divine goodness had placed disturbed...we must conclude some horrible blot upon human nature...The curse we therefore see the creatures groan under,

1. *Ibid* Clark, p. cit. . p. 374.

2. *Existence and Attributes*. Clark, pp. 374, 379.

*the disorders of nature...shews that man is not what he was...but hath admitted into his nature something more uncomely in the eye of God..."*¹

The Lower parts of the Chain.

We can be in no doubt that Charnock regarded nature as an interlocking mechanism, with each member fulfilling its role within the chain. It followed that the sun shone for the good of the world:

*"The sun, the heart of the world, is not for itself but for the good of the world, as the heart of man is for the good of the body...[153]...Could anything so blind settle those ordinances of heaven for the preservation of creatures on the earth?"*²

The interlocking subserviency is a complex but balanced system:

"Subserviency of the lower world, the earth and sea, which was created to be inhabited...The sea affords water to the rivers; the rivers, like so many veins, are spread through the whole body of the earth to refresh and enable it to bring forth fruit for the sustenance of man and beast...Every year are the fields covered with harvests, for the nourishing the creatures; no part is barren, but beneficial to man. The mountains that are not clothed with grass for his food are set

1. Ibid. Clark, p. 632.

2. Ibid. N' Cosh, I. p. 152.

*with stones to make him an habitation; they have their peculiar services of metals and minerals, for the conveniency, and comfort, and benefit of man. Things which are not fit for his food are medicines for his cure under some painful sickness. Where the earth brings not forth corn, it brings forth roots for the service of other creatures. Wood abounds more in those countries where the cold is stronger than in others. Can this be the result of chance, or not rather of an infinite wisdom... [154]... Not the most abject thing, but hath its end and use. There is a straight connection; the earth could not bring forth fruit without the heavens, the heavens could not water the earth without vapours from it."*¹

Even the winds have the set task of refreshing the earth:

*"Winds are fitted to purify the air, to preserve it from putrefaction, to carry the clouds to several parts to refresh the parched earth and assist her fruits, and also to serve for the commerce of one nation with another by navigation."*²

Therefore the inanimate parts of their chain take their place within the appointed order. This is a living 'order', a development of the classical argument from Design, for there seems little doubt that Charnock tends to regard the Chain of Being as a living machine:

"The earth is fitted in its parts. The valleys are appointed

1. Existence and Attributes M' Cosh, p. cit. . p. 153.
2. Ibid, Clark, p. 282.

*for granaries, the mountains to shadow them from the scorching heat of the sun; the rivers, like veins, carry refreshment to every member of this body; plants and trees thrive on the face of the earth, and metals are engendered in the bowels of it for materials for building and other uses for the service of man."*¹

Accordingly ideas of subserviency are integrated with those of function, with an overall operation within the natural Law.² All the subserviency and interrelationship is present in the next step to the plants.

Charnock explains their superiority over inanimate matter in their power of growth. In the set order the earth feeds the plants, and plants in their turn produce fruits for sensible creatures:

*"So a plant receives its nourishment from the earth, sends forth its juice to every branch... Thus, in all ages, in all places, it performs the same task, spins out fruit of the same colour, taste, virtue, to refresh the several creatures for which they are provided."*³

Even though Charnock says man should stand in awe of creation, he also tends to see divisions between man and nature. Later we shall discuss in more detail how Charnock sees the real stability of the 'Chain of Being' in the Natural Law that is its foundation. Hence man reaches for stability through his atemporal soul, which is rational and therefore immortal. He dismisses the lower creation for its mutability and unavoidable mortality:

1. *Ibid.*

2. *Ibid.* N' Cosh, I. p. 153.

3. *Ibid.* p. 156.

"The changeableness of all creatures is evident.

1. Of corporeal creatures it is evident to sense. All plants and animals, as they have their duration bounded in certain limits, so while they do exist...[396]...they proceed from their rise to their fall."

He has the same attitude in relation to beasts. He differentiates them from the plants because as well as the power of growth, they also have sense. Their increasing ability is part of God's purpose that they should serve man:

"Hence let us ascend to the bodies of living creatures, and we shall find every member fitted for use...Every one fitted to a particular use in their situation, form, temper, and mutual agreement for the good of the whole; the eye to direct, the ear to receive directions from others, the hands to act, the feet to move. every creature hath members fitted for that element wherein it resides. And in the body, some parts are appointed to change the food into blood, others to refine it, and others to distribute and convey it to several parts for the maintenance of the whole..."²

Man stands at the top of the temporal Chain. Charnock regarded him as a mixture of body and soul. He almost regards them as opposites, and stresses that man is linked to the beasts only through his body. Again

1. Existence and Attributes, N' Cosh. I. p. 395.
2. Ibid, Clark. p. 283.

we have an emphasis on beasts trapped within the mutability of corporeal creation. In fact there is the further idea that 'manhood' is vested in the rational soul and not in the body. Therefore to follow the instincts of the body is to move away from God and 'Man':

"...man can in no wise be said to be the image of God in regard of the substance of his body, but beasts may as well be said to be made in the image of God, whose bodies have the same members as the body of man for the most part, and excel men in the acuteness of the senses and swiftness of their motion, agility of body, greatness of strength, and in some kind of ingenuities also wherein man hath been a scholar to the brutes and beholden to their skill. The soul comes nearest the nature of God as being a spiritual substance, yet, considered singly in regard of its spiritual substance, cannot well be said to be the image of God. A beast, because of its corporeity, may as well be called the image of a man, for there is greater similitude between man and a brute in the rank of bodies than there can be between God and the highest angels in the rank of spirits...[272]... This image consisted partly in the state of man as he had dominion over the creatures, partly in the nature of man as he was an intelligent being, and thereby was capable of having a grant of that dominion, but principally in the conformity of the soul with God in the

frame of his spirit and the holiness of his actions..."¹

Man's position in the Chain of Being.

Charnock outlines a clear subserviency in the lower world.² Within this structure man's position at the top of the temporal Chain means that everything centres on him.³ But Charnock goes much further than this, he believes that the whole of creation is represented in man⁴:

*"In his soul he partakes of heaven, in his body of the earth. There is the life of plants, the sense of beasts, and the intellectual nature of angels.... So that we need not step out of doors, or cast our eyes any further than ourselves to behold a God. He shines in the capacity of our souls and the vigour of our members. We must flee from ourselves and be stripped of our own humanity before we can put off the notion of deity. He that is ignorant of the existence of God must be possessed with so much folly as to be ignorant of his own make and frame."*⁵

Man is seen as the epitome of the world. For Charnock he bears the indelible imprint of the hand of God.⁶ More precisely, by 'God' he

1. Existence and Attributes, p. 271.
 2. Ibid. I. p. 153.
 3. Ibid.
 4. Ibid. Clark, p. 301.
 5. Ibid. N' Cosh, I. p. 161.
 6. Ibid. p. 161.

means the observable order of nature, or Natural Law. This is a very important point. Hence God is presented as the maintainer of the order of creation and therefore as the sustainer of Natural Law. We should also note that Charnock is developing a form of the Cosmological argument for the existence of God.

*"If the supreme cause of the soul be intelligent, why do we...[166]... not call it God as well as nature? We must arise from hence to the notion of a God.....A man must be ignorant of himself before he can be ignorant of the existence of God. By considering the nature of our souls, we may as well be assured that there is a God, as that there is a sun by the shining of the beams in at our windows. And indeed the soul is a statue and representation of God...The soul fills the body, and God the world..."*¹

Against this background man's soul and body make him a compound of beast and angel.² Charnock was in no doubt that true manhood lies in the soul. It is true that sin/temporality obscures this, but he insists that the rational soul declares this truth through the conscience. This is a significant break between the temporal and spiritual. Charnock centres manhood in the conscience in such a way that the break between the temporal and spiritual is total, infinite. He regards 'reason' as the controlling constituent of 'manhood'. This

1. Existence and Attributes. I. pp. 165-6.

2. Ibid. I. p. 166.

attribute is understood to reside in man. Nothing can be added to it, and if a man obscures it, he 'unmans' himself. This idea even applies to the growing emphasis upon perceiving God in the world. Charnock with the other Puritans regarded innate reason as important. All sensorial perception could do was present evidence before the rational faculties of man, it is the faculties that decide. The concept is one of reason looking for the mark of reason. The Puritans were fond of using the analogy of a courtroom:

"Man in the first instant of the use of reason finds natural principles within himself, directing and choosing them; he finds a distinction between good and evil...[169]...Man can as little silence those thunders in his soul, as he can the thunders in the heavens. He must strip himself of his humanity before he can be stripped of an accusing and affrighting conscience: it sticks as close to him as his nature."

In these terms manhood and rationality are closely associated. In fact conscience, reason and God emerge as converging themes. Charnock lists the whole history of mankind as proof of this common conscience, and sees it as a profound error to deny any one of the three:

"He is most unreasonable that denies or doubts of that whose image and shadow he sees round about him; he may sooner deny the sun that warms him, the moon that in the night walks in her

*brightness, deny the fruits he enjoys from earth, yea, and deny that he doth exist. He must tear his own conscience, fly from his own thoughts, be changed into the nature of a stone, which hath neither reason nor sense, before he can disengage himself from those arguments which evince the being of a God. He that would make the natural religion professed in the world a mere romance, must give the lie to the common sense of mankind; he must be at an irreconcilable enmity with his own reason, resolve to hear nothing that it speaks, if he will not hear what it speaks in this case with a greater evidence than it can ascertain anything else. God hath so settled himself in the reason of man, that he must vilify the noblest faculty God hath given him, and put off nature itself, before he can blot out the notion of a God."*¹

This rational view of man and his place in the Chain of Being means that everything is explained through reason. Upon this basis the whole of human society functions in a morality and civilisation which in their turn are rational. Charnock even goes so far as to outline this in action in contemporary society, with the poor serving the rich, just as the plants and beasts serve man:

*"The poor labour for the rich, as the earth sends vapours into the vaster and fuller air, and the rich return advantages again to the poor, as the clouds do the vapours in rain upon the earth."*²

1. Existence and Attributes. M' Cosh, I. p. 177.
2. Ibid.. Clark, p. 290.

Hence Charnock's concept of man is set within the idea of the Chain of Being. And the beauty of its inter-related parts serves as an argument for 'God', 'Natural Law', and 'harmony'. He doesn't deny miracles, but simply states that 'Natural Law' is more to the liking of a rational God. Therefore sin is seen as a disruption, or obscuring of Natural Law.¹ The concepts of 'God' 'man' and 'Reason' are so inter-related that man must constantly look for the testimony of reason through the Chain of Being. Charnock sees introspection as the only alternative to this,² which for a contingent being is a parlous state to be in:

*"What being we have, had a beginning. After an unaccountable eternity was run out, in the very dregs of time, a few years ago we were created, and made of the basest and vilest dregs of the world, the slime and dust of the earth.... How monstrous is pride in such a creature...."*³

*"The soul being of a perpetual nature, was made for the fruition of an eternal good; without such a good, it can never be perfect. Perfection, that noble thing, riseth not from anything in this world, the slime and dust of the earth... How monstrous is pride in such a creature...."*⁴

1. *Ibid.* N' Cosh, I. p. 185.

2. *Ibid.* Clark, p. 462.

3. *Ibid.* N' Cosh. p. 369.

4. *Ibid.* p. 371.

Therefore man must look beyond the world and realise that like the angels he is an intellectual creature.¹ It is in this way that man is aligned to the ground of his being: God.² So that true stability lies in a kind of elevated, rational, beatific communion with God. This is especially true in the way that Charnock defines God in terms of the human mind. This is something we shall look at in greater detail later. But for the present it is enough to note that in defining the top of the Chain of Being through the characteristics of the mind, Charnock dismisses the lower part of the Chain, as 'clogs to the mind':

"Sense and matter are often clogs to the mind, and sensible objects are the same often to spiritual motions. Our souls are never more raised than when they are abstracted from the entanglements of them."³

"Our souls are more his gift to us than anything in the world. Other things are so given, that they are often taken from us, but our spirits are the most durable gift. rational faculties cannot be removed without the dissolution of nature... We cannot else act towards God according to the nature of rational creatures. Spiritual worship is due to God, because of his nature; and due from us, because of our nature..."⁴

1. Existence and Attributes, N' Cosh. p. 254.
 2. Existence and Attributes. pp. 271-2.
 3. Ibid. p. 292; see also I. p. 328.
 4. Ibid. p. 317.

Hence religion is looked upon as a rational act: "Religion is the highest and choicest act of a reasonable creature."¹ This emphasis on man being essentially rational highlights the gulf between body and soul. Charnock was in no doubt that reason is man's means of attaining true stability. Only a rational creature can be immortal. This would mean complete separation from the body, and therefore 'manhood' is uniquely set in the soul.² Accordingly the soul emerges as the great bridge between God and man. In fact 'bridge' is too limited a term, because Charnock moves beyond linking God and man. They are alike:

"If God be a Spirit, we should take most care of that wherein we are like to God. Spirit is nobler than body, we must therefore value our spirits above our bodies; the soul as spirit partakes more of the divine nature, and deserves more of our choicest cares."³

It is precisely because Charnock viewed God and man as 'alike' that he echoes Anselm's Ontological argument, and then continued to define God as the perfection of man's latent characteristics:

"As it is necessary we should conceive God to be an understanding being; else he could not be God, so we must conceive his understanding to be infinitely more pure and perfect than ours in the act of it...."⁴

1. Existence and Attributes, M' Cosh. p. 318.
 2. Ibid. p. 371.
 3. Ibid. p. 281.
 4. Ibid. p. 496.

But this is not blind introspection, for Charnock of course sets humanity within the Chain of Being. Therefore any theories about God are expressed through the Natural Law demonstrated in creation.¹ The crucial point is that God, the great ground of this system, is defined in terms of human characteristics. But humanity here is the refined view of the schoolmen. Therefore 'reason' is the yardstick. Charnock emphasises this when he tells us that Plato regarded God and 'reason' as synonymous words. This is really a matter of setting the rules for a unified Theory of Knowledge or epistemology. For the perfection of God demonstrates the same 'reason' that holds the whole system together.²

Angels and Heaven.

We have already noted that Charnock regarded man as temporal and spiritual . But essentially he understood man to be a spiritual being. Thereby making him more akin to the angels than the lower order. Angels personified the timeless spirituality which Charnock understood to be rational man's goal:

"Spiritual natures, as angels. They change not in their being, but that is from the indulgence of God; they change not in their goodness, but that is not from their nature, but divine grace in their confirmation; but they change in their knowledge, they know more by Christ than they did by

1. Existence and Attributes. p. 496; Clark, p. 278.

2. Ibid. p. 505.

creation...."

They do not suffer from the threat of the lusts of the flesh ², because they are of a purer reason and understanding.³ We should be aware of similarities here with Anselm's Ontological Argument. It is here that Charnock draws an analogy between Angels and the soul of man. Angels and man are the rational creation of God. They are God's chief works.⁴ This is the peak of the chain in the sense that they are 'simple', rational being:

"All perfections are more united in a simple, than in a corporeal being. Angels being spirits, are more powerful than bodies."⁵

"But how much more of this divine perfection...[he has been referring to the balance of the chain of being in creation]...is seen in the soul! A nature furnished with a faculty of understanding to judge of things, to gather...[284]...in things that are distinct, and to reason and draw conclusions from one thing to another."⁶

1. Existence and Attributes, M' Cosh. p. 396.

2. Ibid. p. 410.

3. Ibid. Clark. p. 283.

4. Ibid. p. 462.

5. Ibid. p. 362.

6. Ibid. p. 283.

We should note the way Charnock is rigidly expressing all known being through a rational system. As with the place of 'man', everything is set against the idea of reason. It was upon this basis that he understood sin as a moving away from God as 'reason'. Order and reason are set side by side:

*"He had declared his power in other creatures, but would declare in his rational creature what he most valued in himself; and therefore created him upright, with a wisdom which is the rectitude of the mind,...[therefore]...The sin of men and angels proceeded not from any natural...[463]...defect in their understandings, but from inconsideration. He that was the author of harmony in his other creatures, could not be the author of disorder in the chief of his works."*¹

This emphasises that for Charnock angels and men are characterised by reason, which is the image of God.

From such a consideration of angels Charnock looks even further to heaven. He regards this as the philosophical perfection of the creation:

*"If his throne be in the heavens, it is pure and good, because the heavens are the purest parts of the creation, and influence by their goodness the lower earth."*²

1. Existence and Attributes. Clark. p. 462.
2. Ibid. p. 676.

God as the Peak and Preserver of the Chain.

We have already seen how Charnock conceived of God as the soul of the world; thereby running and preserving the Chain of Being in the same way that man's own soul rules the body:

*"As the body hath neither life nor motion, without the active presence of the soul, which distributes to every part the virtue of acting, sets every one in the exercise of its proper function, and resides in every part, so there is some powerful cause which doth the like in the world, that rules and tempers it."*¹

Despite the outlining of what Charnock regarded as atemporal qualities, he also draws on the Design and Cosmological Arguments and associates God with the perceived Natural Law:

*"Since therefore we see a stable order in the things of the world, that they conspire together for the good and beauty of the universe, that they depend upon one another, there must be some principle upon which they depend, something to which the first link of the chain is fastened, which himself depends upon no superior, but wholly rests in his own essence and being."*²

This stresses the way in which the idea of a Chain of Being served to unite seemingly contradictory aspects of his thought. We will discuss later how Charnock's ideas of God could be rigidly atemporal, we should be aware of a balance of metaphysical and physical ideas here. There seemed to be no way in which he reconciles this within a unified system

1. Existence and Attributes, N' Cosh. p. 161.

2. Ibid.

of knowledge. For this reason the emergence of a physics should be seen as a greater achievement, because of its inherent contradictions. Believing in the unity of knowledge, and that all being is chained in an order, Charnock closely associates God with the Law of Nature:

*"If the supreme cause of the soul be intelligent, why do we...[166]... not call it God as well as nature? We must arise from hence to the notion of a God."*¹

But we do need to realise that in unifying the temporal and atemporal within the idea of the Chain of Being, Charnock was limiting the concept of God. Clearly the terms are incompatible. Hence the bridge between the two is man's perception. This perception is rational, and so the Chain of Being is basically a means of liberating rational thought, which in the last analysis is impersonal:

*"If you take away God, you take away conscience, and thereby all measures and rules of good and evil. And how could any laws be made when the measure and standard of them be removed? All good laws are founded upon the dictates of conscience and reason, upon common sentiments in human nature, which spring from a sense of God."*²

Against this background, in ontological and cosmological terms, 'God' is the idealised perfection of the Chain of Being. By 'idealised' we should understand the perfection of man himself.³ We must bear in

1. Existence and Attributes N' Cosh. pp. 165-6.
 2. Ibid. p. 174.
 3. Ibid. p. 228; Clark. p. 275.

mind that Charnock had a rational view of man, and so God is associated with the perfection of these rational traits. Hence he saw God's creation of rational man as both a declaration of his nature, and a clear testimony that man is duty bound to observe and describe the nature of God:

"As when we say God is infinite, immense, immutable, they are negatives; he hath no limits, is confined to no place, admits of no change. When we remove from him what is inconsistent with his being, we do more strongly assert his being, and know more of him when we elevate him above all, and above our own capacity...he is not a body; he consists not of various parts..."

It is because of this that he believes that man is quite justified in expressing God through preconceived 'excellencies' which are more akin to philosophy than Scripture:

"If God had a body, he must consist of parts; those parts would be bounded and limited; and whatsoever is limited is of a finite virtue, and therefore below an infinite nature. Reason therefore tells us, that the most excellent nature, as God is, cannot be of corporeal condition, because of the limitation and other actions which belong to every body...[267]...He is unchangeable in his essence, because he is a pure and unmixed spiritual being. Whatsoever is compounded of parts, may be

*divided into those parts, and resolved into those distinct parts which make up and constitute its nature. Whatsoever is compounded is changeable in its own nature, though it should never be changed."*¹

Now this is significant. In an effort to clarify the doctrine of God, Charnock uses Platonic scholasticism as a tool. The crucial point is that the scholasticism takes over. So much so that it produces a list of attributes which God has to fulfil to be 'God':

*"If God were not a Spirit, he could not be the most perfect being. The more perfect anything is in the rank of creatures, the more spiritual and simple it is."*²

*"As no intelligent creature, neither angel nor man, can be framed without a law in his nature, so we cannot imagine God without a law in his own nature..."*³

Like other Puritans Charnock regarded the philosophical definitions as the most excellent. It was for this reason that the top of the Chain of Being was understood to be spiritual and rational. Hence any corporeal representation of God is a disgrace. This was not because of the scriptural point that they are inadequate, but rather that they are temporal and hence base:

"To make any corporeal representation of God is unworthy of

1. Existence and Attributes, M' Cosh, p. 266.

2. Ibid., p. 268.

3. Ibid. Clark, p. 677.

God. It is a disgrace to his nature. Whosoever thinks a carnal corruptible image to be fit for a representation of God, renders God no better than a carnal and corporeal being. It is a kind of debasing an angel, who is a spiritual nature, to represent him in a bodily shape, who is as far removed from any fleshliness as heaven from earth; much more to degrade the glory of the divine nature to the lineaments of a man."¹

"A corporeal fancy of God is as ridiculous in itself, and as injurious to God, as a wooden statue.... God is a pure Spirit; he hath nothing of the nature and tincture of a body."²

"If God be a Spirit, he is active and communicative. He is not clogged with heavy and sluggish matter, which is cause of dulness and inactivity."³

"If God be a Spirit, we should take most care of that wherein we are like to God. Spirit is nobler than body, we must therefore value our spirits above our bodies; the soul as spirit partakes more of the divine nature, and deserves more of our choicest cares."⁴

1. Existence and Attributes. M' Cosh, I. p. 273.
 2. Ibid. p. 277.
 3. Ibid. p. 279.
 4. Ibid. p. 281.

Accordingly God is placed within the Chain of Being, whilst at the same time being characterised by atemporal ideas:

*"It would be a miserable notion of a god, to fancy him with a brutish and unguided power. The heathens therefore had, and could not but have, this natural notion of God. Plato therefore calls him...[276]...Mens, and Cleanthes used to call God Reason, and Socrates thought the title *Ἰσος* too magnificent to be attributed to anything else but God alone."¹*

It seems clear that Charnock has moved beyond using scholastical method. He is obviously using scholastical ideology. It is far from clear if he is embracing them wholeheartedly. The probability is that it is the result of using scholastical methodology. Whatever the reason, God is expressed through most of the dominant scholastical themes. Notably 'necessary being', and 'spiritual being':

"God is the first being, an independent being; he was not produced of himself, or of any other, but by nature always hath been, and therefore cannot by himself, or by any other, be changed from what he is in his own nature:... Again, because he is a Spirit, he is not subject to those mutations which are found in corporeal and bodily natures...."²

"All perfections are more united in a simple, than in a corporeal being."³

1. *Existence and Attributes*. Clark, pp. 275-6.
 2. *Ibid.* N' Cosh. I. p. 382.
 3. *Ibid.* Clark, p. 382.

In these terms 'God' is the only stable point of being. He is supremely detached, whilst being the goal of all intelligent creatures. He is the great philosophical rock which man must move towards:

"God is an immoveable rock, we are floating and uncertain creatures; while he seems to approach to us, he doth really make us to approach to him. He comes not to us by any change of place himself, but draws us to him by a change of mind, will and affections in us."

Now Charnock's view of man as 'floating and uncertain creatures', does not tally with Scripture. This concept of man is set against the ontological view of God. Hence man is 'secondary being', and so in a 'perpetual flux', regardless of the 'Fall'. This clashes with the Scriptural view of man as the final work of God. It is true that since the 'Fall' man can find himself overwhelmed by nature [Job 38-42]. But there is no doubt God made man perfect. Herein is the basis of the relationship between God and man which gives man a dignity of body and soul. [Mt. 6:25; 1Cor. 5:3]. Hence it is quite clear that in Scripture God is understood to have created man holy, and in this sense not 'floating and uncertain'. Because obviously he isn't referring to man's historic fall. When Charnock says man is 'floating' he means it eternally, regardless of the fall:

"There is a mutability in us as creatures, and as creatures cannot but be mutable by nature, otherwise it were not a

*creature, but God... Naturally we tend to nothing, as we came from nothing. This creature mutability is not a sin, yet it should cause us to lie down under a sense of our own nothingness in the presence of the Creator."*¹

Such a view of 'baseness' helps us to understand how Charnock could conceive of God in impersonal terms. But there was another side to this. Whilst God was viewed as impersonal, he was also seen as the foundation of creation. In fact, there is the cosmological sense in which God is creation:

*"All the varieties of creatures are so many apparitions of this goodness. Though God be one, yet he cannot appear as a God, but in variety. As the goodness of power is not manifest but in variety of works, and an acute understanding not discovered but in variety of reasonings, so an infinite goodness is not so apparent as in variety of communications."*²

This was the inevitable result of such a strong concept of God as necessary being. It was also the consequence of expressing God through Knowledge. For since God was understood to know all, he was also seen as the sum of all knowledge:

*"He knows all creatures, from the highest to the lowest, the least as well as the greatest."*³

1. *Existence and Attributes*. M' Cosh. p. 408.
 2. *Ibid.* Clark, .564.
 3. *Ibid.* M' Cosh, p. 471.

*"As it is necessary we should conceive God to be an understanding being, else he could not be God, so we must conceive his understanding to be infinitely more pure and perfect than ours in the act of it."*¹

There is a close association of knowledge with reason, and this brings us to the strongest antithesis between matter and spirit. Reason is the great philosophical ground, the most significant component of being. In a manner reminiscent of Anselm's Ontological Argument, Charnock regards God as the personification of reason and understanding:

*"God is the highest degree of being, and therefore in the highest degree of understanding. Knowledge is one of the most perfect acts in any creature... The perfection of God requires this... ignorance is a defect... The dull body understands nothing: sense perceives, but the understanding faculty is seated in the soul, which is of a spiritual nature... What is the property of a spiritual nature, must be in a most... [506]... eminent manner in the Supreme Spirit of the world; that is, the highest degree of spirituality, and most remote from any matter."*²

1. Existence and Attributes. p. 496.
2. Ibid. p. 505.

Order/Reason in the Chain of Being.

From what we have already discussed it is clear that Charnock thought of the Chain of Being as rational. It followed that God as 'orderer' must be rational too:

"If it be intelligent, this nature must be the same we call God..."¹

Order and reason are the inevitable conclusion of observation:

"From all this it follows, if there be an order and harmony, there must be an orderer."²

Reflecting the Cosmological Argument, within this approach God is the 'x' factor that explains the perceived order:

"Without the owning a God no account can be given to those actions of creatures, that are in imitation of reason. To say the bees, &c., are rational, is to equal them to

*man...*³ Charnock sees this most obviously in the human body⁴, and especially in the soul which he distinguished by its reasoning and understanding.⁵ Hence the soul emerges as not only a manifestation of reason, but also able to perceive reason in the creation. This is significant. Charnock is outlining a basis for knowledge, and the means of expanding and refining this knowledge.

We must emphasise how closely Charnock associates God and man with reason. So much so that he regarded the atheist as unmanning

1. Existence and Attributes, N' Cosh. p. 328.

2. Ibid, p. 397.

3. Ibid, p. 408.

4. Ibid, Clark. p. 280.

5. Ibid, p. 394.

himself:

*"He is most unreasonable that denies or doubts of that whose image and shadow he sees round about him..."*¹

Charnock particularly associated this reason with the conscience. He understood this to be imprinted with the rational Law of Nature:

*"Conscience is nothing but an actuated or reflex knowledge of a superior power and an equitable law; a law impressed, and a power above it impressing it."*²

Hence reason, man and Natural Order are closely associated. So that to ignore the conscience is to bring disorder to the Chain of Being.³

In this sense sin is bad reasoning. Charnock understands man to be a reasoning being. Therefore to sin is to embrace false propositions.

This in turn demonstrates how scholastical Charnock's view of man is. He cannot conceive of man acting in other than reasonable terms. And he was certainly not alone in this. Many Puritans asked why could Adam fall? The Bible suggests a type of wilful disobedience. The Puritans would have none of this. Hence if man fell it was by bad reasoning. The Devil tricked man with false propositions:

*"No sin is committed as sin, but as it pretends a self-satisfaction.[226]...The vapours of self-affections in our clouded understandings, like those in the air in misty mornings, alter the appearance of things, and make them look bigger than they really are."*⁴

1. *Existence and Attributes*, N' Cosh. I. p. 177.

2. *Ibid.* p. 212.

3. *Ibid.* p. 216; Clark, p. 462.

4. *Ibid.* N' Cosh. p. 224.

In this way Charnock is stressing the unity of Knowledge, and its rational nature. For even conversion is expressed through the structure of a Natural Law which man can assent to:

*"The wisdom of God appears in the manner of conversion. So great a change God makes, not by destruction, but with a preservation of, and suitableness to, nature... God produceth grace in the soul by the means of the word, fitted to the capacity of man as man, and proportioned to his rational faculties as rational... [304]... The principle that moves the will is supernatural, but the will, as a natural faculty, concurs in the act or motion."*¹

With such a rational concept of man, Charnock asserted the legitimacy of using reason to make up an image of God. This was a matter of removing what is rationally inconsistent with his being, and adding what is rationally consistent.² This was a process in which Scripture and reason were understood to come together.³

Atemporalism became a significant part of this. Charnock uses Neoplatonic ideas to picture God as a remote atemporal ideal. And which in turn is best represented by reason:

*"The wisdom whereby the world was created could never be the fruit of a corporeal nature;... All acts of wisdom speak an intelligent and spiritual agent."*⁴

1. Attributes of God, Clark, p. 301.

2. Ibid., N' Cosh, p. 263.

3. Ibid., p. 264.

4. Ibid., N' Cosh, p. 265.

If this idea of remoteness is developed far enough, Charnock comes close to saying that man can never have an adequate knowledge of God.¹

But this problem is overcome within the concept of reason. For the lofty idea of the rational God meets with the atemporal soul of man.²

"God is most visible in the frame of the soul; it is there his image glitters. He hath given us a jewel, as well as a case, and the jewel as well as the case we must return to him... It is not fit we should serve our Maker only with that which is the brute is us, and withhold from him that which doth constitute us reasonable creatures."³

The soul emerges as the 'jewel of the world'. It is the image of God, which means that the rational bonds are unbreakable.⁴

Such a rational conception of God and man became a strong basis for a knowledge of God, and hence for the unity of all knowledge. And it is to nature that Charnock turns for a piecemeal collection of material. This is significant. Because Charnock is balancing the idea that man's rational soul communes with God through internal reason, with the wider concept of looking to the Laws of Nature:

"What is infinite and eternal cannot be comprehended by finite and temporary creatures..."⁵

1. Attributes of God, M' Cosh. p. 275.
2. Ibid. p. 281.
3. Ibid. p. 290.
4. Ibid. pp. 292, 317.
5. Ibid. p. 368.

Against the background idea of a Law of Nature, God emerges as the 'first being'.¹ This is the rational principle to which rational man moves.² The movement is an intellectual one, taking place in the mind of man. Even so, for Charnock, this is a process which includes the whole Chain of Being.³

"Now God, being the first Being, possesses whatsoever is most noble in any being. If therefore wisdom, which is the most noble perfection in any creature, were wanting to God, he would be deficient in that which is the highest excellency."⁴

Within this whole process 'reason' is used to express being. In fact we get perilously near to calling God reason,⁵ and in this sense Charnock is drawing upon the Cosmological Argument. Hence the whole of creation is a means of articulating this wisdom.⁶ The clear implication is that the law of nature is closely associated with the being of God.⁷

Atemporalism.

We have already seen how Charnock regarded man's soul as the peak of creation. Nevertheless, he understood man to be essentially spiritual, with nothing temporal worthy of his attention:

"Now the soul of man finds an imperfection in everything here, and cannot scrape up a perfect satisfaction and felicity.

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1. Existence and Attributes, M' Cosh. p. 382.
 2. Ibid. p. 391.
 3. Ibid. p. 496.
 4. Ibid. Clark. p. 276.
 5. Ibid. Clark. p. 275.
 6. Ibid. Clark. p. 284.
 7. Ibid. p. 667.

*In the highest fruitions of worldly things, it is still
persuing something else..."*

In the same terms, it is as 'perfect Spirit' that God rejects all corporality:²

"If we grant that God is, we must necessarily grant that he cannot be corporeal, because a body is of an imperfect nature...[263]...So that the notion of a spirit is, that it is a fine immaterial substance, an active being, that acts itself and other things. A mere body cannot act itself, as the body of man cannot move without a soul....We find a principle within us nobler than that of our bodies, and therefore we conceive the nature of God according to that which is more worthy in us, and not according to that which is the vilest part of our natures."³

God is exalted as perfect, necessary being. This is a spiritual state of philosophical stability, obviously drawing on Anselm's Ontological Argument.⁴ Charnock believes that reason and Scripture meet together in this concept of God.⁵ Hence God is perceived as an intelligent, spiritual agent.⁶ Reason dictates that such a nature should be transcendent and infinite. It is for these reasons that God is divorced from corporality.⁷ Accordingly we should be aware that rationalism is

1. Existence and Attributes. M'Cossh. p. 170.
2. Ibid. p. 260.
3. Ibid. M'Cossh. p. 262.
4. Ibid. pp. 262, 263.
5. Ibid. p. 264.
6. Ibid. p. 265.
7. Ibid. pp. 265-6.

forcing Charnock to set down conditions which God must fulfil to be 'God'.¹ The rejection of temporal creation is quite clear. Charnock believes it would be a contradiction in terms if God was expressed in corporeal terms.² Hence God sits at the top of the Chain of Being as a 'simple' spiritual ideal.³ He is the great, immutable concept, which Charnock sees as a lighthouse guiding the mind of man.⁴ Above all God's wisdom shines through creation, and is especially evident in his own state of perfection.⁵

With this lofty concept of God sitting at the top of the Chain, Charnock does not believe that any other part of creation is stable. Therefore everything could be improved, and by this Charnock does not mean that everything could be purged from sin:

"...there is no creature but we may conceive a possibility of its being made more perfect in the rank of creatures than it already is."⁶

The implication is that temporal creation is not in the image of God. So that if stability lies in God, then temporal creation is condemned out of hand.⁷

1. Existence and Attributes. M'Cosh. p.268.
 2. Ibid. pp.277,279.
 3. Ibid. p.382.
 4. Ibid. pp.416,391.
 5. Ibid. p.505.
 6. Ibid. Clark. p.373.
 7. Ibid. M'Cosh. p.271.

It is for this reason that man's temporality is seen as a profound impediment:

*"There is a natural corruption in us. There are in godly men two contrary principles, flesh and spirit, which endeavour to hinder one another's acts....There is a body of death continually exhaling its noisome vapours."*¹

Thus creation is 'good' because God made it so, but its very mutability hearkens back to the nothing from whence it was created:

*"The being of a creature begins from change, and therefore the essence of a creature is subject to change. God only is uncreated, and therefore unchangeable. If he were made, he could not be immutable, for the very making is a change of not being into being. All creatures were made good, as they were the fruits of God's goodness and power, but needs must be mutable, because they were extracts of nothings."*²

Charnock tells us that this mutability is not sin³. But for all this there seems to be a basic pre-lapsarian flaw in corporeal creation:

*"It is a greater skill to frame noble bodies of vile matter, as varieties of precious vessels of clay and earth, than of a noble matter, as gold and silver."*⁴

Several of these themes come together when we consider his ideas about 'man'. He sees 'man' dragged down by vile temporality:

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1. Existence and Attributes, M'Cosh. p.328.
 2. Ibid. p.397.
 3. Ibid. p.408.
 4. Ibid. Clark. p.280.

*"It is no less a wonder that a little infant can live so long in a dark sink, in the midst of filth without breathing; and the education of it out of the womb is no less a wonder than the forming, increase, nourishment of it in that cell...."*¹

The great problem is that men are all too often prepared to turn to base matter, and thereby invert the order of nature.² Hence sense of the material is seen as a clog to the mind.³ In fact, in his body man is estranged from God:

*"God never promised anything to the carcass, but to the spirit in worship."*⁴

Combined with this emphasis on the soul of man is the truth of Natural Law. At this point aspects of Charnock's thought seem contradictory. He has explained at great length how temporality is profoundly unstable. And yet he believes that when God originally made the creation there was no blemish of disturbance. Charnock must be resolving this in his own mind within the idea of the Chain of Being. The perfection he refers to is the perfection of system. So that whilst true stability lies in God as a lofty rational ideal, creation is stable in that it demonstrates this rationalism:

*"We cannot think that any creature was blemished with a principle of disturbance as it came first out of the hand of God. All things were certainly settled in a due order and dependence upon one another..."*⁵

1. Existence and Attributes. Clark. p.394.
 2. Ibid. N' Cosh. pp.410,252.
 3. Ibid. pp.292,342.
 4. Ibid. p.339.
 5. Ibid. Clark. p.632.

The background of this is a belief in the unity of knowledge, and the basic rationality of this unity. Hence for Charnock atheism was a matter of:

*"... inverting the order of things, a making God the highest to become the lowest, and self the lowest to become the highest."*¹

Hence man must be aware of this, and communion with God is a matter of knowing this Law of Nature:

*"He that moves and acts according to a law of his own, offers a manifest wrong to God, the highest wisdom and chiefest good, disturbs the order of the world, nulls the design of the righteousness and holiness of God. The law of God is the rule of that order he would have observed in the world. He that makes another law his rule, thrusts out the order of the Creator, and establishes the disorder of the creature."*²

So that sin is a selfish turning away from the order of reason.³

Charnock regards man as being essentially rational and atemporal. This accepted man must then live in a temporal world, and be aware of the rational order which his own reason identifies. Now with the association of reason and the spirit, this gives an important twist to the idea of worshipping in the spirit. Charnock understands the true stability of man to be in his soul, with the soul's great purpose being

1. Existence and Attributes. M'Cosh. p.252.

2. Ibid. p.216.

3. Ibid. p.224.

to contemplate God through reason. Hence his concept of Natural Law allows him to value the testimony of nature, whilst dismissing it for its temporality. In these terms God, like reason, is a remote dialectical ideal, which the soul approaches with and through the dialectic. Therefore it is the atemporal soul which emerges as the crown of creation. Indeed, the soul 'glitters' as the seat of God.' Hence man more than anything else is his soul, and cannot but act in a rational manner.² So that carnal temporality is the great threat to the soul.³ Against this idea the whole of temporal creation can be dismissed:

"Let the consideration of God's eternity take off our love and confidence from the world, and the things thereof. The eternity of God reproaches a pursuit of the world, as preferring a momentary pleasure before an everlasting God..."⁴

This is a recurring atemporal theme in Charnock's work. For God and man meet in the soul, and it is a rational coming together. This served the purpose of giving the growing Theory of Knowledge the stamp of the divine. It was a means of giving authority to perceived knowledge. So that in a unique way Charnock's atemporalism maintained the idea of a Chain of being. It became a means of maintaining unity through rational knowledge. Because of this, the tendency was to have the mind of man and God at the top.

1. Existence and Attributes, M'Cosk. p.290.

2. Ibid. p.317.

3. Ibid. pp.410,338,342.

4. Ibid. p.370.

The Doctrine of God.God as the Artificer of Nature.

Charnock believed that the Bible and Natural Theology outlined the being of God because they had their own being from him. Philosophy had taught him that the order of creation necessitated a ground source orderer.¹ In Cosmological terms, with creation made up of second causes, or unnecessary being, 'God' emerged as the basis of this: viz. 'the first cause' or 'necessary being':

"Hath not everything some stamp of God's own being upon it, since he eminently contains in himself the perfections of all his works?"²

This would be especially true of rational creation:

"As the creatures witness there is a first cause that produced them, so this principle in man evidenceth itself to be set by the same hand for the good of that which it hath framed. There could be no conscience if there were no God, and man could not be a rational creature if there were no conscience."³

Hence Charnock saw the essence of God everywhere, at the very least demonstrating God's immensity and eternity.⁴ The role of the concept of man became central in this, for the notion of God became dependent upon man's innate impression of a deity:

1. Existence and Attributes, M'Cossh. p.158.
 2. Ibid. p.442.
 3. Ibid. p.170.
 4. Ibid. p.427.

"...men could not so easily been deceived by forged deities, if they had not had a notion of a real one."¹

Accordingly Charnock saw God as a sovereign being, infinite in essence and perfect. But despite the absolute nature of such perfection, it was thought of as discernible in creation.²

Such a view of nature led to God being regarded as the 'cause of causes', as 'necessary being' itself:

"We must come at length to an infinite, external, independent being that was the first cause of this structure and fabric of the world whererin we and all creatures dwell...Man the noblest of creatures, cannot of himself make a man, the chiefest part of the world."³

This attitude is significant, in Cosmological terms, Charnock is in danger of making God the perfection of what he sees as the Natural Law. Hence God can be adapted to meet the theory of creation. Nevertheless, Charnock regarded the idea of God as 'first cause' as self-evident. To say otherwise would deny the obvious statement of creation.⁴ Hence the idea of God as 'first cause' becomes a means of giving the system of knowledge authority. It was a means of establishing a Theory of Knowledge. Charnock regarded this as wrapped up with the perception of man, and clearly demonstrated in the history of mankind.⁵

1. Existence and Attributes, M'Cossh. p.133.

2. Ibid. p.132.

3. Ibid. p.149.

4. Ibid. pp.252-3.

5. Ibid. p.136.

It is essential we realise that the concept of God is at the centre of any theory of Knowledge. Of course this in its turn would depend on what Charnock meant by 'God'. The use of the idea of Natural Law reflecting the being of God was one way of taking rational concepts of system to the very heart of the deity. Charnock believed strongly that man could perceive God through innate powers which even the devil could not purge from man's soul:

*"The impressions of a deity were so strong as not to be struck out by the malice and power of hell."*¹

Hence Charnock believed:

*"...God as the first cause hath an influence into the motions of all second causes. As all the wheels in a clock are moved in their different motions by the force and strength of the principle and primary wheel..."*²

We are presented with the image of God as an underlying unity. In Neoplatonic fashion Charnock saw the order of creation leading to a view of God as atemporal spirit.³ Reflecting the Cosmological argument, God emerges as the unity and stability of the perceived system in creation. We have already discussed how Charnock criticised any change which compromised this system. This is why he condemns the changeableness of temporal creation. Hence he points to the infinite and unchanging God, as demonstrated by nature:

1. Existence and Attributes, p. 136.
 2. Ibid. Clark. p. 395.
 3. Ibid. M'Cossh. p. 150.

*"The creatures are in a perpetual flux...but God hath his whole being in one and the same point or moment of eternity."*¹

All these infinite ideas of unchanging ability were associated with the essence of God. This is probably why Charnock sometimes associates creation with the person of god. As we see when he refuses to separate God's knowledge of creation from knowledge of Himself:

*"God knows by his own essence...He hath not an understanding distinct from his essence, as we have; but being the most simple being, his understanding is his essence."*²

This shows how closely Charnock was associating God with the perceived system of creation. It also shows the force of logic behind this. Hence the concept emerges of God as the 'orderer of nature':

*"As the production of the world, so the harmony of all the parts of it declare the being and wisdom of a God."*³

Again Charnock seems to echo the Cosmological argument. Order and system are closely associated with God and the way He sustains creation. God was understood to sustain the universe in the same way that a man's soul enlivens the body.⁴ All this was related to the idea of a Chain of Being:

"Since then we see a stable order in the things of the world, that they conspire together for the good and beauty of the universe, that they depend upon one another, there must be

1. Existence and Attributes, M' Cosh. pp. 352, 375.

2. Ibid. p. 352.

3. Ibid. p. 151.

4. Ibid. p. 161.

some principle upon which they depend, something to which the first link of the chain is fastened, which himself depends upon no superior, but wholly rests in his own essence and being."

This draws together Cosmological and Design arguments for the existence of God. These are expressed through the idea of unity in creation through rational system; the essence of God as the basis of this; also the Chain of Being, which we have already discussed as an important philosophical means of expressing the unity of creation.

In using concepts such as the Chain of Being, Charnock associated the perceived system of nature with God. Hence in the preservation of nature he saw 'goodness' and 'power':

*"...and in this sense God is present with all creatures, for whatsoever acts another is present with that which it acts, by sending forth some virtue and influence whereby it acts...The virtual presence of God is evident in our sense, a presence we feel; his essential presence is evident in our reason."*²

So the tendency is to collate characteristics of nature and call them 'God':

*"If nature therefore uses counsel to begin a thing, reason to dispose it, art to effect it, virtue to complete it, and power to govern it, why should it be called nature rather than God?"*³

1. Existence and Attributes. M' Cosh. p. 161.
 2. Ibid. p. 425.
 3. Ibid. p. 157.

Charnock could do this because he regarded rational man as able to perceive his own position within the scheme of things.¹ Hence natural reason was regarded as sufficient to define God in terms of the natural order.² For:

"What is the general dictate of nature is a certain truth...Nature cannot plant in the minds of all men an assent to a falsity."³

Hence Natural Theology outlines the dominant theme of God as 'orderer', with great emphasis upon rational system.⁴ In these terms God emerges as the highest being, the supreme orderer.⁵

Even at this early stage we should be aware that philosophical ideas are forcing the pace. One interesting example of this is the balance in the Attributes of God between 'God is everywhere' and 'everywhere is God'. At times the distinction is far from clear:

"Is it not folly to deny the being of a wise agent, who sparkles in the beauty and motions of the heavens, rides upon the wings of the wind, and is writ upon the flowers and fruits of plants."⁶

And:

"Let it be therefore our desire, that as he fills heaven and earth by his essence, he may fill our understandings and wills by his grace."⁷

1. Existence and Attributes, M' Cosh. p. 128.
 2. Ibid. pp. 8, 155.
 3. Ibid. p. 135.
 4. Ibid. p. 138.
 5. Ibid. p. 149.
 6. Ibid. p. 151.
 7. Ibid. p. 456.

Charnock tells us that to say God is essentially everywhere, is not to say that everywhere is God.' But his point is inconsistent, as we see when he discusses providence:

*"How foolish is it to imagine any hiding-place from the incomprehensible God, who fills and contains all things, and is present in every part of the world."*²

And:

*"We are all in him as fish in the sea; and he bears all creatures in the womb of his providence, and the arms of his goodness."*³

Accordingly within the field of God as 'artificer of nature', we have already been confronted with many of the key scholastical ideas about God. These include the classical Ontological, Design and Cosmological arguments for the existence of God. The very strong philosophical concept of God as the atemporal 'first cause' and 'necessary being' are given great stability within the Neoplatonic model of the Chain of Being. This in turn is linked to the rational concept of man, and man's ability to perceive the imprint of God in nature and himself. Lastly the dominance of this type of monotheism literally drives Charnock to infer at times that 'everywhere is God'.

1. Existence and Attributes, M'Cossh. p.442. [point 4].
 2. Ibid. p.450.
 3. Ibid. p.447.

God as Ultimate Reason.

We have already touched upon the association of God with perceived essences within nature. This was also an important part of the way Charnock expressed God through the concept of reason. The essence of God was closely associated with 'wisdom':

*"...the wisdom of God is not a habit added to his essence, as it is in men, but it is his essence."*¹

This tied in with the view of God as necessary being. Everything was expressed through rational system, so that wisdom and understanding were seen as the key part of the essence of God:

*"There is an essential and personal wisdom of God. The essential wisdom is the essence of God, the personal wisdom is the Son of God...the wisdom of God is not a habit added to his essence...[271]...God is only wise necessarily. As he is necessarily God, he is necessarily wise..."*²

So just as Charnock sees God as the perfection of creation, and thus as expressible through the rational of Natural Law, he also turns to, rationalism in regarding 'wisdom' and 'understanding' as of the essence of God.³:

*"Wisdom is the royalty of God; the proper dialect of all his ways and works. No creature can lay claim to it; he is so wise, that he is wisdom itself."*⁴

1. Existence and Attributes. M'Cossh. p.447.

2. Ibid. Clark. p. 270.

3. Ibid. M'Cossh. p.252.

4. Ibid. Clark. p.268; see also p. 276.

It is very important that we recognise that Charnock is making God the perfection of the perceived natural order. This draws on the Cosmological argument for the existence of God. But more significantly, when he makes God 'wisdom' or the highest perfection in reason, this is a matter of God being the perfection of a system:

"Whatsoever gives being to any other must be the highest being, and must possess all the perfections of that which it gives being to."

This was based on the idea of God as 'first cause'. It is upon the unity of this system that Charnock bases his idea of God as 'reason'.² This becomes a means of expressing God as the system of being, whilst setting Him at an infinite distance from the rest of creation. The distance between the two was maintained by God's self-contained perfection.³

'Reason' is the great unifying principle within this system. In fact there is the idea that it is the only knowledge there is. For even God can only know the reason which is his own reflection:

"God knows by his own essence, he sees the nature of things in the ideas of his own mind, and the events of things in the decrees of his own will; he knows them not by viewing the things, but by viewing himself; his own essence is the mirror of the book, wherein he beholds all things that he doth ordain."⁴

1. Existence and Attributes. M' Cosh. p.149.

2. Ibid. pp.148-151.

3. Ibid. p.481.

4. Ibid. p.497.

Thus rational knowledge was taken to the very heart of the concept of God. So that to deny dialectical method, was tantamount to denying the being of God. ¹ Hence reason and God are closely associated ². Indeed the distinction between God's reason and God as reason is not always clear:

"Therefore it is God's reason that animates the lump of creatureship."³

Within this idea of God as the most perfect being it was logical that he would have the most perfect understanding:

"As God is the most perfect being, so he must have the most perfect understanding."⁴

Hence God and reason were seen as one. Charnock regarded a failure for God to do this as a contradiction in terms:

"God could not be infinitely perfect without wisdom. A rational nature is better than an irrational nature...Wisdom may be without much power...but power is a tyrannical thing without wisdom and righteousness."⁵

So that to be alienated from God was understood to be unreasonable.⁶ The strong implication is that God is absolute reason.⁷ The association of God with reason led to Charnock regarding reason as an important means of approaching God.⁸ Hence reason, God, and Natural Law are held in a

1. Existence and Attributes, M'Cosh. pp. 187, 191.

2. Ibid. p. 132.

3. Ibid. p. 156.

4. Ibid. pp. 465, 149.

5. Ibid. Clark. p. 276.

6. Ibid. M'Cosh. pp. 128, 127, 187.

7. Ibid. p. 132.

8. Ibid. p. 527.

tension. It is upon these terms that he criticises the unreasonableness of atheism. ¹

"How unreasonable is it for any man to hazard himself at this rate in the denial of a God! The atheist saith he knows not that there is a God; but may he not reasonably think there may be one for aught he knows?"²

and:

"He is most unreasonable that denies or doubts of that whose image or shadow he sees round about him...God hath so settled himself in the reason of man that he must villify the noblest faculty God hath given him, and put off nature itself, and blot out the notion of a God."³

The key point is that we have moved beyond the Scriptural practice of using reason to explain faith. For now it is reason rather than faith that describes the attributes of God:

"...we ascend to a conception of a substance purely incorporeal and spiritual, so from a multitude of things in the world, reason leads us to one choice being above all."⁴

Echoing Anselm's Ontological Argument, it is reason that leads us to God as some postulated perfection. There is no doubt for Charnock that in these terms God is rational. ⁵ Because of this the terms 'God' and 'reason' occasionally become synonymous:

1. Existence and Attributes, N' Cosh. p.252.
2. Ibid. p.178.
3. Ibid. N' Cosh. p.177.
4. Ibid. p.150.
5. Ibid. p.p.460.

*"...the impression of a deity is as common as reason, and of the same age with reason."*¹

*"It is but one truth in philosophy and divinity, that what is false in one cannot be true in another."*²

Thus salvation can lie in a rational examination of oneself.³ It is a matter of re-aligning the soul to the principle of reason:

*"By the same exercise of reason, we cannot cast our eyes upon anything in the world, or exercise our understandings upon ourselves, but we must presently imagine there was some cause of those things, some cause to myself and my own being, so that this truth is as natural to man as anything he can call most natural or a common principle."*⁴

The implication of all this is that, "...God is God because he is wise."⁵ Wisdom or rationality are no longer tools used to describe God, they have become a standard against which he is measured, and more pointedly, which he has to fulfil. This should be regarded as the product of setting 'God' within a Theory of Knowledge. Thereby compromising Scripture, whilst extending the authority of Natural Law.

1. *Existence and Attributes*, M' Cosh. p.137.
2. *Ibid.* p.131.
3. *Ibid.* p.191.
4. *Ibid.* p.137.
5. *Ibid.* p. Clark. p.333.

God as the Supreme Neoplatonic Ideal.

By now we should be aware of Charnock's tendency to view God through broad philosophical ideals. We occasionally come across a dual basis. For instance where in terms reminiscent of the Cosmological Argument he regards God testified to by creation; whilst also conceiving of him as a remote 'soul', as a distinct distillation in ontological terms.¹ Hence we should be aware of Charnock's stress upon viewing God as a philosophical perfection.² He is the 'first cause' of things, that which is supreme in the order of nature, "...which is greater than all, which hath nothing beyond it or above it...which we call God."³ It is hard to avoid the idea that at times Charnock has fallen into the trap of allowing philosophy to dictate his concept of God. At times 'God' seems to be a blanket term, a means of pulling common themes together. This should be regarded as part of the process of giving stability to a Theory of Knowledge. God is the 'x' factor which pulls ideas of being together:

"And since, in all natures in the world, we still find a superior nature, the nature of one beast above the nature of another, the nature of man above the nature of beasts, and some invisible nature, the worker of strange effects in the air and earth, which cannot be ascribed to any visible cause, we must suppose some nature above all those, of inconceivable

1. Existence and Attributes. N' Cosh. pp.424,150.
 2. Ibid. pp.8-10.
 3. Ibid. p.150.

perfection."¹

Hence God is 'first', "It can only be said of him, Est, he is..."² In ontological terms, He is the philosophical perfection of any conceived attribute. This of course allowed a growing role for Natural Law because we are being confronted with dialectical rationalism. Charnock is not just using reason to elucidate the doctrine of God, reason has become its own terms of reference. He believed that to doubt this was to compromise the being of God.³

Hence God is an unchanging essence to which nothing can be added or taken away. This in itself appears not to clash with scripture. But the key question is upon what grounds does Charnock say these things. If we turn to his statement that 'God is good', there is no doubting that similar sentiments are grounded in Scripture. Where we have to question Charnock's approach is when he says 'Good is god'. The difference is obvious, and is present in his work:

*"He is the highest goodness, and therefore a communicative goodness, and acts excellently according to his nature...God is necessarily good, as he is necessarily God. His^s goodness is as inseparable from his nature as his holiness...[548]...He loves himself, because he is the highest goodness and excellency."*⁴

1. *Existence and Attributes*. N' Cosh. p. 150.
 2. *Ibid.* Clark. p. 381.
 3. *Ibid.*; N' Cosh. p. 380.
 4. *Ibid.* Clark. p. 546.

This also hints at the way Charnock at times lapses into a monotheism. We see this in some difficulties in dealing with Christ. The person of Jesus straddles the whole Chain of Being in a way that dialectical rationalism cannot allow. This might be the reason why Charnock can envisage no real union between the two natures:

*"There is no change in the divine nature of the Son when he assumed human nature. There was an union of the two natures, but no change of the deity into humanity, or of the humanity into the deity, both preserved their peculiar properties."*¹

Whilst this is quite in line with the Chalcedonian Definition,, Charnock goes on to highlight the gulf he sees between God as the perfection of atemporalism and the temporalism of man:

*"The humanity was changed by a combination of excellent gifts from the divine nature, not by being brought into equality with it; for that was impossible that a creature should become equal to the Creator."*²

It is hard to conclude anything other than philosophy is forcing Charnock's hand.³ The beginning of John's first Epistle leaves us in no doubt that God was made manifest in Christ the man, as does 1Tim. 3:16, "Great is the mystery of our religion: He was manifested in the flesh." God is being seen by Charnock, on the other hand as a philosophical constant.⁴ This is all part of the production of a balanced rational

1. Existence and Attributes. N' Cosh. p. 399.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid. p. 391.

4. Ibid. p. 393.

system. Because of this God is postulated as 'a bare excellency of nature.' Even holiness is expressed as a type of rational integrity:

"God cannot act any evil in or by himself...If he could will any unjust and irrational thing, his will would be repugnant to his understanding; there would be a disagreement in God, will against mind, and will against wisdom..."

All this leads us to a concept of God which is philosophically sound, but which seems impersonal in comparison with the God of Scripture. There seems little room here for a personal God, as we saw in his difficulty in resolving the two natures of Christ. Amongst other things this moves away from the strong biblical idea of the Fatherhood of God. [Mal.2:10]. It was the personal God of creation and salvation that Paul set before the Epicureans and Stoics on Mars Hill.[Acts. 17:16-21]. Hence there is no avoiding man's personal relationship with the Father. It is a relationship which can even change the mind of God. [Gen. 18:23] For Christ the basis of his mission is his personal relationship with the Father.[Jn. 17:25] So Paul stresses that whilst the Greeks want wisdom and the Jews a sign, he preaches Jesus Christ. [1Cor. 1:20] It is upon this principle that Christians are adopted by Christ into a living family. [Rom. 8:17]

Charnock lays a 'simple' essence of God before us. When developed far enough God sits remote at the top of the Chain of Being. So remote, that he is seen as a Neoplatonic, atemporal Spirit.^o

1. Existence and Attributes. Clark. p. 668.
 2. Ibid. pp. 461; 448.
 3. Ibid. M'Cossh. p. 267.

Essentially, this is a lonely concept of God. But it does have distinct advantages within a Theory of Knowledge. In expressing God through a dialectical rationalism, he is giving the system authority and setting no limits on it. It is against this background that we should set his tendency to express God through 'simple' hypostatic themes:

*"There is no weakness in the nature of God that can introduce any corruption, because he is infinitely simple, without any mixture."*¹

This takes us on to the idea of God as the perfection of the observed system in the world. Charnock clearly echoes Anselm's Ontological Argument:

*"God is infinite in his perfections. None can set bounds to terminate the greatness and excellency of God...[434]...In the perfection of a creature, something still may be thought greater to be added to it, but God containing all perfections in himself formally, if they be mere perfections in the creature mixed with imperfection, nothing can be thought greater, and therefore every one of them is infinite."*²

The idea is that in his perfection God contains all creation. Hence God's perfection is associated with unbounded essence:

*"No perfection is wanting to God; but an unbounded essence is a perfection, a limited one is an imperfection."*³

1. *Existence and Attributes*. M'Cossh. pp.242-5.
 2. *Ibid.* pp.433-4.
 3. *Ibid.* p.437.

Because he sees man in the same terms, Charnock believes that all men should be aware of the atemporal basis of creation.' This is God, but we need to be cautious. Because for all Charnock's definition of God in atemporal terms, he does not turn his back on the idea of the Chain of Being. This idea is fundamental. Maybe the relationship between the two can be well shown in the balance between classical Platonic dialectic and epistemology. Plato always set a division between the two, and yet the epistemology was understood to be the perfection of the dialectical rationalism. Hence divisions exist and do not exist at the same time. In these terms the unifying role of the concept of the Chain of Being is seminal in Charnock's work.²

Accordingly God is set at the top of the Chain as, "...unchangeable in his essence, nature and perfections. Immutability and eternity are linked together..."³

*"Mutability is absolutely inconsistent with simplicity, whether the change come from an internal or an external principle."*⁴

We cannot avoid the idea that Charnock's idea of constancy is similar to the order of a rational system. This is shown in his attitude to providence. Providence, like God, acts as a type of unchanging rational pulse throughout all being:

*"Providence is a great clock, keeping time and order, not only hourly, but instantly to its own honour."*⁵

1. Existence and Attributes, M'Cossh. p.210.
2. Ibid. p.161.
3. Ibid. pp.380,383.
4. Ibid. p.393.
5. Ibid. p.17.

"See how God orders second causes, naturally to bring about his own decree?"¹

In this way God emerges with all the characteristics of a philosophical ideal. In the process Charnock is forced to deny those parts of Scripture which compromise this, such as with repentance, or any sign of God changing his mind.² This underlines Charnock's views on the certainty of an unchanging system. God cannot repent because he is the personification of the certainty of rational system. Hence no operation of God can be placed outside this.

Against this background God is understood to be the excellent, efficient, cause of creation.³ This excellency is the basis of the harmony of creation:

"He that is the superior of all, ought to be the end of all. That is the true harmony of the creation, that which is of an inferior nature is ordered to the service of that which is of a more excellent nature..."⁴

The idea of harmony is developed with the difference between God as Creator and Creation being blurred:

"All life is seated in God, as in its proper throne, in its most perfect purity. God is life; it is in him originally, radically, and therefore eternally. He is a pure act, nothing but vigour and act. He hath by his nature that life which

1. *Existence and Attributes of God*. Parsons. pp.522,501.
 2. *Ibid.* M'Cosh. p.400.
 3. *Ibid.* Parsons. p.501.
 4. *Ibid.* Clark. p.748.

*others have by his grant...He that hath life in himself, and is from himself, cannot but be. He always was, because he received his being from no other, and none can take away that being which was not given by another."*¹

This is the logical outcome of identifying the person of God with Natural Law.²

The discussion of how 'reason' shaped Charnock's Doctrine of God takes us to how it was developed by his concept of man. This is an important area:

*"A man must be ignorant of himself before he can be ignorant of the existence of God."*³

By this he basically meant that God and men shared the attribute of reason.⁴ This introduces the dual ideas of God as a rational standard by which man can live, and also of God and man being rationally similar. The link between God and man is most clearly seen in the soul. Charnock regarded God as ruling the world as a man's soul rules his body.⁵ Both were understood to be atemporal and thus held back by bodies.⁶ This meant that looking inwards was a key part of conceiving of God:

*"Though we must not conceive of God, as of a human or corporeal shape, yet we cannot think of God without some reflection upon our own being."*⁷

1. Existence and Attributes. N' Cosh. p. 356.
2. Ibid. pp. 137, 146.
3. Ibid. p. 165.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid. p. 161.
6. Ibid. Clark. p. 376.
7. Ibid. N' Cosh. p. 277.

This inward reflection meant being aware of the rational, and it was in this attribute that Charnock defined God as Spirit.¹ Hence God and man meet on the most sacred and rational level.² This was not new in Puritan thinking. We have already discussed how Perkins and Ames set humanity in the rational faculties. This led Charnock to seeing God as the atemporal perfection of reason and knowledge.³ This idea comes into sharp focus when he sees God in heaven as analogous to man's mind set within the body. God is said to be in his 'holy dwelling place'-2 Chron. 3:27. But Charnock goes further. "It is his court where he has the most solemn worship from his creatures, all his courtiers attending there with a pure love and glowing zeal."⁴ This goes further than saying God rules in heaven. Charnock sets God in heaven because of the excellency of his nature. 'Court' here ties in with the Puritan conception of the mind of man being a type of court where everything is tried at the bar of reason. And it is logical that God who, 'dwells on high in regard of the excellency of his nature...', would hold court in this sense.

1. Existence and Attributes, M' Cosh. p.280.

2. Ibid. p.281.

3. Ibid. pp.503,384.

4. Ibid. pp.439-40;252.

The Nature of Man and his place in the created Order.

Man as the Peak of Created Being.

Charnock saw the goodness of God running through all creation. But with all these strands pulled together in the being of man:

*"...when you have run over all the measures of goodness God hath poured forth upon other creatures, you will find a greater fulness of it in the nature of man, whom he hath placed in a more sublime condition, and endued with choicer prerogatives than other creatures."*¹

Hence he understood everything under him in the Chain of Being to be at man's service.² This involved a vivid idea of the whole creation being at the disposal of mankind:

*"God richly furnished the world for man...The air is his aviary, the sea and rivers his fish-ponds, the valleys his granary, the mountains his magazine."*³

Chain of Being ideology allows Charnock to do this whilst still stressing that man is essentially a bridge between the temporal and atemporal:

"As to the life of man in the world, God by an immense goodness copied out in him the whole creation, and made him an abridgment of the higher and lower world; a little world in a

1. Existence and Attributes, Clark. p.565.

2. Ibid. p.568.

3. Ibid.

... greater one; the link of the two worlds, of heaven and earth,
as the spiritual and corporeal natures are united in
him..."

He agrees with Philo in seeing man's soul as of heaven and his body as of the earth.² All these ideas are set within a broader framework of 'being', with each stage of creation leading onto a higher link in the Chain.³ Within this system man's soul emerges as the peak of creation, so much so that the body, "...is a cabinet fitted by divine goodness for the enclosing of a rich jewel."⁴ In this manner he sets 'man' as the peak of creation, whilst at the same time placing man's true being within Neoplatonic conceptions of the soul.⁵

1. Existence and Attributes, Clark. p.577.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid. p.565.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

God's Image in Man.

Charnock stressed that the soul was associated with God at its deepest being. To deny this, would in fact destroy the soul:

*"This conception is so perpetual, that the nature of the soul must be dissolved before it be rooted out, nor can it be extinct whilst the soul endures."*¹

He denies that religion is an opiate of the people by stressing its innate nature.² This was especially evident if one looked around the world, where even the most base people have a conception of God.³ This was most evident in common notions of reason. We have already discussed how Charnock associated this closely with humanity and a knowledge of God:

*"...before they can stifle such sentiments in them...they must be utter strangers to the common conceptions of reason, and despoil themselves of their humanity. He that dares to deny a God with his lips, yet sets up something or other as a god in his heart."*⁴

This was combined with the idea of the symmetry of creation, Natural Law. Hence the ability to rationalise and perceive rational system in the world was understood to be God within man. Thereby emphasising the close association of God with reason:

1. Existence and Attributes, M' Cosh. p. 136.

2. Ibid. p. 141.

3. Ibid. Clark p. 278.

4. Ibid. M' Cosh p. 175.

*"So that the notion of a god seems to be twisted with the nature of man, and is the first natural branch of common reason....Nature within man, and nature without man, agree upon the first meeting together to form this sentiment, that there is a God."*¹

The wisdom of man seemed to prove this.² In these terms God becomes the peak of man's learning, just as man is the perfection of all beneath him in the Chain of Being.³ Hence God is within man, because he is understood to be the perfection of man. He saw this undeniably proven by the common testimony of reason in far flung nations.⁴ Hence to deny that God is within man, is to deny man himself.⁵ Charnock is here associating being true to oneself with being true to rational system. Accordingly sin is a deluded, self-centredness.⁶ It is clear that he regards such an introspection as a turning away from reason, and an unbalancing of the Chain of Being. Here we have an interesting perspective on 'original sin', for we have moved away from the Biblical idea of sin as a destruction of the created order, to one of sin as a dislocation of the Chain of Being. The differences are profound, for 'dislocation' is not 'destruction'. Sin is thereby enmeshed within a system of rational law. Again we need to emphasise that Charnock has

1. Existence and Attributes, N' Cosh. p. 137.

2. Ibid. Clark. p. 278.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid. N' Cosh. p. 135.

6. Ibid. pp. 224-5..

gone much further than using reason to explain the scriptural 'Fall'. It is hard to avoid the conclusion that Charnock has gone to reason for a definition and basis of his idea of sin.

Man as a mixture of the Spiritual and Temporal.

Charnock understood the goodness of God to be demonstrated in the body and soul of man.¹ But of the two he regarded the soul as the great treasure of the body, the real worth of 'this tabernacle of clay':

"Who can express the wonders of that comeliness that is wrapped up in this mask of clay? A soul endued with clearness of understanding and freedom of will; faculties no sooner framed, than they were intended to produce the operations they were intended for; a soul that excelled the whole world, that comprehended the whole creation..."²

There is a sense here where sin is expressed through the body, whilst the soul is jaded more than fallen.³ This is because he is expressing the essential attributes of the soul through understanding and reason. Also since he tells us that understanding and reason remain, presumably sin lies in a misuse of these. The clear implication is that salvation puts right what man already has. Although Charnock was not on his own here, there is no escaping the incongruity of this with Reformed Theology. In this rational view of the soul there is no gulf between natural man and God. This is explained against the background of man's

1. Existence and Attributes. Clark. p.565.

2. Ibid. p.566.

3. Ibid.

place in the Chain of Being. Hence a man automatically has the power of reason and understanding. No Biblical theologian could disagree with this, but Charnock clearly means more. We have already seen how he expresses his idea of God and man within a unified system of knowledge. So that to say reason and understanding remain in the soul, is to allow man unimpeded development within this system.'

Accordingly he regards man as a "...kind of compound of angel and beast, of soul and body..."², with the greatest emphasis upon the soul.³ For the soul is reasonable in essence, and this is the basis of manhood:

*"He that denies any essential attribute may be said to deny the being of God. Whoever denies angels or men to have reason and will, denies the human and angelic nature, because understanding and will are essential to both these natures; there could be neither angel nor man without them."*⁴

Reason is also the main link between God and man. Here Spirit and reason merge to the total exclusion of matter:

*"Man is not the image of God according to his external bodily form and figure. The image of God in man consisted not in what is seen, but in what is not seen; not in the conformation of the members, but rather in the spiritual faculties of the soul."*⁵

1. Existence and Attributes. Clark. pp. 565-6.
2. Ibid. N' Cosh. p. 166.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid. p. 183.
5. Ibid. pp. 271; 424-5; Clark, 565-6.

In these terms the soul is seen as made separate and excellent by its rational nature.¹ This emphasis upon rational system led Charnock to regard the soul as capable of reaching to the very highest levels of dialectic, viz. to God himself.² Now Charnock could do this within the structure of Chain of Being ideology because he believed in the unity of rational knowledge. Again we should note that this goes much further than believing that knowledge is reasonable, at times Charnock seems to be saying knowledge is 'reason' rather than 'reasonable'. This allowed an exclusive view of the soul, whilst at the same time seeing it as the epitome of creation.³

Man's Rational Perception.

Charnock believed that the history of mankind testified to a constant search for knowledge.⁴ Hence he sets a rational nature at the highest premium:

"A rational nature is better than an irrational nature. A man is not a perfect man without reason...A Christian's graces want their lustre, when they are destitute of the guidance of wisdom."⁵

But Charnock is doing far more here than expressing humanity through rationalism, he is also stressing personal judgment. "No man acts

1. Existence and Attributes. Clark, p.553.

2. Ibid. pp.278,288.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid. M'Cosh. p.135.

5. Ibid. Clark. p.276.

anything but he can give account of the motives of his action..."¹ The strength of this idea is demonstrated when he even sees conversion proceeding upon the basis of God setting forth 'proposals' suited to our faculties.² More than this, conversion proceeds within the system of the Chain of Being.³ Hence there is an idea of salvation rectifying what man already has. The concept is one of moving away from ignorance for, "Depraved understandings, are not fit mates for a pure unblemished mind."⁴ Again the point is that rationality seems to go to the heart of 'manhood'.⁵ Thus reason has become the means of expressing God and man within a unified system of knowledge.⁶ To deny this would strip away the very foundations of humanity,⁷ indeed the soul would recede into non-being in the process.⁸ Hence the rational perception of man becomes the great synthesis and synthesiser of being. The whole process peaks in the recognition and definition of God in rational terms.⁹ This inevitably meant that the perception of man set standards which God had to conform to.¹⁰ It was in these terms that Charnock set all being and soteriology within a rational system.¹¹ Hence man as rational soul was understood to be the highest and most rational part of creation.

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1. Existence and Attributes, N' Cosh. p.493.
 2. Ibid. Clark. p.303.
 3. Ibid. Clark. p.303.
 4. Ibid. p.345.
 5. Ibid. p.454.
 6. Ibid. pp.453,473.
 7. Ibid. N' Cosh. p.135.
 8. Ibid. p.136.
 9. Ibid. p.137.
 10. Ibid. p.385.
 11. Ibid. p.496.

Man's Free Will.

We have already pointed out that Charnock understood all individuals to assimilate received information. Hence he saw Judas Iscariot betraying himself freely, certainly not being caught in the web of blind necessity:

*"If Judas had not done it freely, he had had no reason to repent of it; his repentance justifies Christ from imposing any necessity upon him by that of foreknowledge. No man acts anything but he can give an account of the motives of his action; he cannot father it upon blind necessity..."*¹

Charnock is careful to outline a foreknowledge of God which does not compromise man's freedom of choice.² From what we have already discussed, it is obvious that this does not sit very easily with his strong concept of God. One way in which he attempts to overcome this is by thinking of God knowing the free acts of man.³ This can work, because he refines the concept with the free, rational choice of man being included within the capacity of the divine understanding:

"Can all the free acts of man surmount the infinite capacity of the divine understanding? If God singles out one voluntary action in man as contingent as any, and lying among a vast number of other designs and resolutions, both antecedent and subsequent, why should he not the whole mass of man's thought

1. Existence and Attributes, M'Cosh. p.493.

2. Ibid. p.494.

3. Ibid.

and actions, and pierce into all that the liberty of man's will can effect?''

Hence God's foreknowledge is based on a complex balance of knowing Himself and the individual, as Charnock shows when Christ knew that Peter would deny him.² This in turn should underline just how important Charnock's Theory of Knowledge is to him. For the whole concept of 'free will' tends to centre in the idea of 'knowing'. Accordingly God emerges as perfect knowledge, the great synthesis of rational being.³ For just as man's soul is seen as the rational centre and prime mover of the body, so God is the centre of being.⁴ In this sense God is understood to order contingent being to bring about his own decrees.⁵ Providence is resolved into the essence of God. This was perfectly possible because of Charnock's tendency to associate God with the rational behind the emerging epistemology. Because this means that individual choice is expressed through universal Natural Law, there is little room for individual choice.⁶ But we must qualify this, although this does not negate anything we have already discussed. Whilst Charnock at times swamps the individual with the ideas of necessary and unnecessary being, he alters his approach when when he conceives of man as a microcosm of being. In this sense theories of self-validation, and association of the rational soul with God, lead to ideas of God within man, and hence to free-will.⁷

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1. Existence and Attributes. M' Cosh. p.489.
 2. Ibid. p.491.
 3. Ibid. p.496.
 4. Ibid. Clark. pp.553-4.
 5. Ibid. Parsons. p.522.
 6. Ibid. pp.596-7.
 7. Ibid. Clark. p.577.

Sin in Man.

Charnock coupled his ideas about sin with the concept of the Chain of Being. This in effect meant that sin is a violation of both God and man, in that it compromised man's place in the Chain.¹ He understood this as a self-centredness, as a moving towards the bestial. Hence it would be a denial of reason and understanding:

"The vapours of self affections in our clouded understandings, like those in the air in misty mornings, alter the appearance of things..."²

In doing this he is bringing the concept of God as 'pure and unblemished mind' to the fore. And it was in these terms that a sinful man who denied his own understanding rebelled against God:

"All creatures are fools, as creatures, in comparison with the Creator. The angels he chargeth with folly, much more sinners...Depraved understandings, are not fit mates for a pure unblemished mind."³

Hence Charnock saw the key to combatting sin in the restitution of a holy, reasonable understanding.⁴ The basic starting point is that rational man was created by God in a mutable state.⁵ So that sin is a moving away from this rational equilibrium.⁶ This of course seems to compromise the basic idea of total depravity in Scripture. This is

1. Existence and Attributes. M'Cosh. p.224.
2. Ibid. p.226.
3. Ibid. Clark. p.345.
4. Ibid. p.473
5. Ibid. pp.473-4.
6. Ibid. p.474.

because Charnock sees man's position in the Chain of Being as weakened by sin, but not to the extent that he cannot put this to rights himself through the rational process. This is clearly shown in his idea of holiness, where he refers to man in possession of 'loftiness of understanding, and purity of faculties'. Hence salvation is associated with purifying what man already has. Clearly Charnock is expressing his concept of sin through philosophy, and just as improvement in the philosophical arts is through study and development of innate faculties, Charnock expresses the combatting of sin in the same terms.

Chapter Seven.The Virtuosi.

We have already discussed what the term Virtuosi can mean. Since this group can be said to have been at the forefront of post-Restoration developments in English thought, we shall begin with them.

Influences upon the Virtuosi.

We must qualify our discussion by stressing that many books could be filled in assessing such influences. Our treatment is necessarily brief.

For John Locke, [1632-1704]¹, and the rest of the Virtuosi, Frances Bacon, [1561-1626]², was a fundamental influence.³ Bacon's methodology relied on an Aristotelian emphasis on sensorial induction, whilst his Neoplatonism raised high an other-worldly reason as the lamp of man's soul. These themes were set within an hierarchical ladder of ascent, with atoms at the bottom and God at the top, a method well-suited to scientific induction.⁴ Bacon's approach associated

1. J. Locke, English philosopher. Went to Oxford, where he was deeply influenced by Descartes' views on reason. It was within this framework that he developed an empirical, Christian rationalism, as we see in his 1695, The Reasonableness of the Christian Church. See:

Cross, op. cit., p. 832.

2. F. Bacon. "...philosopher, essayist, orator and lawyer." Entered Cambridge in 1573, pursued legal career which peaked in 1618 as Lord Chancellor. In such work as the Muyum Organum, [1620], he outlined an empirical, rationalistic moralism. See: Cross, op. cit., p. 120.

3. R. T. Aaron, John Locke. Oxford, 1973. p. 12; M. H. Carre, 'Robert Boyle'. art. cit. p. 323.

4. Bass, op. cit., p. 5; F. H. Anderson, The Philosophy of Francis Bacon. Chicago, 1948. pp. 124-5.

methodological enquiry with the acquisition of righteousness.¹ Robert Boyle would be an important disciple of this tradition.²

Richard Hooker, [c1554-1600]³, exercised a great influence, especially through his Ecclesiastical Polity⁴. His revolutionary work on the nature of authority raised reason and informed, individual assent as high as Scripture.⁵

We should also stress the work of the French scientist Pierre Gassendi, [1592-1655]⁶, who inspired Newton to explain the genesis of matter.⁷ Locke was also influenced by Gassendi to view the intellect as eternal and immaterial, thereby developing the concept of man's ability to achieve truth, so that, "...for Gassendi theology should rest upon sound empirical evidence."⁸ It is also significant that Gassendi provided a very good introduction to Cartesianism.⁹

1. F. Bacon, Essays. O. U. P. 1937. pp. 70-2; J. Redwood, op. cit., p. 31; Cross, op. cit., p. 120.

2. Carre, art. cit., p. 323.

3. R. Hooker. Anglican divine. Entered Corpus Christi College Oxford. Became fellow in 1577. "Hooker was par excellence the apologist of the Elizabethan Settlement of 1559, and perhaps the most accomplished advocate that Anglicanism has even had..." Most significantly he developed a concept of law whereby authority was given to Natural Theology. See: Cross, op. cit., p. 665.

4. F. J. Shirley, op. cit., p. 69.

5. Ibid; Aaron, op. cit., p. 69.

6. P. Gassendi. "French scientist, mathematician, and philosopher, who revived Epicurianism as a substitute for Aristotelianism... attempting in the process to reconcile mechanistic atomism with Christian belief in the immortality, free-will, and infinite God and Creation." See: The New Encyclopaedia Britannica. London, 1976. vol. 5. p. 140.

7. J. E. McGuire, 'Atoms and the Analogy of Nature'. Studies in History and Philosophy of Science. May, 1970. vol. 1. p. 8.

8. Aaron, op. cit., p. 34.

9. Ibid.

Locke went to Oxford in 1652 whilst Owen was Vice-Chancellor. "It is somewhat remarkable...that the change from Royalist control to Puritan in the university produced no corresponding change in curriculum."¹ Added to the Puritans' academic influence, was a less tangible cultural influence; for example, "...in his boyhood Locke knew the severe discipline of a Puritan home. He was trained in sobriety, industry and endeavour..."² It is most interesting to speculate whether a Puritan background, "...seems to have provided additional motivation for scientific work."³

The Cambridge Platonists must also be seen as exerting a great influence upon the Virtuosi. Locke had close ties with Ralph Cudworth, [1617-88]⁴, and Nathaniel Culverwell⁵. "Much of the fourth book of the Essay might have been written by one of the Cambridge school."⁶ With a great confidence in human reason, the Cambridge Platonists emphasised that reason and revelation are compatible., so that their view of theology became philosophical.⁷ Because of this the

1. Aaron, op. cit., p. 4.

2. Ibid., p. 2.

3. I. G. Barbour, Issues in Science and Religion. London, 1966. p. 48.

4. R. Cudworth. Cambridge Platonist. In his chief work, The True Intellectual System of the Universe, [London, 1678], he said, "Religious truth was embodied in three great principles: the reality of the supreme divine intelligence and the spiritual world which that intelligence has created, the eternal reality of moral ideas, and the reality of moral freedom and responsibility." See: Cross, op. cit., p. 360.

5. Aaron, op. cit., pp. 26-7.

6. Ibid., p. 27.

7. Barbour, op. cit., p. 38.

naturalist John Ray, [1627-1705]¹, understood religion and natural studies as one.² Ray saw their influence as giving him, "...a theology in which reason, science, observation and exact knowledge had a function and a place."³ Indeed Boyle, Ray, Newton and other Virtuosi can be seen as developers of the basic thesis of Cudworth, that all knowledge is bound together in an epistemology of spiritual reason.³

Ray didn't like the mechanistic work of Descartes, he relied more on the Cambridge Platonists and the Latitudinarian Wilkins.⁴ But as much as most of the Virtuosi shunned being Cartesians, they were all profoundly affected by him. We have already noted how Gassendi fed them semi-Cartesianism. This, along with Descartes' works was very influential, helping men such as Locke to restore faith in philosophy and man's ability to use it.⁵

Locke was also influenced by the proto-Latitudinarians John Hales, [1584-1656], and Chillingworth, [1602-1644]⁶, as well as Latitudinarians such as Tillotson and Patrick.⁷ Most of the

1. J. Ray. Naturalist. Entered Cambridge in 1644. 1649 became Fellow. Very good Hebrew scholar. Ordained priest in 1660. "Ray's varied and useful labours have justly caused him to be regarded as the father of natural history..." D.N.B. vol. XVI. pp. 782-785.

2. John Ray, Three Physico-Theological Discourses, London, 1693. pp. 62-80 McAdoo, op. cit., p. 244.

3. Ibid.

4. Redwood, op. cit., p. 58.

5. John Ray, The Wisdom of God Manifested. London, 1691. pp. 3-

4. McAdoo, op. cit., p. 248.

5. R. E. Sullivan, John Toland and the Deist Controversy. A Study in Adaptions. Harvard, 1982. p. 113; Aaron, op. cit., p. 9.

6. Aaron, op. cit., p. 28.

7. Ibid.

Latitudinarians were heavily influenced by the Cambridge Platonists and this helped them influence Virtuosi such as Ray.¹ Newton, [1643-1727]², was lectured by the proto-Latitudinarian Barrow who did pionerring work in mathematics and geometry,³ John Wilkins, [1614-1672], was particularly influential in his assertion that natural studies and revelation from God are one.⁴ Ray was particularly guided by Wilkins' The Wisdom of God, which he regarded as divinity.⁵ In like manner Toland was influenced by what he saw as the Latitudinarians as advocates of reason.⁶

Beyond these background influences we should note that Virtuosi such as Boyle were an inspiration to others. Locke saw Boyle's inductive empiricism as very sound⁷; so that the physics of Locke's Essay is parallel to the corpuscular physics of Boyle. Boyle, "...is the master who taught Locke how to approach nature empirically and yet scientifically."⁸ Likewise John Toland leaned very heavily on Locke's work.⁹ Toland relied on Locke's Essay because it helped, "Men to speak pertinently, intelligibly, accurately of all kinds of subjects..." as we

1. McAdoo, op. cit., p. 81.

2. Isaac Newton. "English physicist and mathematician...author of Principia. He laid the foundation of calculus etc." Leading member of the Royal Society. D.N.B. vol. 14. pp. 370-93.

3. McAdoo, op. cit., pp. 231-2.

4. Ibid., p. 244.

5. Ibid., p. 240.

6. Sullivan, op. cit., p. 119.

7. Aaron, op. cit., p. 9.

8. Ibid., p. 13.

9. Sullivan, op. cit., p. 6.

in Toland's Letters to Serena, [London, 1704].¹ Isaac Newton was probably the most influential, certainly Locke was very indebted to him.² Later, William Whiston, [1667-1752], sought to place earth history in the context of Newtonian thought in his A New Theory of the Earth, [London, 1696].³

The Virtuosi's View of the Universe.

We are all familiar with the basic differences in viewing the universe as organism or mechanism. The Virtuosi chose the latter⁴, but we should not think that such a concept was without ancient tradition. It was Epicureus who developed the view of the universe as mechanical against Aristotle's theory of an organic, hierarchical unity.⁵ Such a classical, mechanistic physics was supported by Bechmann, Basso and Gassendi⁶, and in England by Robert Boyle.⁷ Boyle developed the concept of machine with that of theistic faith, "The man who compares the world with the clock at Strassbourg, said Boyle, could accept a God as a creator and sustainer of it."⁸

1. Sullivan, op. cit., p. 121.

2. Aaron, op. cit., p. 11.

3. See 'Preface' of: W. Whiston, A Course of Mechanical, Optical... London, 1713; Redwood, op. cit., p. 123.

4. McAdoo, op. cit., p. 276.

5. R. Hooykas, Religion and the Rise of Modern Science. London, 1972. p. 14.

6. Ibid.

7. Carre, art. cit., p. 326.

8. Hooykas, op. cit., p. 14.

They thought this fitted in well with Scripture, and it was against this background that Boyle said there was only one matter, and that it is common to all bodies.¹ Within this system God was understood to be the mover of primary, atomistic matter.² Such motion was then systematised in Laws of Motion, in which the nature of the operation of matter was quantified.³ Obviously this view is linked to Descartes, but the Virtuosi had gone beyond him. Boyle regarded, "Tireless accumulation of evidence, systematic experiment, cautious theorising...to be vastly more valuable in science than the rational procedure of Descartes."⁴

With such a methodology Boyle saw, "All compounds are made from the same fundamental elements, the difference between them spring from the mode in which the elementary factors and forces are related to each other."⁵ This was a beginning, but Boyle's mechanistic philosophy was limited.⁶ It was Newton in physics and Locke in metaphysics, who firmly set mechanism into a theistic epistemology.⁷

For Newton the stress on mechanism left no room for mystery.⁸ The universe was conceived solely in terms of mass and velocity.⁹ He regarded other properties as being purely subjective, as phantoms of the mind¹⁰. Locke developed this to mean the supremacy of reason in the

1. Carre, art. cit., p. 324.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., pp. 326-7; Hooykas, op. cit., p. 47.

5. Carre, art. cit., p. 325.

6. Ibid., p. 326.

7. J. R. H. Moorman, A History of the Church in England. London, 1980. p. 256.

8. McAdoo, op. cit., p. 304.

9. Barbour, op. cit., p. 36.

10. Ibid.

mathematical sciences which could proceed independently of all personal experience.' It was through such work that, "The model of the world as an organism was replaced by that of the world as mechanism."²

We should note that Locke and his contemporaries saw no distinction between philosophy and science.³ This is why their mechanistic views touched all aspects of knowledge. Because of this, "A technique of investigation was on its way to becoming a total account of the world..."⁴ This might well have been linked to the contemporary trend of describing efficient rather than final causes.⁵ Hence, "Newton argued from the law which governed the stars in their courses, Ray from the evidence he found in the structure of plants and animals..."⁶ Whatever their subject of investigation, a view of the universe was emerging in which nothing stood outside the laws of motion. In his Christianity Not Mysterious, [London, 1696], Toland sought to demonstrate the comprehensibility of these laws when he said that even God was bound by them.⁷

The Virtuosi's Concept of Unified Knowledge.

Obviously the amount of knowledge the Virtuosi was assessing was vast. Information received

1. Aaron, op. cit., p. 306.

2. Hooykas, op. cit., p. 13.

3. Aaron, op. cit., p. 74.

4. Barbour, op. cit., p. 36.

5. Ibid.

6. G. Cragg, The Church and the Age of Reason, 1648-1789. London, 1962. p. 73.

7. John Toland, Christianity Not Mysterious... London, 1696. p. 152.

from the study of objects, is received through induction. This has drawbacks, because there was a limit on the number of observations possible. They increased the boundaries of their knowledge by using transduction. Transduction allowed them to postulate the properties of one object from what they already knew about another.¹

We have already touched on the Virtuosi regarding no division between science and philosophy. For them knowledge was unified. In this schema Natural Theology was dominant, because it was a unifying factor within their view of knowledge. The ancient concepts of macrocosm and microcosm was important within this approach, along with the strong idea of a 'Chain of Being'.²

With such a unified, theistic unity, Boyle reduced all nature to two embracing concepts: that matter forms a primary foundation, and that God acts as a second mover.³ In doing this he undoubtedly limited the actions and conceptions about God to Natural Theology. We should qualify this by stressing that Boyle⁴, and Newton⁵ were very cautious about the development of knowledge. Yet this caution was not based on awe of special revelation, rather upon the realisation of the instability of their Natural Theology, which was not seen as due to the Fall, rather an incomplete epistemology. It was for this reason that

1. McGuire, art. cit., p. 3.

2. Ibid., p. 4.

3. Ibid., p. 9; Carre, art. cit., pp. 324-5.

4. Carre, art. cit., p. 326.

5. Barbour, op. cit., p. 35; I. Newton, Principia. Berkeley, 1934. see Preface.

Locke sought to liberate reason¹, which in turn would validate human knowledge.² So that for Tindal, knowledge was always preferable to belief.³

The Virtuosi's use of Knowledge as a Structure of Forces and Masses
Rather than a Hierarchy of Purpose.

Robert Boyle's work demonstrated all natural things as either matter or motion.⁴ "The rules of motion that were then established are the mechanical laws by which the parts of matter operate upon one another."⁵ The Virtuosi regarded all knowledge as unified, and so they included the spiritual and material in this.

One very interesting theory for this is the influence of Puritan Federal Theology. To briefly understand this we should keep in mind from the last chapter that the Puritans constructed an epistemology, and the Virtuosi might well have been developing this. For instance it has been suggested that, "...[the Puritan concept of]...the determinism of God's decrees...[led]...to the mechanistic determinism of Newtonian science..."⁶

Whatever their intellectual heritage, the Virtuosi saw all

1. Aaron, op. cit., p. 76.

2. Ibid., p. 79.

3. M. Tindal, Letter to a Reverend... London. p. 34, quoted in Sullivan, op. cit., p. 95.

4. Carre, art. cit., p. 324.

5. Ibid., pp. 324-5.

6. Solt, art. cit., p. 19; R. Merton, 'Science and Technology.' In Osiris. Vol. 4, pt. 2. 1938; Barbour, op. cit., p. 49.

existence as natural, and therefore regarded empirical science as the means of studying God as the apex of Natural Theology.' This emphasis on empirical evaluation was not seen as a degeneration of method, rather as the means of allowing the individual to be confident of the authority of reason. For it was reason rather than experience which was the touchstone of their developing epistemology, with experience feeding it with the raw material for evaluation.²

The Virtuosi viewed all matter in terms of Biblical creation, and therefore dropped the classical concept of plenitude in favour of a 'Chain of Being'.³ Being created, they understood the chain to be finite, though they did believe in an infinite possibility of things.⁴ It was in terms of this 'chain' that they set the material and the immaterial, or more particularly, "...the insensible levels of nature with the intellectual and the spiritual."⁵ We read this in Joseph Glanvil's Saddu Cimus Triumphatus, [London, 1681]. So that even while Locke developed the corpuscular hypothesis, he certainly believed in spiritual hierarchies.⁶ The important point is that for the Virtuosi their atomistic chain was the same as the theologians' 'Chain of Being'.⁷

It was Newton's work in physics which really transformed

1. Solt, art. cit., pp. 21-2.
2. Aaron, op. cit. p. 306.
3. McGuire, art. cit., p. 30.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., p. 31.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.; , McAdoo, op. cit., p. 174.

established concepts of hierarchical being into a system of natural phenomena set against the corporeal hypothesis.' "This was still a single harmonious order, as in the Middle Ages, but now it was a structure of forces and masses rather than a hierarchy of purpose."² Locke viewed nature in the same terms.³ Newton had broken up the old cosmological theories, and in the process taken all non-mathematical purpose out of epistemology.⁴

The Role of God and Man in the Virtuosi's Epistemology.

God and Man as Exceptions to Atomism.

We have already touched upon the Virtuosi's concept of a corporeal universe made of primary matter. Boyle was well aware of the implications this had for God. He countered by seeing God as the motion behind primary matter, and in this way attempted to remove God from the laws of matter.⁵ It was for this reason that Boyle disliked referring to a 'law of nature', because he saw law as a direction by a higher will, rather than a system of rules.⁶

1. McGuire, art. cit., p. 41.

2. Barbour, op. cit. p. 35; Sullivan, op. cit. p. 174.

3. Reflected in Locke's view of society as a means of safeguarding the individual. See: John Locke, The Second Treatise of Civil Government. Oxford, 1946. p. 62; Taylor, op. cit. pp. 204-5.

4. Toon, Hyper-Calvinism. p. 33.

5. R. Boyle, Works. London, 1744. vol. 1. pp. 450-9; Carre, art. cit., p. 324.

6. Hooykas, op. cit., p. 18.

So we can see that the Virtuosi still tended to view God in the traditional way. Hence they understood God to be external to nature, and this was also true of the way they viewed 'man'. They regarded 'man' as a spiritual being¹, capable of excelling nature². For, "Nature is a complete and functioning machine which is not itself striving towards any ends."³

Newton's religious temperament could not dismiss the concept of providence from creation. For this reason he did not see the world as an autonomous machine, rather as dominated by 'spirit'.⁴ More particularly he saw the stamp of spiritual, divine reason as comprehensible to human reason. "The traditional idea of the soul is here identified with 'rational spirit', and taken to guarantee man's unique status."⁵ Accordingly Newton's universe was still moral and purposeful because of God's use of reason. So that the rational laws of nature link God and man.⁶

More anthropocentrically, man's separation from the rest of creation was seen to rest in his power of reason. Indeed the status of mind and its relation to matter was a problem in their efforts to

1. Barbour, *op. cit.* p. 39.

2. Hooykas, *op. cit.* p. 140.

3. Barbour, *op. cit.* p. 39; Boyle believed there are levels of truth which must be carefully distinguished. See: R. Boyle, The Christian Virtuoso, in Works, pp. 130-9.

4. Barbour, *op. cit.* p. 39.

5. *ibid.*

6. *Ibid.*

describe humanity.' Developing this, Locke set the soul in the mental substance, on the grounds that it is here that man has consciousness.² Obviously here we have an echo of *cogito ergo sum*. Significantly, Locke developed this to say that, "...any individual mental substance is a completely self-sufficient individual thing in no way requiring the existence of any other mental substance for its own conscious spiritual being and life."³

The implications of such a development were profound. Not only had the traditional idea of divine immanence in nature been lost⁴, but also their anthropocentric view of spiritual consciousness left no room for anything outside the individual's perception. This in turn led to a change in the role of Christ. They moved away from the Christocentrism of the Reformation.⁵ Religion was increasingly seen as an intellectual demonstration, rather than as a living and mystical experience.⁶ This in turn undermined the role of such Scriptural doctrines as the Fall and Passion, for it was in the Law of Nature that they saw the real knowledge of being.⁷ This is not to say that the *Virtuosi* became overtly monotheistic, but it is fair to regard their epistemology as such. So that when they tried to set Christianity within such an epistemology it was inevitable that, "...in the process

1. Barbour, *op. cit.* p. 55.
 2. Taylor, *op. cit.* p. 203.
 3. *Ibid.*
 4. Barbour, *op. cit.* p. 42.
 5. *Ibid.*, p. 40.
 6. *Ibid.*
 7. *Ibid.*

the traditional values about Christ, redemption and providence were ignored or modified."¹ A telling example of this is shown when we consider the difficulties thinkers had when setting morality within a Natural Theology. This in turn was associated with grace, so that Locke regarded the ministry of Jesus as based, "...on a careful calculation of rewards and punishments."²

Against this background it was inevitable that their view of providence would change. Even if we look at the cautious work of Robert Boyle, [1627-1691]³, providence is not treated as the hand of God at a historic moment, rather it is the natural order of the world.⁴ This of course squared very well with a naturalistic epistemology, and hence they divorced traditional Scriptural providence from the Law of Nature. "Nature is a complete and functioning machine which is not itself striving towards any ends."⁵ Even when they referred to God's presence in nature, this was a correlation of general, idealistic shared principles, such as 'reason', 'order' and 'goodness'.⁶

1. Barbour, *op. cit.* p. 53.

2. Cragg, *op. cit.* pp. 76-7. With faith as assent, see: Locke, *Works*. London, 1722. vol. 1. p. 330.

3. R. Boyle. "One of the leading scientists of the seventeenth-century. The father of chemistry and son of the Earl of Cork." He took a prominent part in the foundation of the Royal Society in 1662. A very religious man. See: Cross, *op. cit.* p. 190.

4. Carre, *art. cit.*, p. 327.

5. Barbour, *op. cit.* p. 39.

6. McGuire, *art. cit.*, p. 41.

The Virtuosi's Concept of God.

We have already touched on how the Virtuosi adapted their concept of God to atomism by seeing him as the motive force of primary matter.¹ One important consequence of this was that they tended not to accept Scriptural presuppositions about God.² They insisted that one must begin with evidence, as we see in Ray's The Wisdom of God Manifested in the Works of Creation.³ Accordingly for Locke the existence of God was a natural discovery of human reason.⁴

With a developing concept of mechanism, God increasingly emerged as a 'god-mechanic' rather than God-Creator.⁵ This in turn tended to give the impression that the traditional concept of God as Creator was proved. Newton recognised that, "...a God without rule, providence and design, is nothing but Necessity and Nature..."⁶ Therefore as their epistemology developed, God became the 'intelligent designer'.⁷ Basically they viewed God as preserver of the cosmic order.⁸ "Newton assigned God two specific tasks: the prevent the fixed stars from collapsing in the middle of space and to keep the mechanism of the world in good repair."⁹

1. Carre, art. cit., p. 324.

2. Cragg, op. cit. pp. 73-5.

3. Ibid.; Newton, Optics. London, 1721. pp. 344ff.

4. S. N. Williams, Reason, Judges to Revelation. A Case Study in Buddeus, Tindal and Locke. Ph.D thesis. Yale. 1981. p. 152.

5. Hooykas, op. cit. pp. 15-16.

6. Ibid., p. 19.

7. Barbour, op. cit. pp. 38, 40.

8. Ibid., p. 40.

9. Ibid., p. 41; Cragg, op. cit. p. 74.

It was all very well for Newton and Boyle to set God as a remote, intelligent designer, for such a conclusion was not implicit in their work, "...to later interpreters, impersonal and blind forces appeared to be entirely self-contained, and all sense of meaning and purpose was lost."¹ In the process of constructing an epistemology they had drastically reduced the function of God, though most of them thought that they had preserved the traditional concept of God as 'personal intelligence and will'.² By intelligence they meant the emerging concept of the right reason and mathematical certainty of the laws of physics³; and by will they meant the will to choose the ethical way.⁴

The Virtuosi tended to view God in cosmological terms, this led to depersonalisation.⁵ This would give them much common ground with the Deists, viewing a, "...God who started the machine and left it to run by itself."⁶ Inevitably the God of revelation and history was squeezed out. Toland developed a concept of God as reason and nature.⁷ Locke in turn sought to show the evidence for the existence of God through a

1. Barbour, *op. cit.* p. 36.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 40.

3. "Whence is it that nature doth nothing in vain; and whence arises all that order and beauty which we see in the world? How comes the bodies of animals to be converted with so much art, and for what ends were their several parts? Was the eye contrived without skill in optics? Does it not appear from phenomena that there is a being incorporeal, living, intelligent...?" Newton, *Optics*. London, 1721. pp. 344ff; cf. with Howe, *Works*, I. pp. 132, 140; Cragg, *op. cit.* p. 74.

4. Barbour, pp. 38-40, 53.

5. Toon, *Hyper-Calvinism*. p. 33.

6. Barbour, *op. cit.* p. 54.

7. Sullivan, *op. cit.* p. 133.

demonstrable mathematical certainty.¹ In doing this they banished God from his cosmological position of Sovereign Creator.² So that the existence of God was not so much denied, as regarded as irrelevant to the main argument.³

Such views represent the process by which Natural Theology completely overshadowed Special Revelation. For Newton the mathematical method was key part of this, "I offer this work as the mathematical principles of philosophy, for the whole burden of philosophy seems to consist in this—from the phenomena of motions to investigate the forces of nature..."⁴ Since he included all being in nature, and extracted concepts of God from men's conceptions of nature, we can understand how far ranging Newton's statement is. Likewise with Locke, the synthesis of inductive and transductive thought was paramount.⁵ Hence, "Nature, not history was the clue to the knowledge of God."⁶ Reason, and its deductions from Natural Theology replaced Scripture and history as the medium of the knowledge of God and being.⁷

The Virtuosi's Concept of Man.

Boyle refused schemes in which speculation was not based on observable evidence. He saw it as important that the individual should constantly update thought as new information is presented.⁸

1. McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 304.

2. Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 202.

3. Redwood, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

4. Hooykas, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

5. Moorman, p. 256; Aaron, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

6. Barbour, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

7. *Ibid.* 8. Carre, *art. cit.*, p. 326.

Much the same can be said of Newton¹, and Locke². All seem to share Bacon's stress on the individual.³

It seems that induction and empiricism were closely related, and this was consolidated by Cartesianism.⁴ They all developed the inductive method by which the universe was seen as atomistic, and man as mental substance.⁵ This in itself was not out of step with Medieval thought. The key step with Descartes was that he located human identity in a self-consciousness which excluded the idea of a subsistent relation to God.⁶ Non-subsistent self-consciousness was in turn closely related to rational method. Locke had little faith in intuition, for him truth was to be discovered by reason and effort, which in turn led to faith.⁷ We can safely ponder this as an embryonic works righteousness.

With such a concept of induction, everything came under the individual's consideration.⁸ Because of this Newton combined mathematics with experimentation.⁹ With Locke in turn, developing Newton's work to form a concept of 'natural rights', from which he could

1. Carre, *art. cit.*, p. 326.

2. Aaron, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

3. Bacon placed especial emphasis on finding a methodology for achieving sure knowledge. See: F. Bacon, *Novum Organum*. London, 1936. pp. 182-4; Hooykas, *op. cit.*, p. 138.

4. *Essays and Reviews*, London, 1860. p. 257; McGuire, *art. cit.*, p. 4.

5. Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 199.

6. R. Descartes, *Discourse on Method*, [ed. R. Eaton]. New York, 1927. p. 16; Sullivan, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

7. Locke, *The Reasonableness of Christianity*, London, 1695. p. 292; Moorman, *op. cit.*, p. 256.

8. Aaron, *op. cit.*, p. 74; Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 203-4.

9. Barbour, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

justify the Revolution of 1689.¹ Hence he saw, "Awareness of ourselves gives the most important source of information..."² Thus for Toland individual assent based on inductive knowledge constituted the act of faith.³ By this we can identify a tendency for their epistemology and soteriology to be anthropocentric.⁴ Individual conscience was central to their method⁵, with authority vested in the senses and intellect.⁶ Hence Hobbes in his *Leviathan* saw, "...that mankind, inspired by fear of death and instructed by reason, could design its own means of deliverance caused by the existence of a number of individuals each possessed of a natural right to the free exercise of his will in the pursuit of his own felicity..."⁷ Hobbes approached the whole subject from the vantage point of sovereignty on earth, rather than through God in heaven.⁸ Accordingly he saw no traditional righteousness, rather a morality of might⁹, with a society centred by the human will.¹⁰

1. Barbour, *op.cit.*, p. 44.

2. Cragg, *op.cit.*, p. 75.

3. Sullivan, *op.cit.*, p. 126.

4. Toon, *Hyper-Calvinism*, p. 34.

5. Sullivan, *op.cit.*, p. 131.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 123.

7. Taylor, *op.cit.*, p. 351.

8. Hobbes stressed that the individual should obey the ruler. See: T. Hobbes, *Leviathan*. Oxford, 1941. p. 395; with obedience to the ruler part of salvation, *ibid.*, p. 385.

9. Redwood, *op.cit.*, p. 34.

10. Taylor, *op.cit.*, p. 352.

The Virtuosi's Rationalism.

We have already discussed how the outlook of the Virtuosi was coloured by traits such as their empiricism, and the weakening of the authority of Special Revelation. Their rationalism was central to this.

Locke was the great exponent of empiricism in philosophy,¹ and rationalism was a significant part of this. We can see his work, The Reasonableness of Christianity as initiating an era of rationalism.²

"During this period dogma dissolved away to be replaced with reasonable precepts, with the whole of religion capable of being proved."³ As we have already seen, the Virtuosi's concept of man divorced consciousness from Special Revelation. With such an emphasis on personal awareness, they equated happiness with a rationalistic taming of the mind.⁴ In the work of Newton such rationalism tended to be inductive and experimental.⁵

For Locke the obedience man owes to God is parallel to the light of reason.⁶ In his Essay Concerning Human Understanding, he analysed rational method, "...which vindicated the thoroughgoing rationality of essential Christian belief."⁷ So that revelation could only be authoritative when it tallied with the conclusions which,

1. Wallace, op. cit., p. 327.

2. Essays and Reviews, p. 259.

3. Ibid.

4. Williams, op. cit., p. 148.

5. McAdoo, op. cit., pp. 302-3.

6. Williams, op. cit., p. 154.

7. Sullivan, op. cit., p. 72.

"...their own minds had reached rationally."¹ This is why Toland saw it as natural that the mind could conceive of God's attributes.²

All knowledge was set within the methodology of a rationalistic epistemology, which in turn was empirically based.³ Hence faith was understood as assent based on reason.⁴ This separated them from the Cartesians who understood knowledge as attainable independently of reason, whereas the Virtuosi saw authoritative knowledge coming out of rationalism.⁵ Therefore Toland saw his task as one of developing a religion to edify the people, "The universal disposition of the Age was bent upon Rational Religion."⁶

Accordingly the Virtuosi saw all people as subject to the law of reason.⁷ For them, man's dignity and authority rested in his power to reason.⁸ Toland developed the implications of this by insisting that assent only follows when the individual has a clear idea of the proposition.⁹ Hence for Locke reason was Natural Revelation¹⁰, with, "...certainty or knowledge...[as]...the perception of the relationships holding between ideas."¹¹ So that one of the great preoccupations

1. Sullivan, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

2. J. Toland, *Letters to Serena*. London, 1704. pp. 2-4; Sullivan, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

3. Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 158.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 170.

5. Aaron, *op. cit.*, p. 307.

6. Sullivan, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

7. Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 204.

8. Barbour, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

9. Sullivan, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

10. Hooykas, *op. cit.*, p. 47; *Essays and reviews*, p. 269.

11. Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

for Locke was the nature of the power and knowledge of reason.¹ We must not think that this was a detached, academic interest, for Locke's defence and development of the role of reason was a deeply held conviction.² He saw all revelation from God in terms of reason³, so that a fuller communion with God would be achieved in direct proportion to the personal intake of reasonable knowledge.⁴ "Reason originally a supplement to revelation, replaced it completely as the medium of knowledge of God."⁵ Hence Toland, [1670-1722], treated religion as parallel to natural law, which should be assessed rationally.⁶

The Virtuosi as Men of Religion.

We should remember that not only did the Virtuosi see all knowledge as unified, but also they were deeply religious men. This can be said of Boyle who wrote a number of theological works.⁷ His The Christian Virtuoso combines scientific method and religion to form a solid persuasion of the existence of God.⁸ Boyle tended to 'err on the side of caution, and because of this saw some antithesis between science

1. Williams, op. cit., p. 157.

2. Ibid., p. 149.

3. Ibid., p. 169.

4. Aaron, op. cit., p. 77.

5. Barbour, op. cit., p. 40.

6. Toland, Letters to Serena, pp. 2-4; Sullivan, op. cit., p. 127.

7. Carre, art. cit., p. 323.

8. Ibid., p. 327.

and religion.' Newton did not believe this, "Faith and knowledge are so deeply related and they illuminate each other so profoundly that their relationship can never be too close."² But he too was deeply religious, with his stated purpose in writing the Principia, "...when I wrote my treatise about our systems, as had an eye upon such principles as might work with considering men for their belief in a Deity."³

In the same way Locke's philosophy is seen to have arisen out of his faith⁴, with his Essay being deeply religious. Like the other Virtuosi he tended, like the Latitudinarians, to see Christianity as essentially 'simple'.⁵ This made it easier to stress that reason and conscience should guide men in religion.⁶ So that whilst Locke's approach to Scripture was scholarly, he treated it in general terms.⁷

Allowing for their treatment of Scripture, we can understand that the Virtuosi saw their epistemology mirrored in it. They saw few real differences, "...the revealed truths if they be burdens to reason,

1. Boyle, Works, London, 1744. vol. I. pp. 450-1; Hooykas, op. cit., p. 47.

2. Cragg, op. cit., p. 73.

3. I. Newton, Four Letters from Sir Isaac Newton to Dr Bentley. London, 1756. p. 1.

4. But he emphasised that orthodox forms of religion should not be imposed on the individual. See: J. Locke, A Vindication of the Reasonableness of the Christian Religion. London, 1696; Locke also stressed the links between intuition and knowledge of God. See: Works, London, 1759. Vol. I. pp. 256-9; McAdoo, op. cit., p. 297.

5. Williams, op. cit., p. 169.

6. Aaron, op. cit., p. 77.

7. With revelation as just another means of perceiving ideas. See: Locke, Works. I. p. 330; Barbour, op. cit., p. 40.

as but such burdens as feathers are to a hawk."¹ Hence it was in keeping that the Royal Society was warmly supported by church men², with its charter directing its followers to direct their work, "...to the glory of God and the benefit of the human race..."³ Accordingly the work of Boyle, Newton, Ray or Toland⁴ was regarded as a preparation to divinity.⁵ "The brilliant advances of the new science were achieved by men of deep religious convictions."⁶

1. Sullivan, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

2. Moorman, *op. cit.*, p. 254.

3. Barbour, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

4. John Toland. Deistical writer. 1694 went to Oxford, where in 1695 he finished his Christianity Not Mysterious, [London, 1696]. "In it he asserted that neither God himself nor his revelation are above the comprehension of human reason, and attributed the mysteriousness of Christianity to the intrusion of pagan conceptions and the machinations of priestcraft." Though not an original thinker, Toland was one of the most influential representatives of Deism, and his books largely contributed to later discussions of the relationship between reason and revelation and the genuineness of the New Testament books. See: Cross, *op. cit.*, p. 1364.

5. McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 252.

6. Cragg, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

Chapter Eight.The Cambridge Platonists.Cambridge Platonism as a Compromise between Calvinism and Contemporary Scholasticism.

This was a movement of the middle to late years of the seventeenth-century. Amongst its members we should underline: Benjamin Whichcote, [1609-1683], Ralph Cudworth, [1617-1688], and Henry More, [1614-1687]¹. They all came from Presbyterian families. The movement itself arose in the Puritan Emmanuel College in Cambridge², but it cannot be said that the Cambridge Platonists had much sympathy with Calvinism.⁴ They regarded contemporary Calvinism as dogmatic and theoretical, and sought middle ground between this and the Laudians within the Anglican Church.⁵ Hence we can see them as a reaction against orthodox Calvinism⁶, and to do this they relied on Neoplatonism.⁷

In opposition to what they regarded as the strictures of the Puritan belief in total depravity, the Cambridge Platonists had

1. Henry More. Cambridge Platonist. Went to Christ Church Cambridge. "His chief interests were theology, philosophy and ethics." He emphasised in particular the instinctive reasonableness of Divine truth and affirmed the existence of a higher principle. He had a high reputation for learning and saintliness. See: Cross, op. cit., p. 924.

2. Drysdale, op. cit., p. 386.

3. Hooykas, op. cit., p. 138; Moorman, op. cit., p. 254.

4. Cragg, op. cit., p. 68.

5. Ibid.

6. Toon, Hyper-Calvinism, p. 32.

7. Bass, op. cit., p. 235.

optimism in human nature.¹ They used Richard Hooker's work as an intellectual basis for this optimism.² The Cambridge Platonists were making an attempt to abandon Puritan rational methodology, and form their own.³ This was centred in a belief in faith being more than assent to historical things, rather it is an innate and divine power in the individual soul which corresponds with God.⁴ The key to their perception of God, man and the world was reason, but this is a far deeper and more mysterious reason than we saw with the Virtuosi.⁵

The Cambridge Platonists lacked passion for Scripture, they found far more support for their system in ascriptural sources such as Platonism⁶, more particularly the Neoplatonism of the Renaissance,⁷ and especially the Platonic Florentine Academy.⁸ Like the Puritans they were also affected by the Neoplatonism of Ramism.⁹ We should underline that amidst all these influences they were trying to form an epistemology which they saw as distinct from such groups as the Virtuosi, "Turning aside from empiricism, the Cambridge Platonists had endeavoured to provide a method which would take account of reason, faith and experience within the framework of a unified concept of

1. New, op. cit., p. 25.

2. Ibid.

3. Knox, op. cit., p. 126.

4. Essays and Reviews, p. 291.

5. McAdoo, op. cit., p. 81.

6. Rather than Scripture, Cudworth looked to a divine mind capable of determining the form of the universe. See: R. Cudworth, True Intellectual System of the Universe. London, 1706. p. 172; and it was in this sense that he defended miracles: Ibid., oo, 700-6; see also the Preface to the reader; McAdoo, op. cit., p. 121.

7. McAdoo, op. cit., p. 124.

8. Bass, op. cit., p. 2.

9. Ibid.

reality."¹ Which we can view as, "...mysticism based on a foundation of reason."²

The Cambridge Platonists' Concept of Man.

The Cambridge Platonists had a philosophical conception of religion and the world, and so they tended to affirm the role of the individual as perceiver. For them, "Right and wrong, freedom and self-determination, are rooted in the nature of things."³ They regarded the rationality of man as a basis for toleration, for, "...unless a man is free to follow the dictates of his conscience he is not able to achieve the moral integrity which is required..."⁴ Whichcote's Platonism saw religion as a matter of moral, intellectual uprightness.⁵ The Cambridge Platonists had a great belief in reason⁶, and especially that it was the duty of men to think and enquire.⁷ This in turn was not regarded as a detached, academic exercise, rather as deeply personal.⁸

Whereas the Virtuosi treated reason as exact in its operations, the Cambridge Platonists regarded it as mysterious, "...a mix of conscience and ratiocinations, a still voice, light in the

1. McAdoo, op.cit., p. 157.

2. Ibid., p. 107.

3. Cudworth, True Intellectual System, p. 171; Cragg, op.cit., p. 229.

4. Cragg, op.cit., p. 69.

5. Sullivan, op.cit., p. 54.

6. e.g. Cudworth used Neoplatonic ideas of infinity to prove the existence of God: viz. something eternal, see: Cudworth, ibid., p. 642; McAdoo, op.cit., p. 19.

7. McAdoo, op.cit., p. 87.

8. Ibid.

mind."¹ Hence they thought men must use rationalism and speak authoritatively², for this is the only way to interpret experience, "The tree of knowledge must be planted by the tree of life."³ Therefore faith was regarded as a response⁴, as, "...an internal participation of the Divine nature."⁵ Not suprisingly the Cambridge Platonists' view of God tended to mirror the human intellect.⁶ It is important for us to realise that they greatly developed the concept of the individual, and the role of reason as part of the human personality.⁷

The Cambridge Platonists' Concept of Reason.

We have already discussed how the Cambridge Platonists were attempting to restate Christian truth⁸, there is little doubt that their concept of reason played a central role in this. An emphasis upon spiritual reason tended to stop the development of a narrow rationalism.⁹ So that whilst Natural Theology was dominant within their system, this seemed to be limited by their spiritual concept of being.¹⁰ In doing this they reflected Richard Hooker's concept of the spirituality of reason¹¹, and thus Cudworth combined spiritualistic and rationalistic themes.¹² It was upon this basis that they saw reason and revelation as compatible.¹³ So

1. McAdoo, op. cit., p. 90. 2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., p. 93; Cudworth, ibid., pp. 733-4.

5. Ibid. 6. Ibid., p. 104 7. Ibid., p. 118.

8. Cragg, op. cit., p. 69. 9. Ibid.

10. Ibid. 11. New, op. cit., p. 29.

12. Hooykas, op. cit., p. 138.

13. Barbour, op. cit., p. 38; Cragg, op. cit., p. 68; anyone who considered the notion of creation had to accept that there is a higher reason, see: Cudworth, op. cit., pp. 192-5.

that they regarded reason as much more than ratiocination, rather, "...the breath of a higher divine reason."¹ Hence More wrote of faith in terms of love, with such love seen in terms of reason. This concept of spiritual reason did not grow out of mainstream, epistemology.² Indeed, we should examine whether the Cambridge Platonists themselves accepted 'spiritual reason' in the last analysis.

Spiritual reason was the basis of their emerging epistemology; so that for More and Cudworth even if we could observe atoms, it would not undermine their spiritual view of first principles.³ Hence they regarded nature as 'plastic', "...reason immersed and plunged into matter..."⁴ More denied Cartesianism, and helped to develop a concept of subjective, spiritual reason.⁵ We can view this as the combination of faith and reason.⁶ Hence More was determined to show the interdependence of spirit and matter.⁷ It was in such a system that they saw intellectual and spiritual peace⁸, with such a state, "...a serene understanding, an intellectual calmness."⁹

Accordingly to take, "...away reason, is to rob Christianity of that special prerogative it had above all other religions in the

1. McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 84.

2. Moorman, *op. cit.*, p. 255.

3. Cudworth, *op. cit.*, p. 171; McGuire, *art. cit.*, p. 3.

4. McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 134.

5. H. More, An Antidote Against Atheism. London, 1653. Preface; Cudworth, *op. cit.*, pp. 715-25.

6. McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 140.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 107.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 101.

9. Cudworth, *op. cit.*, pp. 831-2; McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

world, namely, that it does not appeal unto reason."¹ They saw reason as the infrastructure of reality.² This epistemological view must be regarded as quite an achievement. Demonstrating their great ability, the Cambridge Platonists juxtaposed knowledge and faith, revelation and reason, ethics and Christian doctrine.³ More than this they saw true self-knowledge and religion in the intellectual apprehension of this reasonable matrix. It followed from this, "...that it was more important to understand what...[God]..is than that he is."⁴

The Cambridge Platonists' View of Scripture.

The Cambridge Platonists' view of reason and personality suggest a changed role for Scripture. Benjamin Whichcote insisted that, "...the revelation in scripture is the only rule, in al matters of faith."⁵ But we must remember that for the Cambridge Platonists there was no opposition between Natural and Special Revelation. Hence they saw none of the fundamentals of Scripture which could not be explained through reason, "...the scriptural way...is alway by evidence of reason and argument..."⁶ They could do this because they set such a premium on the mind, with wisdom being set in the mind.⁷ It was precisely in this way that Richard Bentley severely denoted

1. McAdoo, op. cit., p. 104.

2. Cudworth, op. cit., pp. 831-2; McAdoo, op. cit., p. 101.

3. Cragg, op. cit., p. 68.

4. Ibid; Cudworth, op. cit., pp. 191-2.

5. McAdoo, op. cit., p. 88

6. Ibid; Cudworth's proof of the existence of God, op. cit., p. 725.

7. Ibid, p. 107; Cudworth, op. cit., pp. 854-5.

Scripture, using instead, "...the mighty volumes of visible nature and everlasting table of right reason." Hence it is accurate to regard the Cambridge Platonists' view and use of Scripture as rational, "...nothing without reason is to be proposed; nothing against reason is to be believed..."

The Cambridge Platonists' View of God.

The Cambridge Platonists set themselves to find a harmony between Natural Theology and Special Revelation. "Truth is one, in the world of the spirit, harmony must take the place of strife."² Above all they stressed the authority of reason, which they personified as the very voice of God.³ So it is important to stress that reason did not mean only the ratiocinative process, but, "...the breath of a higher, divine reason."⁴ Accordingly they read the variety of creation back to supreme wisdom⁵, with God as the foundational reason.⁶ They saw God's nature as 'firmness of ratiocination', along with 'integrity of will and affections', resting on the 'light of understanding'.⁷ It was upon this philosophical unity that the individual mind could come to terms with the harmonious

1. McAdoo, op. cit., p. 88.

2. Moorman, op. cit., p. 255.

3. Ibid.

4. McAdoo, op. cit., pp. 84-5; Cudworth, op. cit., pp. 733-4.

5. Ibid., p. 88; Cudworth, op. cit., pp. 728-9.

6. Ibid., p. 106.

7. Ibid.

personality of God.' Similarly Culverwell saw reason as a reflection of God, "You may see Socrates in the twilight."²

We should recognise their anthropocentric approach to God. In many ways their Christianity was a restoration of humanity's innate disposition to 'true belief'.³ Basically they conceived of God as $\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\varsigma$, but, "...the image of this is the human intellect."⁴

1. McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

2. With understanding as a higher plane of perfection, higher than can be perceived by sense: Cudworth, *op. cit.*, oo, 854-5; McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

3. Sullivan, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

4. McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 104; with divine knowledge as archetypal: Cudworth, *op. cit.*, pp. 733-4

The Whichcote¹-Tuckney² Debate.

We have already seen that the Cambridge Platonists were prepared to criticise the established Calvinist norms. Benjamin Whichcote was part of this trend.

*"He had by this time disengaged himself, from the narrow and slavish principles of his Education; and not content to have emancipated himself, he employed all his Credit, Weight and Influence, which were justly great; in spreading and propagating a nobler freer and more generous set of opinions."*³

This attitude grew quite naturally out of the great Puritan college, Emmanuel, "The atmosphere was one of eager discussion and incessant controversy."⁴ It is against this background that we should set the

1. Benjamin Whichcote. [1609-83]. Cambridge man. Became fellow in 1633 and tutor in 1634. In 1637 he was ordained priest and deacon. Successful preacher. 1644 became Provost of King's College. 1650-1 became Vice-Chancellor. In 1662 he accepted the Act of Uniformity. He was one of the leading Cambridge Platonists, "Averse to the pessimistic view of human nature prevalent among the Puritans, he exalted man as a child of reason. He saw in reason the test of Scripture, and maintained that some matters on which good men disagreed were insoluble, and pleaded for freedom of thought..." see: Cross, *op. cit.*, p. 1453; G. R. Cragg (ed), The Cambridge Platonists. O.U.P. 1968. pp. 3, 35.

2. Anthony Tuckney. [1599-1670]. Puritan divine. Educated at Cambridge, became fellow of Emmanuel College in 1619. He took a leading part in the Westminster Assembly. He became Master of Emmanuel in 1645 and then of St. John's in 1653. In 1656 he became Regius Professor of divinity. Forced into retirement after the Restoration. He published little. His Four Letters to Whichcote, exemplify "...the strength of his Puritan convictions, his fear of the rationalistic tendencies of the Cambridge Platonists, and his charity towards the opinions of his opponents." see Cross, *op. cit.*, pp. 1380-1.

3. S. Salter (ed), Moral and Religious Aphorisms. To which are added Eight Letters: which passed between Dr Whichcote, Provost of King's College; and Dr Tuckney, Master of Emmanuel College in Cambridge; on several very interesting subjects. London, 1753. pp. xx-xxi.

4. Cragg, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

Whichcote-Tuckney debate.

The Cambridge Platonists had emerged as a group, "...unable to draw any...line of demarcation between natural and intelligible being...between the rational and the spiritual; for in their eyes the spiritual is simply the purest and highest form of the rational."¹ This led to them denying the fundamental requirements of Calvinistic dogma. In this they mirrored Chillingworth's wish for more faith and less religion, as laid out in his The Protestant Religion [1638].² But for all this their ideas were 'new' and 'strange' against the background of Emmanuel College. Cambridge was overwhelmingly Calvinist, with thirty-three of Emmanuel's students emigrating to New England, thereby becoming the bedrock of that great Puritan colony. Amongst these we can count the immensely influential John Cotton.³ Therefore it is not surprising Tuckney saw Whichcote's views as at the least strange. He excused his ex-pupil by wondering if they were the product of keeping bad company.⁴

*"Whilst you were fellow here, you were cast into the companie of very learned and ingenious men; who I fear, at least some of them, studyed other authors, more than the scriptures; and Plato and his scholars, above others..."*⁵

Whatever reason there was, Whichcote seemed to be putting the Dialogues of Plato above Christian doctrine.⁶ Clearly the ideas of the

1. Ernst Cassirer, The Platonic Renaissance in England. London. Nelson. 1953. p. 52.

2. Ibid. p. 37.

3. Cragg, op.cit., p. 8.

4. F.J. Powicke, The Cambridge Platonists. London, 1926. p. 56.

5. Salter, op.cit., p. p. 38.

6. Cassirer, op.cit., p. 25.

Cambridge Platonists were out of place, and many were saying just this.' We should sound a note of caution here. This argument was far from superficial. Whichcote had deliberately set out to oppose aspects of Puritanism. "Dr Whichcote was so zealous to preserve a spirit of sober Piety and rational Religion, in the university and town of Cambridge; in opposition to the fanatic Enthusiasm, and senseless Canting, then in vogue..."² Because of this Whichcote wrote to Tuckney and suggested it would be better to deal with the issues in private rather than blur them in public bickering.³ Tuckney agreed and immediately raised the issue of Whichcote's sermon on 7/9/1651. He accused Whichcote of teaching unsound theology.

The prime concern of Tuckney's first letter was the importance Whichcote laid on reason:

*"...I have seldom hear'd you preach; but that something hath been delivered by you, and that so authoritatively, and with the big words, sometimes of "diviniest reason," that hath very much grieved me; and, I believe, others with me"*⁴

This is a common theme of the Right Letters. Tuckney cannot but see such a stress on reason as the product of a luke-warm religion:⁵

"Mind and understanding is all; Heart and Will little spoken of.-The decrees of God quaestion'd and quarrel'd; because, according to our reason, we cannot comprehend; how they may

1. Salter, op.cit., Second Preface. p. xxi.

2. Ibid. p. xxii.

3. Samuel Salter (ed), op.cit.; C.A. Patrides, The Cambridge Platonists. C.U.P. 1980. p. xxvii.

4. Salter, Ibid. p. 2.

5. Cassirer, op.cit., p. 37.

stande with His goodness: which according to your phrase, Hee is under the power of-Those our Philosophers, and other Heathens, made fairer candidates for Heaven; then the scriptures seeme to allowe of: and they, in their virtues, preferred before Christians, overtaken with the weaknesses.- A kinde of Moral Divinitie minted; onlie with a little tincture of Christ added: nay, a Platonique faith unites to God...."

Tuckney was himself a scholar, therefore he allowed some role for rationalism, but he did not agree with the supreme role Whichcote appeared to give it, resulting in what he regarded as the abasement of Scripture.² He complained that Whichcote and his ilke involked Prov. 20:27 far too much³, leading to self-reliance. Reason was being raised at the expense of grace, which Tuckney regarded as an undermining of one of the fundamental truths of the Gospel.⁴

Before we consider Whichcote's reply it will help if we know something of his background. Like nearly all of the Cambridge Platonists he came from a Puritan background, and this influence is evident in his character. He "...retained some of the finest qualities of Puritanism-- its moral earnestness, for example..."⁵ A comment by Burnet is particularly enlightening:

1. Salter, *op. cit.* p. 38.
 2. *Ibid.* p. 75
 3. *Ibid.* p. 20.
 4. *Ibid.* p. 4.
 5. Cragg, *op. cit.* p. 8.

"Whichcote was a man of rare temper, very mild and obliging. He had great credit with some that had been eminent in the late times...[i.e. during the Interrugnum] and made all the use he could of it to protect good men of all persuasions. He was much for liberty of conscience: and being disgusted with the dry systematic of those times, he studied to raise those that conversed with him to a nobler set of thoughts, and to consider religion as the seed of a deiform nature [to use one of his own phrases]. In order to do this he set young students much on reading Plato, Tully [Cicero] and Plotinus, and on considering the Christian doctrine as a religion sent from God both to elevate and sweeten human nature; in which he was a great example, as well as a wise and kind instructor."

Whichcote saw Tuckney's limitation of rationalism as a repression of God's truth. For it seemed to him that reason rather than rigid dogmatism is the foundation of Protestantism:

" And I think, all Protestants hold; that Cuilibet Christiano conceditur iudicium discretionis..."²

Whichcote also wanted much more emphasis upon the individual than Puritanism was willing to allow. For whilst Christ "...is to be acknowledged as a pinnacle of grace in us," he emphasised the role of the individual, with grace "...working in or upon them, to make them God-like."³

1. G Burnet, *History of My Own Time*. O. Airy (ed). Oxford, 1897. Vol. I. p. 331; Cragg, *op. cit.*, p. 4.
 2. Salter, *op. cit.* p. 12.
 3. *Ibid.* p. 38.

"Christ doth not save us; by onely doing for us, without us: yea, we come at that, which christ hath done for us, with God; by what he doth for us, within us...."¹

He develops this theme in the second letter: "I receive the truth of Christian religion in a way of illumination, affection and choice; I myself am taken with it, as understanding and knowing it...What doth God speak to but my reason."² Upon this basis he sets out five points which we can see as a counter to the Five Points of Calvinism:

(1) *Sacra scriptura est autoritativa* [Holy Scripture is self-authenticating in itself].

(2) *Sacra scriptura est adequata regula fidei* [Holy Scripture is a sufficient rule of faith].

(3) *Omnis ad salutem necessaria perspicue traduntur in scripturis* [All things necessary to salvation are clearly taught in Scripture].

(4) *Quilibet Christiano conceditur iudicium discretionis* [Freedom of judgment is conceded to every Christian].

(5) *Quilibet abundet in suo sensu: and Fides non est cogenda* [Anyone is rich in his own mind: and Faith must not be forced].³

Whichcote agrees with Tuckney that Scripture is fundamental, and also that the mysteries of God must not be pried into. Nevertheless, he can see no limitation to reason, and adds: "My own understanding must be satisfied."⁴ Therefore Whichcote saw the irrational rather than the

1. Salter, *op.cit.* p.13.

2. Cragg, *op.cit.* p.40.

3. *Ibid.* p.40.

4. *Ibid.* p.41.

rational as the greatest threat to Christianity.' To him it was self evident that the rational is most spiritual,² with the individual's spiritual development being the imitation of God which rationalism allowed. This was far more important to Whichcote than what he regarded as petty divisions:

*"And I pray, God, our zeale, in these times, may be so kindled with pure fire from God's altar; that itt may rather warm, than burn; enliven rather, than enflame...I am persuaded that christian love and affection, among all partakers of the Gospell-grace is a point of such importance, and certain foundation; so pressed upon us by our Saviour, and his Apostles; that it is not to be prejudiced, by supposals of differences, in points of religion anie ways disputable; though thought weightie, as determined by the parties on eyther side: nor yet by the trulie different persuasion of those; who cannot be satisfied, either in our conceited forms of expression; or particular determinations beyond scripture: which, as some have observed, have indeed enlarged Divinitie; but have lessened Charitie, and multiplied Divisions."*³

1. C. A. Patrides, [ed], The Cambridge Platonists, C. U. P. 1980. p. 9.

2. Ibid. p. 10.

3. Salter. Ibid. p. 118.

Also:

"Truth is truth, whosoever hath spoken itt, or howsoever itt hath been abused: but if this libertie may not bee allowed to the universitie, wherefore do we study?...Everie christian must think and believe, as he find cause...yett cannot I...give up so noble, so choice a truth; so antidotal against temptation; so satisfactorie, so convictive, so quietive; in so full confirmation, to my mind,, of the truth of Christian religion...And too much and too often on these payntes!...Sir, I oppose not rational to spiritual; for spiritual is most rational: But I contradistinguish rational to conceited, impotent, affected, CANTING: (as I may call it: when the Ear receives wordes, which offer no matter to the understanding; make no impression on the inward sense."

In his second letter Tuckney broadened his criticism by labelling Whichcote an Arminian and Socinian. He especially highlighted the influence of John Goodwin.² Tuckney was concerned to show that the 'authorities' which Whichcote set such store by were lacking:

"The Dialogues of Plato and the Enneads of Plotinus have gained an almost canonical validity; they are placed on a par with the books of the Bible and treated with an equal veneration as sources of religious knowledge."

1. Salter, *op.cit.* p. 57; Cassirer, *op.cit.*, p. 38.

2. Salter, *op.cit.* p. 27.

3. Cassirer, *op.cit.* p. 25.

He particularly accused Whichcote of spending most of his time on philosophy and metaphysics, thereby allowing this vaunted 'natural light' to take him into the same heretical fields as the Arminians and Socinians.¹ "Nothing is more questionable than to attribute true blessedness to the ancient philosophers and 'other heathens', and to defend and recommend a morality which preserves but a thin colouring of christianity."² From his own point of view Tuckney stressed that we must accept the doctrines of Christianity, especially predestination. For to turn to the heathen philosophers to establish a *recta ratio* is to chase a rainbow, to attempt the impossible.³

*"The power of Nature, in Morals, too much advanced- Reason hath too much given to itt, in the mystreis of the Faith- A recta ratio much talkt-of; which I cannot tell, where to finde."*⁴

Whichcote answered:

*"Surelie, a recta ratio may there be found; where vera fides is to be found."*⁵

He also added that he had not been reading the 'wrong' authors, to be accurate he had read far more of Calvin, Perkins and Beza than anyone

1. Salter, *op.cit.* p.20.
 2. Cassirer, *op.cit.*
 3. *ibid.* p. 78.
 4. Salter, *op.cit.* p.38.
 5. *Ibid.*, p.62.

else.' Even so, he denies that enquiry should be curtailed to safeguard fundamentals. "Great is the truth, and it will prevail; the truth does not seek out corners."² Therefore he saw it as his duty to relate all knowledge to his faith, because God touches all. More than this he justifies the use of scholastical terminology and method, because it is necessary to describe God adequately:

"The time I have spent in philosophers I have no cause to repent of, and the use I have made of them I dare not disown. I heartily thank God for what I have found in them; neither have I, upon this occasion, one jot less loved the Scriptures."³

Also:

"In the nexte place you advise me "not to affect schoole-phrases and learning, in preaching; nor the use of Philosophie and metaphysics...I have, to my best, endeavoured to confirme truth, and convince the understandings of men therein: and to that purpose, as I have bin able, have made use of all those principles; that derive from God, and Speak him in the world..."⁴

This attitude is especially important in the way he related it to personal moral growth:

"I believe, in the true use of understanding, a serious and considerative mind would be apt to think that either God would

1. Cragg, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 42-3.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 44.

4. Salter, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

*pardon sin to penitents who reform absolutely, or else would propose a way in which, and terms and conditions on which, he would forgive and be reconciled, God being duly looked upon as the fountain and original of goodness."*¹

Therefore Whichcote defends the central role of reason and human perception in religion and all knowledge. "I always thought that that doth most affect and commend the heart which doth most fully satisfy and convince the mind; and what reacheth the mind but reason, the reason of the things."² Emphasising, "...that there is nothing of true reason againste anie thing of Christian faith...."³ It was upon this basis that he sees the rational and spiritual united:

*"Sir, I oppose not rational to spiritual, for spiritual is most rational. But I contradistinguish rational to conceited... And I think where the demonstration of the Spirit is, there is the highest and purest reason; so as to satisfy, convince, command the mind; things are most thoroughly seen into, most clearly understood; the mind not so much amused with the form of words, as made acquainted with the inwards of things, the reason of them and the necessary connexion of terms clearly laid open to the mind and discovered."*⁴

1. *Ibid.* p. 45.

2. *Ibid.* p. 46.

3. Salter, *op. cit.* pp. 61-2.

4. *Ibid.* p. 46.

All this means that Whichcote denies Christianity as the blind sacrifice of arbitrary predestination:

*"Yet I confess, I cannot but marvel to see you balance matters of knowledge against principles of goodness, and seem to insist on Christ less a principle of divine nature in us than as a sacrifice for us."*¹

*"Christ is the leaven of Heaven, sent into the world and given to us to learn us into the nature of God... Upon this account I acknowledge Christ, in parts of nature, reason, and understanding, as well as in the gift of grace..."*²

Upon this basis Whichcote turns Tuckney's argument around. He sidesteps the slur of being called a Socinian by emphasising that the real issue was about the unity of knowledge in God:

*"Truth is Truth, whosoever speaks it, and I will readily agree with Papist, Socinian, or any, so far as he asserts it; because it is not his but God's."*³

The argument developed no further. It was a matter of agreeing to disagree:

*"Wherefore if, in this poynte of discerning, we differ; there is no helpe for it: we must forbear one another: and nothing is to be done."*⁴

1. Cragg, *op. cit.* p. 48.

2. *Ibid.* pp. 48-9; Salter, *op. cit.* p. 123.

3. Powicke, *op. cit.* p. 3.

4. Salter, *op. cit.* pp. 132-3.

This has been a debate, "...about the power of Reason to judge of matters of Faith...." Tuckney had stressed the fundamentals of a Scripturally based religion. Whichcote agreed with this, whilst expressing the Christian faith against the background of scholastical ideals of the unity of knowledge. Salter sums up this attitude in quoting Whichcote's 956th Aphorism:

*"Religion doth possess and affect the whole man: in the Understanding, it is knowledge; in the life, it is obedience; in the affections, it is delight in God; in our Carriage and Behaviour, it is modesty, Calmness, Gentleness, Quietness, Candor, Ingenuity; in our dealings, it is Uprightness, Integrity, Correspondence with the Rule of Righteousness: Religion makes man Victorious, in all Instances."*²

1. *Ibid.* p. 99

2. B. Whichcote, Moral and Religious Aphorisms. Norwich, 1703. p. 134.

How Stable was Cambridge Platonism?The Lure of Cartesianism.

McAdoo stresses that for scholars at this time the Cartesian concept of the machine was a great attraction.¹ Even Henry More, who is seen as the most spiritual and mystical of the Cambridge Platonists, was immersed in such literature.² The Cambridge Platonists could not ignore the example set by mainstream liberalism. The Virtuosi led the field, with Newton and Locke developing the implications, "...life and sense, reason and understanding, were really nothing but local motion."³ Of course such ideas clashed with their cosmology, as Cudworth tried to show in his mammoth work, The True Intellectual System of the Universe, (London, 1677).⁴ He failed, and if anything, landed up relying on the system he tried to criticise.

This shows a profound flaw in their epistemology, for of all systems, mechanistic Cartesianism should have been anathema to the Cambridge Platonists. Henry More had stressed that nature is plastic and unified, with the impetus being spiritual, "...as cannot be resolved into mere mechanistic powers."⁵

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1. McAdoo, op. cit., p. 103.
 2. Bass, op. cit., p. 238.
 3. McAdoo, op. cit., p. 280.
 4. Redwood, op. cit., p. 51.
 5. McAdoo, op. cit., pp. 111, 113, 136.

The Failure of Cambridge Platonism to Construct a Stable Epistemology.

As we have already seen from our investigation of Puritanism and the Virtuosi, this was a time of Christian restatement. The Cambridge Platonists have to be placed in this category. They rebelled against what they regarded as the strictures of Calvinistic Federal Theology, and wished to reinterpret Christianity from the standpoint of man. Whilst doing this, they should be regarded as conservative, with a desire to preserve the full meaning of Christian tradition.¹ So they would not consider themselves as making concessions to the spirit of the age.² They saw it as their duty to present Christianity in such a way as would appeal to 'the new Age'.³

Within such a rigid Christian framework, they certainly regarded themselves as separated from the unfettered radicalism of such groups as the Deists.⁴ Yet in form, Cambridge Platonism was abstract and philosophical, with an emphasis on general doctrine and values, rather than Scripture or historical facts. Whilst doing this they reacted against the materialism of men such as Hobbes.⁵ For them there was a basic congruity between Christianity and philosophy.⁶ Within this approach, Cudworth defended miracles and prophecies as realities that could not be reasoned away.⁷ In short the Cambridge Platonists were

1. Cragg, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

2. McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

3. *Ibid.*

4. Cragg, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

5. *Ibid.*; Aaron, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

6. Cragg, *op. cit.*, p. 70; Cudworth, *op. cit.*, pp. 725-6.

7. Redwood, *op. cit.*, p. 54; Cudworth, *op. cit.*, pp. 700-6, 637-8.

attempting to construct a Christian epistemology, "...which seeks its terms of reference in a mystical experience mediated partially in and through the contemplation of nature, but which they do not hesitate to validate by the historical element in religion..."¹

Whilst we can accept the drift of this, it is also possible to see the Cambridge Platonists as, "...speculative theorists defending a religious metaphysic and a theism..."² Locke criticised them for a basic contradiction in their stance.³ From this we can regard the Cambridge Platonists as scholars who were in basic disagreement with the contemporary epistemological views. Within the concept of unified truth, they leaned heavily on Natural Theology.⁴ This in turn meant that they were looking for more than the findings of science.⁵ They sought a merger of science and spirit, out of which developed their concept of 'plastic nature'. Above all they immersed their whole methodology in reason.⁶ The Cambridge Platonists approached their epistemology from the basis of spiritual reason and philosophy, but they were often forced by their methodology to assent to such things as Cartesianism's machine. It seems that their epistemology and methodology were pulling in different directions. As Neoplatonists they were experiencing precisely the same difficulties as Plato.

1. McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 118.
 2. Aaron, *op. cit.*, p. 28.
 3. *Ibid.*
 4. McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 85.
 5. *Ibid.*, p. 299.
 6. *Ibid.*, p. 300.

So from the point of view of intellectual stability, it seems that the Cambridge Platonists' methodology was more important than their epistemology. Hence it was their methodology which stopped any mystical withdrawal into the self.¹ Instead, they increasingly expressed individualism through mainstream liberalism.² Hence whilst their epistemology was dualistic with an emphasis on the spiritual and material, their methodology tended to deal with the latter; viz. they were methodologically constructing a physics. We can see this in their use of Cartesianism because of its methodological stability.³ This is even true of the most spiritual of the Cambridge Platonists, Henry More.⁴

The underlying dualism in their outlook meant that they could never reach a stable epistemology, or theology for that matter. Henry More criticised Locke for this very reason.⁵ So we can wonder if they were consciously striving to form an epistemology. We have already seen that they reacted against Puritanism, and also against mainstream liberal method.⁶ Whatever the impetus of their thought, it is clear that whilst they developed a Natural Theology, their thought was flawed. Also, whilst they were immensely influential, their thought as a whole can be regarded as isolated.⁷

1. McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 104, 280; Redwood, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

4. Bass, *op. cit.*, p. 238.

5. McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

6. Redwood, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

7. Bass, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

Chapter Nine.Pre-Restoration Anglicanism.

As part of our main discussion of the nature and role of Natural Theology in Anglican thought, we must touch upon some background material. In doing this we are not falling into the trap of giving a potted history. It is imperative that we touch upon the developments which gave us post-Restoration Anglicanism.

Introduction.

As early as the 1570's there was a sharp division between the great Anglican apologist Richard Hooker and the Puritans. Perry Miller sees the basic reason for this in the latter's Augustinianism and the former's Thomism.¹ This may be far too general, it is more balanced to see Hooker taking a middle-road between Calvinism and Roman Catholicism. The resulting emphasis was upon defending the Church under the Crown.² Theologically they moved further away from Calvinism, "...toward a theology of elastic compromise and continuous adjustment between divine law and human nature..."³

1. Miller, *op. cit.*, p. 5.
2. Haller, *op. cit.*, p. 22.
3. *Ibid.*

There is no denying the political pressures exerted on the emerging Anglicanism, as we see in Elizabeth's harsh treatment of Archbishop Grindal when he tried to be independent.¹ Also we must stress the numbers of Puritans within the church. Between 1583-90 the number of Presbyterian ministers increased to over five hundred within the Church of England.² Yet even at this stage we can look for a key division in their attitude to the Fall. Anglicans certainly felt that, "...not every faculty for good had been crushed out of..."³ man. This may be a reason why the Anglicans blocked Puritan reform, "...this pessimism was based on optimism in human nature."⁴ We must not view this optimism in human nature as unscriptural, the Anglican position at this time can be seen as profoundly scriptural.⁵ Hence for Anglicanism man, "...was at once a miserable sinner and within worldly limits, a rational creature."⁶ Whereas for Puritanism man was wholly fallen.⁷

Because of their view of the Fall the Anglicans tended to regard salvation as a means of repair rather than renewal.⁸ Of all man's faculties, they regarded reason as least impaired, "...it had a natural capacity to distinguish between good and evil in a moral order."⁹ This is not to imply that Anglicanism was moving away from

1. Drysdale, *op. cit.*, p. 179.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 192.

3. New, *op. cit.*, pp. 6, 25.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 25.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 28.

6. *Ibid.*

7. *Ibid.*

8. Knox, *op. cit.*, p. 415.

9. *Ibid.*

the Protestant standard of justification by faith.' Above all we must be aware of the diverse strains within Anglicanism at this time. For instance we have already noted their dependence upon Aquinas, "...but we can view their modified interest in the Fall and its effects on man as Augustinian in spirit."²

Perhaps we can regard the Puritan/Anglican split as the Puritans' failure to, "...capture the Elizabethan ecclesiastical establishment."³ Bearing this in mind we can view Richard Hooker as, "...shaking off the trammels of Calvinism with which it had been entangled..."⁴ Although the leaders of the Elizabethan Church were Calvinists to a man⁵, Peter Heylin's A Declaration of the Judgement, [London, 1659], said precisely this.⁶ He regarded Calvinism as too obsessed with system, and as such not compatible with, "Old English Protestantism..."⁷ As early as 1604 Bancroft was rebelling against Calvinism for these reasons.⁸ This trend was compounded by the preferment of men such as Carey, Andrewes and Laud.⁹ McAdoo underlines the importance of Thomism in giving these men an intellectual rebuttal to Calvinistic decrees, with a system of reason and law.¹⁰

1. New, op. cit., p. 12.

2. H. C. Jones, A History of Christian Doctrine. London, 1968. p. 416.

3. McKin, 'The Puritan View of History', art. cit., p. 221.

4. Stanley, op. cit., p. 5.

5. McAdoo, op. cit., p. 25.

6. Ibid., p. 26.

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid., p. 29.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid., p. 182.

For men such as Laud the Anglican Church was catholic, apostolical and rational. Within this framework he looked to the individual to experience forgiveness through the Church. For the Puritans the whole process was more internalistic, and perhaps this is why Baxter dismissed Laudianism as irrelevant.¹ "Baxter treated the Laudian episode as a false intrusion into the predestination debate."² Laud dismissed a predestination centred soteriology³, and saw it as his duty to achieve a spiritual union of the people; with the hierarchy of the Church instituted by God, as we see in Joseph Hall's Episcopacy by Divine Right Asserted. [London, 1640], and Humble Remonstrance, [London, 1641].⁴ Although seeing themselves as separate from the Roman Catholics, it is important to note that Laud twice refused a cardinal's hat. there is no doubt that like them they saw grace in and around the Church. It is this that really separated them from the Puritans, "Anglicans had a dynamic concept of sacramental power."⁵ This in turn was administered by an apostolic priesthood, as Henry Dodwell, [1641-1711], emphasised.⁶ It was because of this 'complete' view that Laud saw the altar as more important than preaching.⁷ In short, although it is difficult to spot the roots

1. Lamont, op. cit., p. 130.
 2. Ibid., pp. 134-5.
 3. Haller, op. cit., p. 235.
 4. Drysdale, op. cit., p. 268.
 5. New, op. cit., p. 68.
 6. Lamont, op. cit., p. 251.
 7. New, op. cit., p. 69.

which High Anglicans insisted they had, there is no doubt that especially with Hooker, Anglicanism became exclusive to Puritanism.

Although Article VI of the XXXIX Articles states that nothing contrary to Scripture must be allowed within the Church, it was very difficult to pin down what 'scriptural' meant. The Anglicans were moving away from Calvinistic fundamentalism. But when Walter Travers, [1584-1643], criticised Hooker for listing extra-scriptural authorities, Hooker accused him of doing exactly the same.¹ From what we have seen of the Puritan treatment of Scripture, Hooker's observation was probably fair. However we interpret 'scriptural', the Anglicans constructed, "...the three fold canon of Scripture, reason and tradition."² They saw this as the spirit of the church, with the responsibility of interpreting and supplementing scripture. In particular they linked exegesis to the 'natural reason of men'.³ We see examples of this in the work of Jeremy Taylor, [1613-1667], and John Cosin, [1594-1672], who both emphasised, "...loyalty to ancient standards, reinforced by profound learning and guided by spiritual insight. Taylor proved that respect for tradition could be harmonised with a generous latitude in interpretation."⁴ Lancelot Andrewes, [1555-1626], was part of this, and he was particularly eager for priests to see the Church as part of Catholic Christendom as seen in the Creeds.⁵

1. Shirley, op.cit., pp. 40-60.

2. Robinson, art.cit., p. 35.

3. Ibid.

4. Cragg, op.cit., p. 65.

5. F. Higham, Catholic and Reformed. A Study of the Anglican Church, 1559-1662. S.P.C.K. 1962. p.24; Andrewes, Works, VI. p. 352.

We can point to an emerging Anglican methodology based on a natural man's reasonable interpretation of Scripture, tradition and reason. This does not mean there was theological unanimity.¹ For example, the post-Restoration bishop of Winchester, George Morley, [1597-1684], was a Calvinist.² "Anglicanism became an amalgam of certain Protestant doctrines and certain traditional attitudes..."³ So that while Hooker is probably the greatest Anglican writer⁴, his work cannot be regarded as a cornerstone of Anglican theology.⁵ It was Hooker's methodology which was really influential, and it was this which united them.⁶ Indeed it has been said, "Anglicanism produced theologians far more than theologians produced Anglicanism."⁷ This may be true, but we have to stress that it can be very easy to dismiss Anglican theology. There are some authorities who regard Hooker's major influence as spiritual rather than methodological.⁸ However, after consideration it appears that developers of Anglican theology such as Hooker and Henry Hammond, [1605-1660]⁹, had success in so far as

1. Cragg, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

2. *Ibid.*

3. New, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

4. McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. v.

5. *Ibid.*

6. *Ibid.*

7. *Ibid.*, p. 321.

8. Higham, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

9. Henry Hammond. Anglican divine. Went to Magdalen Oxford. Ordained 1629. "Forced to leave Penshurst during the Civil War. He returned to Oxford, and composed, among others his Practical Catechism." "Throughout his life he maintained a high standard of personal devotion and a discipline bordering on asceticism." See: Cross, *op. cit.*, p. 606.

they could marry established theology with emerging scholastical method.¹

One of the strongest factors in affirming an Anglican unity is the vigour with which it bounced back at the end of the Interregnum. There is no doubt that during the Commonwealth period persecution almost obliterated Laud's church. The Church was associated with the Crown by the Puritans, with White in his The First Century of Scandalous Ministers, describing priests as, "...dumb dogs, ignorant drunkards, whoremungers and adulterers, men unfit to live, crawling virmin...unclean beasts..."² The old liturgy was strictly forbidden, with set prayers having to be said from memory.³ Chillingworth died in 1644, whilst Hales, deprived of his fellowship in 1649, "...lived obscurely until 1656, and died of melancholy and despairing."⁴ Despite this, the High Church showed great strength. During the Interregnum they purposed to maintain the priesthood, bring the right influence on Charles II, and prepare clergy and laity in England for the King's return.⁵ "Their eyes were on the future when the monarchy should be restored, and they were determined that when this took place there should be a complete restoration of the Church of England as the one and only church in the country."⁶ Hammond was probably the most

1. McAdoo, op. cit., p. 367.
 2. Spence, op. cit., p. 147.
 3. Ibid., p. 151.
 4. Haller, op. cit., p. 246.
 5. Moorman, op. cit., p. 244.
 6. Ibid., p. 246.

influential Anglican apologist during this period.¹ Anglicans were aided in this with the support they were given, as we see with Hales, who was supported by his former maid.² Accordingly the 'spirit of Anglicanism' was nurtured³, so that with the Restoration the Church was surprisingly strong.⁴

The political nature of Anglicanism must also be taken into account. We see this in the post-Restoration reaction which resulted in a substantial exodus from the Church, and the Clarendon Code.⁵ Howe regarded the new Act of Uniformity as a demand for him to renounce his vows to God, and therefore he left the Established Church.⁶ The political side of Anglicanism is better understood when we realise that they looked at the whole system from the unity of an ecclesiastical polity. Accordingly they thought it right that the church should continue as the 'handmaiden of the state'.⁷ "The life of ordered worship had been resumed..."⁸

Such a political link with the establishment was the inevitable outcome of Elizabeth making the church a, "...symbol of royal authority within the nation."⁹ Hence Hooker defended an

1. McAdoo, op.cit., p. 36.
2. Higham, op.cit., p. 253.
3. Ibid.
4. Spence, op.cit., p. 138.
5. Cragg, op.cit., pp. 51, 54.
6. Davis, op.cit., p. 438.
7. Cragg, op.cit., p. 56.
8. Ibid.
9. Haller, op.cit., p. 7.

established status quo under the Crown.' This in turn developed under James I, with the Crown portrayed as the supreme governor of the Church.² Most importantly these events meant, "...that the common bond of...[the]...people would in future be not their religion but their nationality and that the religious loyalties of the English would express not their unity as Christians but their division upon various lines as English men."³ So it is not easy for us to assess the political nature of Anglicanism. Perhaps if we bear in mind the Puritans' politicality with such works as Baxter's Holy Commonwealth, [London, 1658], we can understand how politics could hold such a position of the national outlook.

Whilst we have seen that Anglican theology was diffuse, the same cannot be said of their methodology. In this respect the work of Hooker was foundational.⁴ His ideas were brilliantly developed by Chillingworth, especially in his The Protestant Religion a Safe Way to Heaven, [London, 1638].⁵ This was reinforced by men such as Jeremy Taylor, [1613-1667]⁶ who thought profound learning could only strengthen

1. Haller, op.cit., p.22.

2. Ibid., p.49.

3. Ibid., p.7.

4. Ibid., p.363.

5. Ibid., p.22.

6. J. Taylor. High Anglican bishop and writer. Went to Cambridge. Ordained 1633. Preferred by Laud. Chaplain to Charles I. 1642 chaplain to Royalist army. Wrote very important devotional treatises such as The Rule and Exercise of Holy Living, [1650]. They are characteristic expressions of Anglican spirituality in their balanced sobriety and their insistence on a well ordered piety which stresses temperance and moderation." Cross, op.cit., p.1325.

faith.¹ They were willing to put religious authorities on trial by reason, "God himself was expected to produce credentials satisfactory to reason."² We should also note the work of the Great Tew Circle and John Hales in particular.³ Out of these trends developed an emphasis on freedom to choose, linked to rational method.⁴

It was upon philosophical and political grounds that Hooker developed his somewhat out-dated Ecclesiastical Polity, "...a theology of elastic compromise and continuous adjustment between divine law and human nature, towards a rationalism which supported public security..."⁵ Laud was not a philosopher, but it was within the framework of Hooker's work that he attempted to reform the people, "The Church was one with the living whole which was the nation...the church must make the way of righteousness plain to rulers and subjects; it must enforce spiritual unity; it must teach reverence and loyalty, respect for rank and authority, and decent manners; and it must maintain a beautiful and ordered worship of God..."⁶ This was developed by Chillingworth and Hales to mean a tolerant Church, but not a toleration of other churches.⁷

1. Cragg, op. cit., p. 65.

2. Ibid., p. 159.

3. John Hales. Anglican divine. Went to Oxford. 1612 became public lecturer in Greek at Oxford. Present at Synod of Dort, (1618). 1639 became chaplain to Laud and canon at Windsor. Died in retirement at Eton. His Golden Remains were published posthumously. Cross, op. cit., p. 603.

4. Higham, op. cit., p. 233; Sullivan, op. cit., p. 52.

5. Haller, op. cit., p. 22; Shirley, op. cit., p. 18.

6. Haller, op. cit., p. 228.

7. Ibid., p. 247.

Although the individual has a role to play in such an ecclesiastical polity, there was no intense appeal to the individual in the form of a sermon. There were great Anglican preachers such as John Downname, [1573-1631], and Lancelot Andrewes'. But for them and Laud the altar emerged as the intensest religious place for the individual.² Added to this was the Elizabethan repression of preaching on the grounds of political uniformity.³ Isaac Barrow, who in many ways was a bridge between pre and post-Restoration attitudes, represents this Anglican approach to preaching.⁴ Hence the role of the preacher was to be an expounder of moral theology⁵, "...with the proper work of man, the grand drift of human life...to follow reason."⁶ Accordingly the concept of the sermon had changed from an appeal to the individual, to a rational argument levelled at a man's natural rationality.

Just as the sermon was softened, dogma was also given a more

1. Haller, *op. cit.*, p. 22; Lancelot Andrewes. Bishop of Winchester. Went to Cambridge. "He was a devoted scholar, hard working and accurate, who became the master of fifteen languages." A good preacher.

"Theologically, Andrewes was one of the principle influences in the formation of a distinctive Anglican theology...He held a high doctrine of the eucharist, emphasised that in the sacrament we receive the true body and blood of Christ...He wanted the Church of England to express its worship in an ordered ceremonial, and in his own chapel used the mixed chalice, incense and altar-lights." Cross, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

See: L. Andrewes, Seventeen Sermons on the Nativity, published in the Ancient and Modern Library of Theological Literature. Oxford, 1887.

2. Laud, Yorks, VI. p. 57; D. Boorman, 'The Puritans and Preaching'. The Evangelical Magazine of Wales. vol. 17. No. 6. Dec/Jan 1978-9. p. 16;

Ziff, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

3. Boorman, *art. cit.*, p. 16.

4. Andrewes, Yorks, I. p. 5; McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 230.

5. *Ibid.*

6. *Ibid.*

general interpretation. This is certainly the drift of Laud's The Relation of the Conference of 1622¹, between himself and the Jesuit Fisher.² During this he agreed that truth is in the Bible, but that the onus of proof must also lie there.³ In saying this he was using the ideas of Hooker who had taken the unique step in Protestant terms of seeing Scripture as one amongst other authorities. Developing this, Chillingworth conceived a more rational view of revealed authority.⁴ "Chillingworth can fall back on only one cardinal truth, namely the truth revealed to reason in scripture, the light of God shining upon the eye of the soul."⁵ Hence we can see Chillingworth pulling away from rigid dogma.⁶ His work was complimented by John Hales.⁷ We should view these opinions as another product of their optimism in human nature.⁸ It was also part of a reaction against Roman Catholic scholasticism.⁹ Anglican attitudes to dogma were also linked to contemporary attitudes to the individual.¹⁰ Contemporary ideas about individuality were very much linked to rational assent.¹¹

1. V. Laud. Archbishop of Canterbury. Went to Oxford. 1601 received holy orders. 1629 became Chancellor of Oxford. "He did much to encourage individual scholars such as Hales and Chillingworth. Clashed with the Puritans. Was executed in 1645. See: Cross, op. cit., pp. 789-90.

2. Haller, op. cit., p. 236.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., p. 239.

5. As we see when Chillingworth put the spirit of Scripture above the Church; see: The Religion of Protestants, Oxford, 1638. Cap. 6. sect. 56; Haller, op. cit., p. 239.

6. Haller, op. cit., p. 240.

7. Ibid., p. 242.

8. Hooker, Works, I. i-viii; New, op. cit., pp. 25, 28.

9. Sullivan, op. cit., p. 57.

10. Haller, op. cit., p. 242.

11. Sullivan, op. cit., p. 53; McAdoo, op. cit., p. 12.

Occasionally Anglicans such as Sanderson treated reason as the infrastructure of a physics¹, whereas Jeremy Taylor saw its role as metaphysical.² The differences are clear, but both are linked by the great value they put upon reason. These trends were brought together by Hammond when he applied them to religion to find the relationship between what was rationally fundamental, and what is speculative.³ Therefore we can see Anglicanism as allowing man an unimpaired power of natural reason, with nature reason being the capacity to judge and to perform good and evil as reckoned by a moral order in the world.⁴ Accordingly authority was measured against this. One by-product of this rationalism was a change in their conception of the authority of God. "The mere assertion of natural rationality closed the gap between God and man..."⁵

All the characteristics we have looked at led to a rigid denial of Calvinistic doctrine. This was especially true of predestination. Andrewes regarded the doctrine of reprobation as perilously close to making God responsible for sin.⁶ He believed that Christ died sufficiently⁷. Although Andrewes tried to limit how far the individual can choose salvation⁸, there is no doubt the concept of free-will was emerging.⁹ Hooker and Donne both regarded the Federal view

1. McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.*, p. 359.

4. New, *op. cit.*, pp. 6-7.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 22.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 13; Andrewes, *Works*, VI. pp. 289-90.

7. *Ibid.*

8. *Ibid.*

9. *Ibid.*, p. 21; Hooker, *Works*, II. pp. 691-2.

of soteriology as an abuse, chaining God to man whatever the individual's actions.¹ This combined with Anglicanism's more positive view of the world, made them less sure how assured a man could be of salvation.² This in turn was balanced by a belief in leniency on Judgement Day.³ Perhaps the key question for Anglicans was not whether the ends are predestined, rather whether the means of attaining it are.⁴

Bearing all these trends in mind, we can see that there was a balance between the visible and invisible Church. With, "The visible and external government...[as]...that which is executed by man and consisteth in external discipline, and visible ceremonies practised in the church and over the church."⁵ Hence they regarded the visible and invisible church as parallel to hierarchical cosmology, "...you must with your faith run and spring up to him, and leaving this world, dwell above in heaven."⁶ In this whole outlook the Anglicans associated the visible Church with reasonable method.⁷ They also associated the traditional visible Church with divine hierarchy.⁸ These were combined with an emphasis on natural man to mean that Anglicanism was a multi-authority religion. More than this, the dominance of natural reason, undermined Scripture and historical Christianity.

1. New, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 22.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 76.

4. McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 305.

5. New, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 38.

7. McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 317

The Influence of the Cambridge Platonists on Anglicanism.

We have already looked at Cambridge Platonism, especially in regard to its formation of a Natural Theology. It is important to realise how marked an influence this had on the Anglicans. Many of the Restoration Anglicans had been taught by the Cambridge Platonists¹, and even those that had not been taught by them had similar views.² Even in the intellectual vitality of the Restoration period, the Cambridge group was not eclipsed, with Cudworth producing his massive work, The True Intellectual System of the Universe, (London, 1676).³ With their influence felt as early as 1637, we can begin to have some idea how influential they were.⁴ So that Tillotson, Stillingfleet, and Patrick were all greatly indebted to the ideas of the Cambridge Platonists.⁵

Probably the main feature of Cambridge Platonism utilised by Anglicans such as Jeremy Taylor was their rejection of systematic, Federal Theology.⁶ Added to this was the Cambridge Platonists' veneration of reason.⁷ Jeremy Taylor describes their spiritual ideas about reason very well, "It is a transcendent that runs through all topics."⁸ The proto-Latitudinarian Barrows shows a similar influence in his emphasis upon reason, Scripture and antiquity.⁹ This united belief

1. Cragg, op. cit., p. 70.

2. McAdoo, op. cit., p. 57; Bass, op. cit., p. 80.

3. Higham, op. cit., p. 329.

4. Ibid., p. 279.

5. McAdoo, op. cit., p. 187; Bass, op. cit., pp. 30, 35.

6. McAdoo, op. cit., p. 57.

7. Ibid., p. 74.

8. Ibid., p. 86.

9. Ibid., p. 235.

in reason was made stronger by a common belief in the natural ability of man. This trend would peak in the ideas of the Latitudinarians.¹ Therefore More and Cudworth had a great influence on the whole of Anglicanism.² In time, Anglicans such as Stillingfleet and Glanvil would leave the Cambridge Platonists' theory of metaphysical reason behind, but we have already seen that this was something the Cambridge Platonists would do to some extent. Whatever the development, when we look at the work of the Latitudinarian Wilkins we see, "...his method was the same as More's, and it had its effect on the work of Stillingfleet and Tillotson."³

The Influence of the Virtuosi upon Anglicanism.

We have already noted the development of a rational method based on natural reason. The work of the Virtuosi added strength to such ideas. Joseph Glanvil saw science as advantageous for this reason. Bishop Seth Ward, [1617-1689]⁴, was one of the first fellows of the Royal Society. In short, "The intellectuals of the Anglican Church were happy to use the Newtonian world picture with its emphasis on God's providence in a material universe composed of lifeless inert matter, to fortify their own liberal Protestant

1. McAdoo, op. cit., p. 159.

2. Ibid., p. 212.

3. Ibid., p. 114.

4. Seth Ward. Bishop of Salisbury. Educated at Sidney Sussex, Cambridge. Stayed in England during the Commonwealth period. When in Oxford he did very important scientific work, "which foreshadowed the Royal Society." e.g. in works such as Astronomia Geometrica, [1650]. Became Bishop of Exeter in 1662 and translated to Salisbury in 1667. He was hostile to dissenters. See: Cross, op. cit., p. 1439.

theology..." We have already seen that the Anglican's ecclesiastical polity was all-inclusive, and that everyone in the seventeenth-century regarded knowledge as unified. Hence it was perfectly possible for the intellectuals amongst the Anglicans to fall into the trap of thinking that Newtonian physics or Cartesian philosophy could enrich their world-view.

Anglicanism as part of Mainstream Scholastical, Natural Theology.

Wilkins regarded the Summa Theologica as an important source of Latitudinarian ideas.² Without trying to trace their pedigree back this far, it is enough for us to accept the influence of Hooker, and to underline his rationalistic methodology.³ This in turn was developed by Anglicans such as Jewel, Laud and Chillingworth, to mean that man as a rational being expected his faith to be resolved to reason.⁴ Added to this was the metaphysical depth of the Cambridge Platonists' rationalism.⁵ It is true that Laud's appeal to antiquity was based on Scripture and the Creeds, but it was not separated from reason and contemporary liberality.⁶ Hence Sanderson saw law and reason as the framework of moral theology, with faith supposing reason.⁷ The same can

1. Keonigsberger, op. cit. p. 233.
 2. McAdoo, op. cit. p. 212.
 3. Shirely, op. cit. p. 1.
 4. Sullivan, op. cit. p. 52.
 5. McAdoo, op. cit. p. 188.
 6. McAdoo, op. cit. p. 318.
 7. Ibid., p. 48.

be said of the work of Jeremy Taylor.' Before the Restoration these trends peaked in Henry Hammond's Of the Reason of the Christian Religion. In this work he said the first thing to do in religion is to express a concept rationally and then judge its worth. Hence Scripture would have to be a rational ground of belief.² After the Restoration these trends were developed by Anglicans such as Wilkins and Tillotson.³

Bearing in mind the dominance of liberal scholasticism within Anglicanism, the Latitudinarians are significant in that they, "...undertook the task of reconciling the Church to the changes which a new intellectual environment demanded."⁴ Their belief was centred on an appeal to human intelligence.⁵ With, "God himself expected to produce credentials satisfactory to reason."⁶ In a similar vein Sanderson had emphasised the freedom of the rational individual⁷, and Hammond developed this with religion based on Scripture, reason and experience.⁸ This is not at all true of Robert South, [1634-1716]⁹, or Swift, who both shunned scholastical expressions of the Anglican faith.¹⁰ However, many

1. McAdoe, op. cit., p. 53.

2. Ibid., p. 370; H. Hammond, Of the Reason..., London, 1650. Preface.

3. Ibid.; J. Tillotson, Six Sermons, London, 1694. p. 258.

4. Cragg, op. cit. p. 157.

5. Ibid., p. 159.

6. Ibid.

7. McAdoe, op. cit., p. 37.

8. Ibid., p. 36.

9. R. South. English divine. Went to Christ Church Oxford. For a time he was sympathetic to the Presbyterians, but in 1658 he took orders. "His sermons, smart, witty, and often sarcastic, became exceedingly popular, but his outspokenness precluded him from higher preferment."

Cross, op. cit. p. 1274.

10. McAdoe, op. cit., p. 170.

of the first members of the Royal Society were clergymen.¹ So that the genius of Latitudinarians such as Patrick lay in his systematisation of contemporary scholarship through the traditional structure of the Church.²

It was the rising importance of rational methodology which we should regard as the most significant factor in Anglicanism's role in mainstream Natural Theology. There was a great emphasis upon religion being rational because it is part of a unified knowledge³, as we see in the work of Simon Patrick.⁴ In his reliance on science and reason, Joseph Galvill emphasised he was in the Anglican tradition by specifically citing Jeremy Taylor.⁵ Taylor himself asserted, "...if you are to dispute against a heathen, a good reason will sooner convince him than a humble thought."⁶ In Taylor's Liberty of Prophesying, [London, 1647], we see a clear links with Chillingworth in his reliance on ideas of an enlightened reason.⁷

Developing this theme, we can look to John Hales, who asks, "...how can it stand with reason that a man should be possessor of so goodly a piece of the Lord's pasture as is the light of understanding...if he suffer it to be untilled..."⁸ Here we come to

1. McAdoo, *op.cit.*, p. 170.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 190.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 370.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 190.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 167.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 64.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 65.

8. Higham, *op.cit.* p. 166.

the crux of the Anglican attitude; viz. the ability of the individual to assess rationally. This was why the Great Tew Circle demanded liberty of conscience from the tyranny of dogma.¹ Chillingworth said much the same thing, as did Jeremy Taylor in his Liberty of Prophesying.² These in turn were mirrored and influenced by mainstream liberalism, and so are parallel to works such as Milton's Areopagitica, and Roger Williams' Bloudy Tenet.³

1. Higham, op. cit. p. 164.

2. Ibid., p. 232.

3. McAdoo, op. cit., p. 231.

Chapter Ten.The High Anglicans and Latitudinarians.The High Anglicans.

In the crisis of the Commonwealth period Jeremy Taylor produced Holy Living, and Holy Dying. They became beacons of Anglican doctrine.¹ They are casuistical works, and reflected the High Church view, providing a means by which, "...the questing soul could travel toward God and in which it could find peace in this life."² With such a general view, Laud had denied the Puritan elevation of the sermon.³ He regarded ceremonial in general, and the eucharist in particular, as the true means of finding religious experience.⁴ Hence Laud saw Jesus as having bequeathed the Church as the dispenser of grace.⁵ This in turn was expressed against a hierarchical view of being, with the priesthood as the link, "...between the lowest in nature and the highest in heaven."⁶

If we look at the work of Hales, we see an optimistic view of humanity.⁷ Similarly, Lancelot Andrewes has dismissed the Calvinistic

1. Horton Davies, op.citp. 360; Cross, op.citp. 1325; Higham, op.citp. 243.

2. Horton Davies, op.citp. 360; Ziff, op.citp. 6.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

6. Ziff, op.citp. 8.

7. McAdoo, op.cit. p. 19.

idea of predestination because he wanted to approach predestination from man's perspective rather than from the concept of eternal decrees.¹ He felt the Puritans had made a fatal philosophical mistake in making dogma out of an opinion.² Above all they didn't want predestination to infringe man's perception.³ This was all part of a marked reaction against Calvinism by High Anglicanism.⁴ Accordingly from the earliest days they wanted to lessen its influences, and so they were at pains to outline their own theology. Part of this attitude resulted in a disliking of the Calvinism of the XXXIX Articles.⁵

Although not a theologian, Laud had a firm grip of Christian doctrine.⁶ The Fisher debate proved this. We should also note the way he kept his Anglican identity in a Roman Catholic court.⁷ Viewing doctrine through an ecclesiastical polity, he, "...wanted to silence dissent and restore the church to medieval heights."⁸ To achieve this he needed a uniform doctrine, and to do this he expanded education at Oxford.⁹ Against this background we can see High Anglicans such as Thomas Fuller, [1608-1661]¹⁰, and Nicholas Ferrar, [1592-1637]¹¹, as,

1. McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 30; Andrewes, *Works*, VI. p. 290. 2. McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 30.
 3. *Ibid.*, p. 18. 4. *Ibid.*, p. 29; Higham, *op. cit.*, p. 64.
 5. McAdoo, *op. cit.*, pp. 120, 343. 6. *Ibid.*, p. 337.
 7. Higham, *op. cit.*, p. 91. 8. *Ibid.*, p. 109.
 9. *Ibid.*, p. 111.

10. T. Fuller. Anglican Historian. Went to Queens Cambridge. Entered orders. "His witty and popular style won him a wide reputation." Wrote such works as Church History of Britain, [London, 1655].
 Cross, *op. cit.*, p. 532.

11. N. Ferrar. Founder of Little Gidding, a haven of Anglican spirituality. A very able student at Cambridge. 1629 he left parliament to form his community. "In 1626 he was ordained deacon by Laud, and under his direction this household of some thirty persons lived a life of prayer and worked under a strict rule." He earned the hostility of the Puritans, especially in works such as The Arminian Nunnery, [1646].
 Cross, *op. cit.*, p. 500.

"...searching for a via media which was the lowest common denominator."¹

There is no doubt that a hard Anglican doctrine emerged during the Commonwealth period. Hammond's Pacific Discourse, [London, 1660], developed a sacramental doctrine based on Scripture, reason and experience.² The Prayer book was also assuming a much more dominant position. This shows the influence of Hooker.³ Also, Jeremy Taylor was especially important in the way he joined theology with scholastical method, whilst maintaining the emphasis on the personality, "...through the means of grace and the experience of the individual in relation to the corporate."⁴ He did this by consolidating the Church's position, but in the process compromised Scripture to reason.⁵ In doing this he was developing Hooker's ideas about reason and law.⁶ In applying reason to Scripture he split it into what he regarded as perspicuous, necessary truth, and unclear unnecessary truth.⁷ This in turn was based on man's innate rational ability. Therefore whilst Taylor believed in original sin⁸, he did so in terms of a man's freedom to choose to do good.⁹ This does not mean that with Taylor we have a detached scholar, for his work was greatly concerned with practical divinity.¹⁰ Likewise,

1. Bass, op. cit., p. 80; Sullivan, op. cit., p. 98.

2. McAdoo, op. cit., p. 36.

3. Ibid., p. 48.

4. Ibid., p. 55.

5. Ibid., p. 67.

6. Ibid., p. 332.

7. Ibid., p. 72.

8. Ibid., p. 78.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid., p. 326; Higham, op. cit., p. 243.

the High Anglican works of the 1650's and 1660's, "...display a remarkable unanimity of method in combatting moral theology, prayer, meditation, and sacraments in such a way that devotional practice and practical divinity are seen to be aspects of the same thing."¹ Such a combination tended to be doctrinally generalistic. If we look at the great success High Anglicans had in indoctrinating during the Commonwealth period, it is well to remember that, "...what gave the Laudians cohesion as a party was policy not party theology."²

Accordingly the High Anglicans were not always clear about fundamentals. For Laud the test lay in Scripture and the Creeds, with an emphasis on the latter.³ The Great Tew Circle added to this that only what is clear in Scripture should be regarded as fundamental.⁴ Clarendon summed up this trend, "...whatsoever is too hard for us there to understand, is in no degree necessary for us to know."⁵

With the return to power, it seemed that the High Anglican doctrine would be in the ascendancy. John Cosin, [1594-1672]⁶, and Wren drew on the Durham Book of 1619, and Waddenburn's Scottish Liturgy of 1637, to produce a very much higher version of the Prayer Book.⁷ The Latitudinarians turned this down⁸. Whilst this was a great blow, it was

1. McAdoo, op. cit., p. 326.

2. Ibid., p. 337.

3. Ibid., p. 340.

4. Ibid., p. 344.

5. Ibid., p. 350.

6. John Cosin, Bishop of Durham. Educated at Caius College Cambridge. "He was a personal friend of Laud...and as such incurred the hostility of the Puritan party. This increased when in 1627 he published his Collection of Private Devotions. Went into exile with the Royal household. A rigid disciplinarian, he used all the legal powers at his hand to make both the Puritans and Roman Catholics conform to the Church of England in his diocese. Cross, op. cit., p. 346.

7. Horton Davies, op. cit., p. 374. 8. Ibid., p. 386.

still a time when many Laudian practices returned.' This was a time when old school Anglicans attempted to establish full Caopline worship². Jeremy Taylor lived until 1667, Cosin until 1672. John Pearson, (1613-1686), lived to produce his Exposition of the Creed, (London, 1686).³ Whilst being aware of their influence, we need to realise that High Anglicanism was changing, no one shows this better than Edward Stillingfleet.⁴

Many scholars see Stillingfleet as a Latitudinarian. Like Dewey Wallace we should regard him as a descendent of the moralist, Arminian line of Henry Hammond, Jeremy Taylor and Herbert Thorndyke.⁵ Wallace also shows us why Stillingfleet could also be viewed as a Latitudinarian, "...Arminianism was becoming Latitudinarian and was converging with the legacy of the Cambridge Platonists, and the scientific divines."⁶

Stillingfleet thought he saw a destructive new philosophy behind contemporary scholasticism.⁷ This was the drift of his Discourse in Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity, which was written against

1. Horton Davies, op.cit., p. 392.

2. Moorman, op.cit., p. 254.

3. Ibid.

4. Edward Stillingfleet. Bishop of Worcester. Educated at St. John's Cambridge. Won the favour of Charles II. After the Great Revolution of 1689 William III preferred him. Stillingfleet was a High Anglican, whose scholastical method often made him appear a Latitudinarian. Cross, op.cit., p. 1293.

5. Wallace, op.cit., p. 160.

6. Ibid., p. 160.

7. Sullivan, op.cit., p. 76.

Locke.¹ Hence Stillingfleet saw it as his duty to proclaim High Church orthodoxy to the wider Church.² He attempted to turn away from rationalistic empiricism to an authoritative emphasis on traditional testimonies.³ Part of this was an attempt to use liberal method to prove the validity of Scripture.⁴ This was not a return to Puritan fundamentalism, rather a High Church emphasis on scriptural reason. Therefore he attempted to prove its superiority against other books of philosophy.⁵ We should not regard this as a rejection of contemporary, scholastic method, rather as a denial of what he saw as an attack on the traditional values of the Church.⁶

The rationalistic attack on mystery was also opposed by Robert South's Christianity Mysterious⁷, "Against Unitarians and Anglican rationalists he emphasised the need to accept all revealed truth." he denied rationalistic-empiricism, and criticised the Socinians for admitting, "...of nothing which the natural reason of man cannot have a clear and complete perception of."⁸ Bishop Williams also dismissed the contemporary rationalistic means of investigation.⁹ We can understand

1. Stillingfleet was worried about Locke's Essay. Especially its effect upon the Trinity. See: The Bishop of Worcester's Answer to Mr Locke's Letter. London, 1697. p. 6.; Aaron, op.cit., p. 40.

2. Sullivan, op.cit., p. 55.

3. Ibid., p. 79.

4. McAdoe, op.cit., p. 186.

5. Ibid.

6. Higham, op.cit., p. 162; Sullivan, op.cit., p. 85.

7. e.g. South's attack on Sherlock's accounts of the Trinity in his, Animadversions upon Dr Sherlock's Book. London 1693. p. xvii;

Sullivan, op.cit., p. 80.

8. Ibid., p. 81.

9. Sullivan, op.cit., p. 94.

these mens' opposition, not so much as a challenge to scholastical method, as to contemporary epistemology.

The High Anglicans used authorities from the early centuries to prove the validity of their case.' Above all they wanted to demonstrate that the High Anglican emphasis on outward worship, "...were neither 'old superstitious Roman dotage' nor 'schismatically new'."² Hence in Andrewes' work we see an emphasis on antiquity and continuity³, "...it was in this rather than logical development or dogma that he trusted."⁴ Similarly Jeremy Taylor stressed, "...one canon...two testaments, three Creeds, four general councils, five centuries, and the series of Fathers in that period...determine the boundary of our faith."⁵ Hence whilst Hooker developed a methodology of reason in relation to authority, Andrewes always started with tradition.⁶ It was for this reason that Laud regarded the idea of continuity as a living one.⁷ If we move on to Stillingfleet, it is precisely this synthesis of tradition which he saw as under attack.⁸

Whilst affirming tradition, like the Puritans the High Churchmen were solidly anti-Roman Catholic.⁹ Laud was twice offered

1. Horton Davies, *op.cit.*, p. 337.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 351.
3. McAdoo, *op.cit.*, McAdoo, *op.cit.*, p. 30.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 320.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 320.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 332.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 317.
8. Sullivan, *op.cit.*, p. 76.
9. Ziff, *op.cit.*, p. 6.

a cardinal's hat, but he refused.' Such a rejection was carried forward in Thorndyke's, [1598-1672], The Reformation of the Church of England better than that of the Council of Trent, [London, 1670].² He emphasised that catholic traditionalism did not imply any sympathy to Rome. In fact anti-papalism was one of the most popular themes of this time. The legitimacy of James II as a Roman Catholic King put this to the test. Bearing in mind the way the Elizabethan Settlement had bound the Church to the monarchy, compounded by Stuart ideas about Divine Right, it was a grave crisis when the legitimate successor was popularly deposed in the Great Revolution of 1689. By 1691 there were about four hundred Non-Juring clergy, led by Archbishop Sancroft.³ But the crisis was one about loyalty to the Crown, not to Rome. High Anglicans were united in their hatred of Rome, and so on reflection rejected James.⁴ Despite this trauma High Anglicans did not give up the idea of a comprehensive Church.⁵ Francis Atterbury, [1662-1732]⁶, believed that to

1. Higham, op.citp. 111.

2. Herbert Thorndyke. Anglican theologian. Educated in Cambridge. His first important theological work was, Discourse of the Government of Christianity, [London, 1641]. "...he looks for a unified christendom on the basis of the first General Councils, conceding a certain superiority to the pope..." Cross, op.citp. 1356.

3. Horton Davies, op.citp. 393.

4. Moorman, op.citp. 253.

5. Sullivan, op.citp. 59.

6. F. Atterbury. Bishop of Rochester. A true High Churchmen. Lecturer at Christ Church. Became chaplain to William and Mary. Regarded as the best preacher of his day. Banished in 1723 for involvement in Jacobite plot. See: Cross, op.citp. 103.

to be an Englishman was to be Anglican, and Archbishop Sharp, [1645-1714]', "...treated church and nation as interchangeable expressions."²

As a corollary to an appreciation of tradition, High Anglicans saw it as essential that religion should have an extrinsic form. We must remember that right up until about 1610 Calvinism was very strong within the Church. Archbishop Abbot, [1562-1633], was a Calvinist. He incurred bitter opposition from Williams and Laud for this.³ Part of their defiance was shown in their enrichment of churches under their control. Andrewes did this at Winchester, and Matthew Vren at Peterhouse Cambridge. They saw that, "...the piety of later Tudors...[was formal and scholastical]...it was to offset this...that..." they purposed to enrich church life.⁴ Part of this enrichment was an elevation of the eucharist over the Word.⁵ Ferrar added an emphasis of depth and meaning in the Christian community.⁶ Laud was greatly concerned with ceremonial when he became Archbishop in 1633. He wanted to impose a spirit on the people rather than a theology. This is shown when he accepted the Prayer Book when he really wanted it to be revised along the lines of the Durham Book of

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1. James Sharp. Archbishop of St. Andrewes. Early sympathy with Puritans. Professor of philosophy at St. Andrewes. Involved with Monck and the plans for the King's return. As a result he got the see of St. Andrewes in 1661. He took repressive measures against the Presbyterians. As a result he was brutally murdered in 1679. See: Cross, op. cit. p. 1249.
 2. Sullivan, op. cit. p. 60.
 3. Higham, op. cit. p. 64.
 4. Horton Davies, op. cit. p. 337; Higham, op. cit. p. 141.
 5. Horton Davies, op. cit. p. 339.
 6. Higham, op. cit. p. 155.

1619.¹ He did this because in the Stuart period the Prayer Book became, "...an excellent medium for the expression of the spirit of the English Church and people before God...This is a well ordered worship of great dignity and decency."²

These characteristics were highlighted during the difficult Commonwealth period.³ Therefore in 1649 Jeremy Taylor's An Apology for Authorised and set forms of Liturgies, regarded the Prayer Book as the great strength of ecclesiastical polity.⁴ Anthony Sparrow, [1612-1685], sought to defend the legitimacy and pertinence of the Prayer Book in his Rationale, [London, 1657].⁵ Commonwealth persecution necessitated adaptation of the Prayer Book as we see in Robert Sanderson's, [1587-1663]⁶, A Liturgy in Times of Rebellion, as well as Taylor's A Collection of Offices. These works, added to L'Estrange's Alliance of Divine Offices, [1659], began to instill a great aura of sacredness in a book which before had been taken for granted⁷; as we see in John

1. Horton Davies, op.cit pp. 338, 340.

2. Ibid, p. 529.

3. Ibid, p. 331.

4. Taylor, An Apology..., p. 69; Horton Davies, op.cit p. 348.

5. 1772 edition, pp. 79-80; Horton Davies, op.cit p. 350; Anthony Sparrow. Bishop of Norwich. Went to Cambridge. "He was a keen High Churchman throughout his life, best known through his Rationale" "...the object of which was to show that the Church of England service was neither 'old superstitious Roman dotage nor schismatically new.'" See: Cross, op.cit p. 1278.

6. Robert Sanderson. Bishop of London. Went to Oxford. "Gaining favour with Laud he was appointed a Royal chaplain in 1631.." Reinstated in 1660. "He took a leading part in the Savoy Conference of 1661, and drafted the Preface to the new, 1662 Prayer Book." Cross, op.cit p. 1214.

7. Horton Davies, op.cit p. 364.

Gauden's, [1605-1662], Eikon Basilike. Post-restoration High Anglicans did not share this veneration as much as the main body of the Church, and so they pressed for revision. After the repression of the Commonwealth period, the Prayer Book lost some of its mystique, especially since they were far more concerned with developing a more catholic Church. despite the trauma of the Great Revolution, these themes continued within High Anglicanism², as we see in the work of Clarendon.²

We have already touched on links between the Church and Crown. Such trends peaked in Gauden's Eikon Basilike, within which we are confronted with quite a sophisticated step on from the Tudor concept of the 'virgin Queen' or James I's 'Divine Right'. Gauden presents the King as a sacred part of the ecclesiastical polity. Against this background the Laudian party planned for the return of the King as the completion of a religious crusade.³ In such an adoration of the King, we should see a dependence on the institution rather than the person. Nothing demonstrates this more clearly than Laud's refusal to become a Roman Catholic when the court wanted it⁴. It is also significant that a large number of High Churchmen remained within the Church after the Non-Juring crisis. Nevertheless, Divine Right was still very important to them after the Restoration, "It was inculcated by preachers so

1. Sullivan, op.citp. 59.
 2. Higham, op.citp. 311.
 3. Sullivan, op.citp. 246.
 4. Higham, op.citp. 132.

different in outlook as South, Stillingfleet and John Tillotson, [1630-94].¹

Although we can see the High Anglicans as attempting to impose an ecclesiastical polity², this did not stop them trying to develop their own pastoralism. Laud was, "...a man of devotion, discipline, reudition, and sympathy for the poor..."³ Andrewes was greatly concerned with practical theology⁴, and it is notable that during the Abbot controversy he supported the Archbishop.⁵ We should also remember the spiritual community of Ferrar at Little Gidding.⁶ This was a great time for Anglican preaching, with Donne, Andrewes and Taylor masters of, "...the brilliant and daring act of metaphysical preaching..."⁷ bearing all this in mind it has been suggested that in the 40's and 50's, High Anglican priests tended to be better pastors than their Puritan counterparts.⁸ Accordingly we can understand why in the Commonwealth period Sanderson strove to come to terms with the authorities and maintain his own standards.⁹ This is mirrored in Taylor's Holy Living

1. Crag, op. cit. 78; J. Tillotson. Archbishop of Canterbury. Went to Cambridge. "In 1661 he was present at the Savoy Conference as a watcher on the Non-Conformist side." "In 1691, with some reluctance through the circumstances of Sancroft's deposition, he accepted the see of Canterbury. His time was undistinguished. His policy was dictated by hatred of the Roman Catholics and a desire to include all Protestant dissenters other than Unitarians within the Church of England."

Cross, op. cit. 1359.

2. Cragg, op. cit. 79.

3. Horton Davies, op. cit. 339.

4. McAdoo, op. cit. p. 322.

5. Higham, op. cit. 64.

6. Ibid., p. 155.

7. Horton Davies, op. cit. 524.

8. Higham, op. cit. 91.

9. Horton Davies, op. cit. 357.

and Holy Dying, which again is a casuistical work.¹ In these and other works such as the anonymous The Whole Duty of Man, the High Anglican desire to meet the needs of the people is evident.² To answer such a need, Sanderson, Laud and Hall were all outspoken opponents of enclosing.³

On the tenth of January 1645 Laud was executed, Cosin fled to France and Vren was imprisoned.⁴ There is no doubt that the High Church party suffered during this period.⁵ We have already touched on the abolition of the Prayer Book⁶. But there was a fight back which is demonstrated by such works as Thorndyke's Of Religious Assemblies, [1642].⁷ The most learned attack on the Directory, came with Henry Hammond's The View of the New Directory, (London, 1645).⁸ Hence the High Church party was working in unison, developing and sustaining dogma along with ministry and striving for the return of an Anglican King.⁹ Laudians got themselves appointed to key positions where they could influence people who would make all the difference in making the Restoration a success.¹⁰ As a result the first Restoration parliament was solidly High Anglican, and the King was on their side.¹¹

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1. Horton Davies, op. cit. p. 360.
 2. Moorman, op. cit. p. 260; McAdoo, op. cit. p. 54.
 3. Ibid., p. 45.
 4. Horton Davies, op. cit. p. 344.
 5. Moorman, op. cit. p. 245.
 6. Horton Davies, op. cit. p. 364.
 7. Ibid.
 8. Ibid., pp. 345, 348, 356.
 9. Moorman, op. cit. pp. 245-6.
 10. Ibid., p. 246, 250.
 11. Ibid., p. 249.

It is somewhat curious why, if they had this support, the Latitudinarians held the whip hand. The reason probably lies in the High Church fight back during the Commonwealth period. It was a romantic policy of Church and Crown which they proclaimed, and this had to be general. Hence it is not really surprising that their 'supporters' saw no need for the implementation of full blown High Anglicanism.'

In the chapters on Puritanism we discussed how the central 'unreasonableness' of Puritanism often clashed with their methodology, whereby they attempted to set their faith within a theory of unified knowledge. High Anglicanism was similar in that its epistemology was supernatural, whilst its methodology was natural. Stillingfleet realised this clashed with the traditional Anglican concept of spiritual reason.² It was for this reason that the High Anglicans attacked the Unitarians.³ Therefore when Hammond in his Specific Discourse, [London, 1660], saw religion as a balance of Scripture, reason and experience, it was within a traditional epistemology.⁴ For Jeremy Taylor, "Reason...is contained in a view of reality which includes the spiritual as well as the intellectual."⁵ In similar fashion Stillingfleet resisted contemporary, scientific, naturalistic epistemology.⁶ Whilst we can accept this, we should also realise that the High Anglicans used liberal method a great deal, so much so that they became epistemologically committed to it.⁷

1. McAdoo, op. cit., p. 337. 2. Sullivan, op. cit. p. 76.
 3. Ibid., pp. 85, 94. 4. McAdoo, op. cit., p. 36. 5. Ibid., p. 60.
 6. Ibid., p. 391; B. Stillingfleet, The Bishop of Worcester's Answer. London 1697. pp. 3-7.
 7. Ibid., p. 186.

High Anglicanism Forced to Defend a Position More Political than Theological.

After the Restoration the Church did not just have two theological streams, it also had two political groups: High Church Tories and Low Church Whigs.¹ Their wranglings straddled three reigns.² We should not underestimate the fact that the High Anglicans regarded the Latitudinarians as their enemies, labelling them as Remonstrants and Socinians.³ Much to his regret, Toland fled from Ireland in 1697 and walked straight into this power play. The High Anglicans dubbed him a heretic whilst for the Latitudinarians he was speaking their sort of language.⁴

We really should not be surprised at the political nature of the Church at this time. We have already noted how everyone in the seventeenth-century regarded knowledge as unified. Added to this there were social reasons why any separation of Church and State would have undermined, "...the whole basis of the territorial church-state system, thereby loosening the whole order of society."⁵ Therefore whilst the Savoy Conference of 1661 was called for liturgical reasons, it was manipulated by politicians.⁶ So that the Puritans were not rejected for religious reasons, rather because the Anglicans equated religious

1. Cragg, op.citp. 61.

2. Ibid.

3. Sullivan, op.citp. 82.

4. Ibid., p. 9.

5. Taylor, op.citp. 511.

6. Horton Davies, op.citp. 367.

disunity with weakness in the body politic.' When pleas for toleration came from Anglicans such as Stillingfleet, it was for freedom of thought and not of action.² One result of this politico-religious synthesis with its emphasis upon the sovereign, was that the High Anglicans misunderstood the Stuart's attempts to increase their powers in civil and religious affairs. This was part of a savage attack against the political and religious liberty of the individual³, but Charles I and Charles II kept close to the High Anglicans, and so the real issue was masked.⁴ The trend was only broken when James II introduced a straight Anglican/Roman confrontation.⁵

In the Restoration era, "The Prayer Book was the very image of conservatism, of the unchanging island in a sea of turbulence..."⁶ The political nature of the Prayer Book had been recognised as early as the Westminster Assembly⁷, and now such a concept had been, "...sealed in the blood of king Charles the Martyr..."⁸ Hence compromise with the Puritans within any framework put forward by Baxter, or Ussher's Reduction of Episcopacy unto the form of Synodical Government, [London, 1641], was out of the question for areligious reasons.⁹ Clarendon would reflect political opinion in his efforts to completely restore the Laudian Church. Hence the new Prayer Book was

1. Moorman, op.citp. 226.

2. Ibid, p. 266.

3. Plum, op.citp. 72.

4. Ibid, p. 69.

5. Ibid.

6. Horton Davies, op.citp. 331.

7. Ibid, p. 334.

8. Ibid, p. 363.

9. Moorman, op.citp. 249.

imposed as part of the Act of Uniformity.¹ Church and state were regarded as one, "...and those who refused to conform to the discipline of the church could not expect the privileges of citizenship."²

The High Anglican's use of Scholastical Methodology.

For Jeremy Talyor,

"...it is reason that carries me to objects of faith, and faith is my reason so disposed, so used, so instructed."³ We have already seen that such an elevation of reason was placed within a traditional epistemology of the world as a created spiritual hierarchy.⁴ Whilst accepting this, we should underline the authority they placed in reason.⁵ In the years after the Restoration, their conception of epistemology changed, with reason now discerning a hierarchy of mathematical and mechanical certainty. This, coupled with their reliance on reason meant that the nature of High Anglican epistemology changed. Most importantly it led to High Anglicans taking part in mainstream scholastical thought. So that Stillingfleet combined contemporary rationalism with tradition by stressing that the Fathers relied on reason, and thus did not disregard rational evidence for faith.⁶ Such a use of contemporary scholastical thought inevitably led to some of Stillingfleet's work being wholly

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1. Moorman, *op. cit.*, p. 251.
 2. *Ibid*, p. 252.
 3. Sullivan, *op. cit.*, p. 52.
 4. McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 58.
 5. *Ibid*, p. 64.
 6. *Ibid*, p. 389.

Latitudinarian in flavour, so that McAdoo regards his *Sacrae*, as an important Latitudinarian work.¹ Stillingfleet attempted to combine traditional attitudes with contemporary Natural Theology. It was for this reason that he defended Mosaic history by proving that it conformed to the canons of reason.² In the process his work took on the character of the scholars he was attempting to counter.³ "The inherent contradiction of their methodology and epistemology also undermined their opposition to Socinianism, where, because of their shared methodology the High Anglicans didn't effectually ram home the Socinian denial of Christ."⁴ This is also linked to some theological ineptitude on the part of the High Anglicans⁵, Stillingfleet is representative in his association of faith with the contemporary concept of reason.⁶ Revelation and reason were used to establish each other.⁷ So that whilst trying to safeguard traditional authorities, Stillingfleet juxtaposed faith and knowledge, "...both of them proceed on the same foundation of certainty...faith fixeth on the veracity of God immediately in references to the Divine testimony; knowledge proceeds upon it."⁸ Even when Stillingfleet began to realise the incongruity of High Anglicanism with contemporary, rationalistic methodology, he could

2. McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 179.

2. Cragg, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

3. Sullivan, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 99, 107.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 107.

6. Cragg, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

7. *Ibid.*

8. McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 184.

only try to fight it with the same methodology.' The implication is that High Anglicans such as Stillingfleet were lightweight theologians, who certainly couldn't stabilise their attitude to tradition, faith, or contemporary rational method.² Even so, we should accept that they were attempting the impossible, the reconciliation of a spiritual epistemology with a naturalistic methodology.

All these trends inevitably led to a re-evaluation of Scripture. We have already seen that Stillingfleet defended Mosaic history by proving that it conformed to the contemporary concept of reason.³ Whilst conceptions of Scripture crumbled before such rationality, Scripture seemed to be safeguarded by equating it with morality. It was for this reason that Stillingfleet saw Scripture as safe in the hands of the Deists, "He was confident that they respected it as the best statement of the moral law..."⁴

The Latitudinarians.

The Latitudinarians began to dominate the Anglican Church as early as the Savoy Conference in 1661.⁵ It was for this reason that the Laudian proposals of Wren and Cosin failed.⁶ Latitudinarians wanted no "...rocking of the ark of the church of England..."⁷; and in this way

1. Sullivan, *op. cit.*, pp. 79-80.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 58.

3. Cragg, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

4. Sullivan, *op. cit.*, pp. 56, 92.

5. Horton Davies, *op. cit.*, p. 367.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 379.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 386.

they represented the mood of the nation.'

We have already discussed how High Anglicans had inculcated High Anglican policy, which meant that their specific theology didn't receive widespread support. It was probably for this reason that the Latitudinarians were not as loyal to the Prayer Book.² Rather than committing himself to such an intense foci of authority, Tillotson stressed an appeal to reason, for, "...the careful, comprehensive arguments, solid, unhurried, unadorned."³ This does not mean that we are dealing with a departure from traditional Anglicanism. If we look at Isaac Barrow's, [1630-1677]⁴, sermons, we see they are, "...scriptural, expository and practical...[with]...frequent references to the Fathers who are described as 'wise instructors'".⁵ Likewise Tillotson preached, "...modest, rational, pragmatic sermons..."⁶ The great change came in the emphasis upon contemporary, rational methodology. One of the key figures in synthesising Anglican liturgy and rational method was Simon Patrick, [1625-1707]⁷. His liberality laid great emphasis on reason.⁸ Patrick felt that such a development

1. Sullivan, *op. cit.*, p. 386. 2. *Ibid.*, p. 368.

3. McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

4. Isaac Barrow. Anglican divine, classical scholar, and mathematician. Went to Cambridge. In exile 1655-9. Appointed professor of Greek in Cambridge. 1660 professor of Geometry at Gresham College. He taught Isaac Newton. The precision of a mathematician's thought shines through his Pope's Supremacy, [1680]. Barrow was very influential.

Cross, *op. cit.*, p. 134.

5. McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 234.

6. Horton Davies, *op. cit.*, p. 524.

7. Simon Patrick. Bishop of Ely. Went to Cambridge, where he was influenced by the Cambridge Platonist John Smith. 1654 ordained. He was a prominent Latitudinarian. Cross, *op. cit.*, p. 1026.

8. McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 190.

was balanced and not inimical to a caring priesthood.¹ However, we should recognise that they were, "...far less conscious of the threat to orthodoxy which was inherent in the stress on reason as opposed to revelation, on morality in contradistinction to sacramental grace."²

In such a lack of caution we can grasp something of the motive force behind Latitudinarianism.³ The influence of the Cambridge Platonists can be seen in the Latitudinarian emphasis on a, "...broad based...clergy seeking toleration, a reasoned religion...sometimes with Arminian leanings."⁴ Latitudinarianism has been seen as, "...Cambridge Platonism minus the sense of wonder and genius."⁵ We should also regard them as a reaction against the extreme of the Puritans and the High Anglicans.⁶ They were deliberately moderate⁷, and were in turn seen as dull.⁸ In his The Friendly Debate, [London, 1669], Patrick outlined their position as a, "...nexus of scripture, reason and tradition...", as opposed to the Non-Conformists', "...disregard for sober and plain doctrine."⁹ Hence Barrow saw, "...devotion is that holy and heavenly fire which darteth into our minds the light of spiritual knowledge, which kindleth in our hearts the warmth of holy desires..."¹⁰ Because

1. McAdoo, op.cit., p. 190.

2. Higham, op.cit., p. 329.

3. Ibid.

4. Redwood, op.cit. p. 60.

5. McAdoo, op.cit., p. 158.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid., p. 228.

8. Ibid., p. 160.

9. Ibid., p. 194.

10. Ibid., p. 233.

of this we tend to find a mixture of contemporary rational method and traditional Anglicanism in Latitudinarianism.¹ This was developed by a great impulsion to know the sense of the world, through rationalistic, empiricist investigation.²

Rationalistic assent became a key part of their outlook, as we see in Spratt's History, "...the Church of England will not only be safe amidst the consequences of a nation, but amidst all the improvements in knowledge, and the subversions about old opinions about nature, and introduction of new ways of reasoning thereon."³ Fowler's The Principles and Practices, [London, 1670], further outlines Latitudinarianism's reliance on Natural Theology, with his definition of Latitudinarianism as, "...concerned to demonstrate that religion is able to commend itself to man's free acceptance by its reasonableness."⁴ In doing this they regarded themselves as stabilising contemporary moves towards religious enthusiasm, and discension.⁵ Accordingly John Wilkins, [1614-1672]⁶, was eager to demonstrate that there is no incongruity between theology and the new philosophy.⁷

1. McAdoo, op. cit., p. 185.

2. Ibid., p. 229.

3. Ibid., p. 171.

4. Ibid., p. 161.

5. Ibid., p. 162.

6. J. Wilkins. Bishop of Chester. Went to Oxford. "He became increasingly interested in the new scientific movement. In 1638 he published The Discovery of a World in the Moon". Sympathetic to Parliamentarians, therefore made Master of Wadham College and then Trinity. Deprived at the Restoration. Founder of the Royal Society. Cross, op. cit. p. 1459.

7. J. Wilkins, Of the Principles and Duties of natural religion. London, 1675. p. 20; McAdoo, op. cit., p. 206.

Latitudinarian Theology.

Doctrinally the Latitudinarians didn't believe in the Puritan emphasis on imputed righteousness.¹ They also disliked rigid external authority.² Because of the stress they placed on natural man's ability to discern rational truth, they emphasised individual freedom and reason.³ Therefore Tillotson wanted to emancipate the pulpit from High Anglican metaphysical, and Puritan fundamentalistic preaching.⁴ Because of such an appeal to natural man, Barrow saw the Atonement as Christ's moral conquest of sin.⁵ The implication of this was that natural man must take part in such a moral crusade.

Accordingly doctrinally the Latitudinarians tended to be in an intermediate position. This was partly the result of a methodological simplification of theology. "The terms in which they defined reason, together with their active interest in practical problems, persuaded them that essential beliefs were profound and simple."⁶ Doctrinally the Latitudinarians were not only differentiated in their lack of mysticism, but there was also their comparative lack of imagination to take into account.⁷ Part of this might well have been the post-Restoration emphasis on political stability.⁸ So that even their great

1. McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 163.

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.*

4. *Ibid.*, p. 171.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 233.

6. Cragg, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 70.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 78.

emphasis on moral theology lacked urgency, "Their outlook was reasonable and dispassionate; magnanimous and charitable. Their virtues easily degenerated; their good will subsided into mere complacency..."¹

A central theme of their theology was that, "The great design of christianity was the reforming of men's natures..."²

Hence there was a strong ethical emphasis in their work, they constantly defined man's moral duty.³ Such an emphasis on morality was easily interchanged with interest in intellectual developments, so that there was a strong interest in keeping abreast of intellectual developments which seemed capable of quantifying and promoting such morality.⁴ It was for this reason that Joseph Glanvil valued Cartesianism.⁵

The Latitudinarian's Less Inhibited use of Natural Theology.

Latitudinarians saw more importance in practical considerations than removed theology, with, "...nothing...more relevant than academic theory."⁶ They believed God's existence could be demonstrated, "...his attributes could be determined by an examination of the universe; man's status and dignity could be inferred from an unbiased study of man's nature."⁷ Therefore the association

1. Cragg, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.*, p. 72.

4. *Ibid.*

5. McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 170.

6. Cragg, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 71.

of reason and demonstration was important to them', and this especially changed their view of God. The Latitudinarians were quite aware that the God of special revelation and the God of nature and reason are inimical.² In practice the latter were used to interpret the former. Therefore Joseph Glanvil, [1636-1680]³, saw it as essential that men should, "...understand the laws of matter and motion, the more shall we return the necessity of a wise mind to order the blind and insensible matter."⁴ Hence Glanvil was more concerned with finding out truth through the wholeness of experience.⁵ Out of this grew what Wilkins and Glanvil saw as a sceptical defence of mystery based on reason.⁶

The Virtuosi were supported by the Latitudinarians⁷, and they also influenced them.⁸ We can set this against the growing importance of naturalistic sciences in the second half of the seventeenth century. Whilst utilising the new mechanistic rationalism, Thomas Spratt and Joseph Glanvil regarded knowledge of science and religion as unified.

1. Sullivan, *op.cit.*, p. 224.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 61.

3. Joseph Glanvil. Religious writer. Educated at Oxford. Pre-Restoration he had sympathy with the Presbyterians. 1666 became rector of Abbey church Bath. "Throughout his life he took a keen interest in natural phenomena, especially in their bearing on religion, and he became one of the founder members of the Royal Society." Cross, *op.cit.* p. 562.

4. McAdoo, *op.cit.*, p. 167.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 171.

6. Glanvil defends reason. See: J. Glanvil, A Seasonable recommendation and defence of reason in the affairs of religion. London, 1670. p. 1; J. Wilkins, Of the Principles and Duties of Natural Religion. London, 1675. p. 29.

7. Moorman, *op.cit.*, p. 254.

8. Aaron, *op.cit.*, p. 29.

"In other words, scientists deal with natural phenomena, but they approach them in a reverent and religious spirit..."¹ Sprat thought scientific and religious methods were showing evidence of clashing, and therefore should be kept apart.² In this he was supported by Boyle³, but not by Newton⁴.

Sprat and Glanvil emphasised that faith cannot be destroyed by knowledge.⁵ Hence the non-rational elements of Calvinism found little support with them or the Virtuosi.⁶ This does not mean that the Latitudinarians set all religious authority in terms of scientific method, they, "...stood half way between the unquestioning reliance on authority which was characteristic of the early seventeenth century and the rationalism of the eighteenth."⁷ Hence they saw great advantages in the new philosophy⁸, with Tillotson urging, "...the utility of natural religion and its arguments, veering towards a deistic form of religious apologia."⁹ All this came out of a deep confidence in reason,¹⁰ that profoundly affected their attitude to soteriology. Their cosmology was

1. Cragg, *op. cit.* p. 73.

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.*

4. *Ibid.*

5. *Ibid.*, p. 73; J. Glanvil, A Seasonable Recommendation, London, 1670. p. 1.

6. Solt, *art. cit.*, p. 21.

7. Cragg, *op. cit.*, pp. 71-2.

8. McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 165.

9. J. Tillotson, Six Sermons, London, 1694. p. 258; paralleled when Stillingfleet argued against transubstantiation, by saying that Jesus' body could not be in more than one place at a time: The Doctrine of the Trinity and Transubstantiation compared as to Scripture, Reason and Tradition. London, 1687. pp. 19-24.

10. Moorman, *op. cit.*, p. 255.

clearly mechanistic and deistic.' Morality grew naturally out of their emphasis on the injunctions of natural law.² They were confident that the Holy Spirit would argue with the soul through Natural Theology. So they stressed the need for 'simple', uncorrupted doctrine for uncorrupted minds.³ With such an emphasis upon reason's role in sifting pure Christianity from natural law⁴, combined with man's innate and natural rationality, it was inevitable that Latitudinarians such as Gilbert Burnet, [1643-1715]⁵, would regard the Bible as pious allegory.

The Political Standpoint of the Latitudinarians.

The Latitudinarians were very influential, and held some of the most prominent pulpits in England.⁶ This was evident as early as the Savoy Conference of 1661, which they dominated.⁷ They refused to allow the High Anglicans to gain the theological or political initiative.⁸ They supported the Whig standpoint of modernistic emphasis on the individual's right to choose. This was not a charter for a freedom of rights, but rather an intellectual freedom to work with modern concepts of authority, rather than traditional ones. The Latitudinarians stood for a *via media*, they shunned, and were reactions against political and religious extremes.

1. Sullivan, *op. cit.*, p. 243.
 2. *Ibid.*, pp. 65, 82.
 3. *Ibid.*, p. 52.
 4. *Ibid.*, p. 119.
 5. *Ibid.*, p. 175.
 6. Cragg, *op. cit.*, p. 71
 7. Horton Davies, *op. cit.*, p. 379.
 8. *Ibid.*, p. 380.

Being removed from the High Church adoration of the Crown, and aware of the political discord a Roman Catholic monarch would cause, the Latitudinarians supported William III.¹ Despite the crisis this caused, they took the opportunity of stressing the importance of a broad church.² This was an appeal to the High Church, and to some extent the Presbyterians as well. Hence Thomas Comber, [1645-1699]³, regarded the Prayer Book as, "...so comprehensive, so exact, and so inoffensive a composure; which is so judiciously contrived that the wisest may exercise at once their knowledge and devotion; and yet so plain that the most ignorant may pray with understanding..."⁴ The Latitudinarians used the Prayer Book as a general means of unifying the Broad Church, whereas for the High Anglicans it was almost a sacred book. The Latitudinarian attitude to the Glorious Revolution in general and the Prayer Book in particular, shows their adaptation of doctrine and traditional conceptions about the Church and its relationship to contemporary culture.⁵

Accordingly whilst Latitudinarians didn't believe in an ecclesiastical polity, they still regarded politics and religion as closely tied⁶ Politics was a great preoccupation of the

1. Cragg, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

2. Horton Davies, *op. cit.*, p. 394.

3. T. Comber. Dean of Durham from 1691. He wrote, A Companion to the Temple and Closet, [1672-6], written to bring Non-Conformists back into the Church. "Comber strongly resisted James II's attempts to fill Anglican benefices with Roman Catholics, and unreservedly welcomes William and Mary." Cross, *op. cit.* p. 315.

4. Thomas Comber, A Discourse Concerning the daily and frequenting the Common Prayer. London, 1687. p. 13.

5. Horton Davies, *op. cit.*, p. 403.

6. Cragg, *op. cit.*, pp. 119-120.

bench of bishops.¹ "In his own diocese, the bishop was expected to promote his party's cause."² This was part and parcel of the way they regarded Church and State to be linked³, so that they thought any separation would affect the whole order of society.⁴ Whilst accepting this, we should be aware that the Latitudinarian movement towards individual liberty was very significant. The Non-Jurors failed because the Latitudinarians placed civil and religious liberty above High Anglican theory.⁵ When using such concepts as 'freedom', we should remember that like everyone else in the seventeenth century, the Latitudinarians regarded disunity in religion as weakness in the body politic.⁶ Hence we are really talking about freedom of thought rather than of action, which nonetheless was a very significant development.⁷

The Latitudinarian Concept of Scripture.

The Latitudinarians valued reason, they saw, "...its authority...[as]...the great defence against unregulated inspiration."⁸ "It was equally natural to them to define it in terms that made it indistinguishable from common sense."⁹ Hence

1. Cragg, *op. cit.*, pp. 119-120.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 122.

3. Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 511.

4. *Ibid.*

5. Plum, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

6. Moorman, *op. cit.*, p. 266.

7. *Ibid.*

8. Cragg, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

9. *Ibid.*

their whole religious consciousness centred on the individual's rational evaluation. Such a methodology was self-validating, and although Scripture was set at a premium, it was interpreted by reason. "The usual practice was to construct a reasonable pattern of belief, and then prove that revelation coincided with it."¹ Therefore Tillotson believed that revelation which purported to be divine, should be validated by man's rational conceptions.² So that Glanvil in his introduction to Rust's Discourses, emphasised the religious significance of, "...arguments taken from natural notions."³ Of course it, "...was impossible to be consistently rational and still remain doctrinally orthodox..."⁴ Despite this the Latitudinarians valued Scripture⁵, although their conception of it was changing to one of moralistic allegory.⁶

Accordingly for the Latitudinarians 'the new commandment' was in fact a synthesis of Natural Theology.⁷ they believed, "...true philosophy can never hurt sound divinity,"⁸ so that for Tillotson nothing contrary to reason could be contained in Scripture.⁹ Scripture was treated as more authoritative than patristic sources, but only so far as it was interpreted by reason.¹⁰ We can see that their

1. Cragg, op. cit., p. 71.

2. Essays and Reviews, pp. 2, 267.

3. McAdoo, op. cit., p. 167; J. Glanvil, A Seasonal Recommendation, p. 1.

4. Sullivan, op. cit., p. 55.

5. Ibid., p. 71.

6. Ibid., p. 55.

7. McAdoo, op. cit., p. 175.

8. Ibid., p. 194.

9. Ibid., p. 200.

10. Cragg, op. cit., pp. 71-2.

view of Scripture was well on the way to eighteenth century rationalism.¹ The Latitudinarians regarded reason as natural revelation, and therefore as enough, "...to convince us of our moral freedom and the certainty of a future life."² For Tillotson natural revelation became the dominant means of assessing the nature of all revelation.³ So that religious commitment was seen to resemble the understanding of scientific propositions.⁴ Synge believed, "The great and necessary Truths of Religion are plain and evident to every sober and inquisitive person."⁵ It was for this reason that Wilkins put Plato's testimony next to Moses'.⁶

The ascriptural nature of Latitudinarian authorities necessitated a recourse to classical conceptions of morality. Aristotelian views of God tended to be dominant, despite their incongruity with Scripture.⁷ Wilkins used the Aristotelian definition of prudence as practical reason.⁸ All this came out of a great concern with moral theology⁹, which for Patrick could never be contrary to sound reason.¹⁰ Not all Latitudinarians liked such an obvious reliance

1. Cragg, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Essays and Reviews*, p. 267.

4. Sullivan, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

5. *Ibid.*

6. McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 210.

7. Lovejoy, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

8. John Wilkins, *The principles and Duties of Natural religion*. London, 1675. p. 20; McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 223.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 229.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 194.

on the Summa Theologica,, Glanvil complained that, "Thomas is but Aristotle sainted."¹ But whatever they saw as their influencers, they had a great concern for moral theology, which tended to take the authoritative place of Scripture. Barrow explains its role, "...the study of moral philosophy, how exceedingly beneficial may it be to us, suggesting to us the dictates of reason concerning the nature and faculties of our souls, the chief good and end of our life, the way and means of attaining happiness, the best rules and method of practice."² So that even amongst the best of the Latitudinarians Christianity was, "...a type of religion which was reasonable, sincere and within the range of ordinary men."³ All this helped to promote a rational morality, the foundation of religious societies was one product of this.⁴ The Latitudinarians' sermons were ethical and high in moral tone.⁵ It was upon these grounds that they emphasised reason⁶, whilst questioning the place of too much emotion. Sermons, "...were rational rather than mystical in tone, ethical rather than dogmatic in content."⁷ They thought of the universe as a harmony of God's beneficence, with man obliged by his rational nature to act in the same way. "Having minimised the speculative element in religion, the Latitudinarians were free to emphasise its practical implications-It is wise and sober and pious."⁸ The drift of their thought was the assimilation of natural and special revelation.⁹

1. McAdoo, op. cit., p. 369. 2. Ibid., p. 236.
 3. Ibid., p. 256. 4. Cragg, op. cit., p. 62.
 5. Moorman, op. cit., p. 260. 6. Cragg, op. cit., p. 61.
 7. Ibid., p. 117. 8. Ibid., p. 158.
 9. McAdoo, op. cit., p. 175.

All this led to them believing moral certitude was within the grasp of natural man.¹ This grew out of their belief that Natural Law and Christianity are parallel advancements of worldly happiness.² Patrick saw faith as, "...the highest improvement of reason and elevates the understanding."³ Barrow coupled this with an emphasis on obedience⁴, which Wilkins interpreted as the rational and prudent choice of what seems most rational.⁵ Therefore sanctification was understood in terms of the cultivation of sincerity, "...the simplicity of mind and manners in our carriage and conversation one toward another..."⁶ With 'sincerity' being the rational treatment of things seen. "Having regularised the act of faith, the Latitudinarians were on the verge of transforming Christianity into natural morality."⁷ The idea of grace had been transformed from a divine gift into a human attainment.⁸

Accordingly for Tillotson and Patrick religion was put on a rational base.⁹ Nothing was seen to be outside reason¹⁰, and by virtue of man's rationality, the individual's perception became the most significant authority.¹¹ Natural Theology became paramount because

1. Sullivan, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 50.

3. McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 197.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 238.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 213; J. Wilkins, *Of the principles and Duties...*, p. 20.

6. Sullivan, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

7. *Ibid.*

8. *Ibid.*, p. 66.

9. McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 177.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 190.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 208.

"The law of nature is the law of reason, for voluntary agents partake of it by reason."¹ Moral theology grew out of this emphasis on Natural Theology², "The new theologians were men more at home in their gardens than at their altar rails-they thought in terms of Natural Theology."³

1. McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 311.
2. *Ibid.*
3. Redwood, *op. cit.*, p. 118.

Chapter Eleven.The Socinians.

In brief the, "...term applied to a critical and reconstructive theological movement of the post-Reformation decades, with consequent ideals of faith and morals."¹ The term recognises the influence of Faustus Socinus, [1539-1604]. His churches in Poland were greatly persecuted after a time of success. As a result they scattered to Holland and England, where they were successful in influencing what we can term unitarian theology.² However, we should be cautious, since there was no groundswell of popular Socinianism. "In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries English Socinian influence may be traced in the opinion of Latitudinarians and liberal philosophers and of the so-called Arians of the Church of England."³

Hence the Socinians were not so much a party, as a broad based movement. Their numbers included Unitarians, Latitudinarians and Virtuosi.⁴ It was for this reason that their ideas spread so easily.⁵ This is why Toland⁶, Tillotson⁷, and Locke⁸ were all associated with the

1. J. Hastings, [ed], Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics. Edinburgh. 1958. Vol. XI. p. 650.

2. Ibid, p. 652.

3. A. Richardson, [ed], A Dictionary of Christian Theology. S.C.M. 1979. p. 314.

4. Sullivan, op. cit., p. 84.

5. Ibid, p. 88.

6. Ibid, p. 119.

7. McAdoo, op. cit., p. 177.

Socinian movement. One of the key figures was Firmin, and when he died in 1697 much of the steam went out of the Socinianism.¹

As a religion, Socinianism cherished reason, they had no place for a mystical faith.² Because of this they did not accept the absolute authority of Scripture.³ However, they were far from clear about all this. Nye expressed it as having confidence in those who have transmitted the Bible, rather than in the text itself.⁴ In similar fashion the Socinians effectively denied Christ, but they didn't really connect theory with practice.⁵ Despite this lack of clarity many were very close to the Socinians. If this was not the case they would have been far more severely attacked for their view of orthodox soteriology. Hence we should regard the Socinians as the apex of a movement which relied totally on empirical rationalism. They were particularly indebted to Locke's work on the concept and role of reason.⁶

In his Vindiciae Evangelicae, [London, 1655], Owen emphasised God's perfect knowledge of all events past and future. He wrote this in answer to John Biddle's, [1615-1652]⁷, denial of predestination

1. Sullivan, op.cit., p. 105.

2. Ibid., p. 89.

3. Ibid., p. 94.

4. Sullivan, op.cit., p. 92.

5. Ibid., p. 99.

6. Redwood, op.cit., p. 101.

7. John Biddle. English Unitarian. Went to Magdalen Hall Oxford. In 1638 he developed his XII Arguments, against the deity of the Holy Ghost. This caused him a lot of trouble in the 1640's. Went to prison, he was released, but was harrassed until his death in 1662. Cross, op.cit., p. 172.

in order to emphasise man's freedom.' Allowing such private judgement they saw, "Reason and morality provided the criteria for distinguishing truth from error."² Hence it seemed logical to Nye that religious authority lay with the perception of man.³ Because of such an emphasis on individual choice and understanding, the Socinians were anti-clerical, "...for them the sacraments were only symbolic...[for]...good men extract theology from nature."⁴ Toland developed this theme to see Christianity as a means of producing civilisation.⁵ The great theme of these times was the validating of the Scriptural view of God. Because of their emphasis on a rationalistic interpretation of Scripture, they tended to view God as being unified.⁶ This approach led to Christ being regarded as a creature⁷, with his role being a moral exemplar, with each man being capable of attaining a moral perfection.⁸

Unitarianism.

This was, "A type of christian thought and religious observance which rejects the doctrines of the Trinity and Divinity of Christ in favour of the unipersonality of God."⁹ John Biddle is

1. Wallace, op.cit., p. 152.

2. Sullivan, op.cit., p. 87.

3. Ibid., p. 92.

4. Ibid., p. 103.

5. Ibid., p. 109.

6. Toon, Hyper-Calvinism, p. 37

7. Ibid.

8. Sullivan, op.cit., p. 99.

9. Cross, op.cit., p. 1390; Richardson, op.cit., p. 352.

regarded as, "...the father of Unitarianism..."¹ The movement had no formal creed, and it had adherents from across the religious spectrum. Again we are dealing with a movement which was linked to mainstream liberalism "Hence reason and conscience have now become the criteria of belief and practice for Unitarians. Owing to their belief in the abiding goodness of human nature, they are critical of the orthodox doctrines of the Fall, the Atonement and eternal punishment."²

We are examining Socinianism and Unitarianism under different headings to isolate specific trends in their Natural Theology. In reality the terms were interchangeable.³ Peter Firmin was a Unitarian and leading Socinian, as was the clergyman Stephen Nye.⁴ Both show the popular appeal these movements had. They flourished after the freedom of the Great Revolution, but had been a growing force since the 1660's.⁵ Because so many Unitarians had links with the establishment, and also because overt Unitarianism tended to be radical, Unitarians tended to seek aninimity.⁶ John Biddle's works were republished in 1691, with the movement development with such works as Arthur Biddle's The Naked Gospel.⁷

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1. Cross, op.cit., p. 1392.
 2. Ibid.
 3. Sullivan, op.cit., p. 84.
 4. McAdoo, op.cit., p. 83.
 5. Sullivan, op.cit., p. 83.
 6. Ibid., p. 84.
 7. Ibid.

The Unitarians divorced philosophy from contemporary theology.¹ Like the Socinians they were anti-clerical². They preferred a more individual faith and regarded morality as the rational assimilation of the individual with Natural Theology.³ They thought of nature as obeying uniform laws which were natural rather than scriptural.⁴ Against this background they believed that it was, "...of his intellect...[that]...man stood between the eternal and the transitory."⁵ Therefore Matthew Tindal only paid lip-service to revelation in so far as it concurred with reasonable demonstration.⁶ The upshot of this was a severe indictment of the credibility of Scripture.⁷ Any use they gave to Scripture tended to be subserviant to their rationalistic designs.⁸ Above all we should view the Unitarians as the apex of the increasing emphasis on men, "...thinking for themselves...[to be]...intellectually honest."⁹

Such an intellectual honesty tended to think of God in terms of logical concepts, thereby depersonalising God.¹⁰ Nye treated God as an impersonal ideal¹¹, and in the process undermined the Trinity¹².

1. Sullivan, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.*

4. *Ibid.*

5. *Ibid.*

6. *Ibid.*, p. 93.

7. M. Tindal, *Christianity as Old*. London, 1730, p. 13; Sullivan, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

8. Sullivan, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

9. Horton Davies, *op. cit.*, p. 454.

10. Toon, *Hyper-Calvinism*, p. 33.

11. Sullivan, *op. cit.*, p. 102.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 97.

Accordingly it was natural for Toland to treat miracles as if they were explicable through Natural Theology.¹ Within this framework God was not conceived of as supernatural, so that we should be aware of an emerging Deism here.² The traditional concept of the Trinity was shattered, because they regarded it as contrary to reason.

The Deists.

The term is seen as, "...the system of natural religion which was first developed in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century."³ It was a system of rationalism. "The Deists held that reason itself was capable of demonstrating the propriety of believing in God as 'The Intelligent Author of Nature' and 'Moral Governor of the World'.⁴ Deism was closely alligned to the work of Newton, Locke and especially Toland's Christianity Not Mysterious, [London, 1696].

The methodological and epistemological changes caused by such groups as the Puritans and Virtuosi helped to foster the growth of Deism.⁵ The Virtuosi in particular, "...discredited traditional theology, and therefore rationalist natural theology became very dominant."⁶ In 1660 Pascal estimated Deism to be a rational religion independent of revelation.⁷ Such a concept of reason was greatly

1. Sullivan, op. cit., p. 128.

2. Ibid., p. 205.

3. Cross, op. cit., p. 385.

4. Richardson, op. cit., p. 89.

5. Toon, Hyper-Calvinism, p. 33.

6. Cragg, op. cit., pp. 73-5.

7. Sullivan, op. cit., p. 206.

by Locke'. So that their whole view of the world was rational, with all knowledge expressed through Natural Law.² It followed that they denied the supernatural.³

All this meant that any truth for man is contained in nature, as we see in Tindal's Christianity as Old as Creation.⁴ The implication was that Natural Theology was perfect and complete, so that to recognise the validity of Special Revelation, was to undermine the unity of the natural, rational system.⁵ Hence a Deist was, "...one who acknowledges the existence of God upon the testimony of reason, but rejects revealed religion."⁶ They demonstrate a complete reliance on Natural Theology and rational method.⁷

In seeing the Deists' view of Natural Theology as perfect knowledge⁸, we also need to remember that they associated knowledge with morality. They regarded natural morality as so complete that nothing could be added to it.⁹ "...the moral law is nothing but the conditions of our actual being..."¹⁰ Locke held a similar view.¹¹ Therefore the Deists opposed any restraint on personal enquiry, "...men could arrive at moral and religious views for themselves by rational enquiry..."¹²

1. Cragg, op. cit., p. 77.

2. Ibid., p. 159; Sullivan, op. cit., p. 206.

3. Ibid.

4. Tindal, Christianity as Old. pp. 2, 101; Cragg, op. cit., p. 159.

5. Cragg, op. cit., p. 159; Sullivan, op. cit., p. 93.

6. Sullivan, op. cit., p. 206.

7. Ibid., p. 220.

8. Cragg, op. cit., p. 159.

9. Essays and Reviews, p. 270.

10. e.g. Anthony Collins', A Discourse of the grounds and reasons of the Christian Religion. London, 1724. p. vi; Essays and Reviews, p. 270.

11. Williams, op. cit., p. 156.

12. Redwood, op. cit., p. 24.

It is important to remember that in the period before 1700 the Deists were not really a party. "At this time the term Deist was often a means of abuse with no specific meaning."¹ However, it is fitting that we should identify those factors which characterised the emerging Deism. Of these, the authority they set on Natural Theology was most significant.² "What distinguished the Deist was not an interest in natural religion, but the belief that natural religion alone was sufficient, without need for any supernatural revelation."³

The Quakers.

"The Friends were organised as a distinctive christian group in 1668 when Fox, [1624-1691], drew up his 'Rule for the Management of Meetings'. "⁴ "They constituted a 'way' rather than an 'orthodoxy', a friendship group rather than a church. Dispensing with the outward forms of religion...they nevertheless adopted very formal manners of speech, dress etc. in daily life."⁵ The religious beliefs of the Friends are set forth in the classic work of Robert Barclay, [1648-1690],⁶ Theologiae Verae Christianae Apologia, (London, 1676).⁷ The

1. Sullivan, op.cit., p. 206.

2. Ibid., p. 205.

3. Toon, Hyper-Calvinism, p. 35.

4. Cross, op.cit., p. 529.

5. Richardson, op.cit., p. 131.

6. R. Barclay. Scottish Quaker apologist. Educated at the Roman Catholic Scottish college in Paris. Followed his father into Quakerism in 1667. "He soon acquired a wide learning which, combined with considerable intellectual powers, made him the most weighty of all Quaker theologians." In 1683 he was made Governor of East New Jersey.

Cross, op.cit., p. 130.

7. Cross, op.cit., p. 529.

central doctrine is that of the 'inner light', which they set above such traditional authorities as Scripture.

The Puritan devaluation of the sacraments reached a peak with the Quakers. Their intense concentration on the 'fire within', could allow no sacerdotal interference between the individual and God. Therefore William Penn, [1644-1718]', saw Quakerism as profoundly individualistic, a monastery within each person, "...the soul is encloistered from sin."² It was for this reason that they were iconoclastic, they tore down anything which infringed upon the individual as a receptacle of the Holy Spirit.³ Therefore for the Quakers New Testament worship is one of living revelation proceeding from the heart.⁴ It was such an emphasis on the sanctity of the individual and the authority of personal revelation, which led them to refuse oaths, violence and above all to press for personal freedom.⁵ This is why they placed such an emphasis on honest living and integrity.⁶ The Quakers saw every aspect of life touched by the Holy Spirit, hence nothing was set beyond Christian standards.⁷

1. W. Penn, Quaker and founder of Pennsylvania. Partly educated at Oxford, from where he was sent down in 1661 for refusal to conform with the restored Anglicanism. By 1668 he was becoming a Quaker. 1669 he wrote No Cross, No Crown, a classic Quaker statement. In the 70's he was taken with the idea of forming a colony with security of conscience. Established the colony by 1684. Unfortunately supported what he saw as James II's toleration. As a result he lost the governorship on Pennsylvania. Remained in England, and wrote a great deal. Cross, op. cit pp. 1042-1043.

2. Horton Davies, op. cit p. 294. 3. Ibid. 4. Ibid.

4. A. Lloyd, Quaker Social History, 1669-1738. London, 1950. p. 19; Cragg, op. cit p. 67.

6. A Raistrick, Quakers in Science and Industry. Newton Abbot. 1968. p. 67.

7. As we see in John Gratten's emphasis upon personal evangelisation, whilst emphasising the maintenance of his family and profession, see: A Journal of the life of that Ancient Servant of Jesus, John Gratten. London. 1720. pp. 89, 112.

Therefore they saw the doctrine of the indwelling Christ as central.¹ This was the guidance of the inward light², which John Owen saw as mystical in nature.³ Such a concept was known to be subjective, and things could get out of hand. Fox⁴ relied on group leaders to regulate this.⁵

Because of such an emphasis in the individual and toleration, it is not surprising that the Quakers tended to come from the socially disadvantaged craftsmen and the professions.⁶ As we saw with the Puritans Webster and Dell, such a grouping had rebelled against hierarchical conceptions of society, church and scholarship. Accordingly he advocated toleration, religious liberty and the new liberal scholarship, as we see in the work of Penn and Barclay.

1. Raistrick, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

2. *Ibid.*

3. Wallace, *op. cit.*, p. 156.

4. George Fox. Founder of the Society of Friends. "In 1646, after a long interior struggle, he won moral victory in reliance on the inner light of the living Christ." He was frequently imprisoned. "To promote the growth of the Society of Friends he undertook frequent missionary trips." His famous Journal, was first published in 1694. See: Cross, *op. cit.*, pp. 516-517.

5. Raistrick, *op. cit.*, p. 25; Horton Davies, *op. cit.*, p. 531.

6. Raistrick, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

Chapter Twelve.Parallels in Liberal Methodology.

In our discussion of the Cambridge Platonists we saw a strong methodological rationality which jarred with their mystical epistemology. Such an incongruity didn't stop this liberal rationalism', if anything by the end of our period it was stronger. We should regard the Latitudinarians, with their reliance on the Cambridge Platonists and the Great Tew Circle², as users of the same liberal method. They mark a step on, in their emphasis on authoritative reason.³ This was not a denial of faith, but it does demonstrate that liberal rationality was entering their epistemological world-view.⁴ Even when we look at the High Anglicans, with their epistemological commitment to the traditional church catholic, we encountered a clear reliance on rationalistic methodology. However, whilst Jeremy Taylor emphasised reason against a background of spirituality, Stillingfleet had a deeper commitment to liberality, which in the long term meant that his methodology undermined High Anglican epistemology. When we move on to the Virtuosi, the acceptance of rational method is almost total. They regarded all knowledge as rational, with the empirical assessment

1. Aaron, op.cit., p. 25; McAdoo, op.cit., p. 81.

2. Horton Davies, op.cit., p. 179.

3. Solt, art.cit., p. 21.

4. Sullivan, op.cit., p. 63.

of Natural Theology the basis of their cosmology.¹ Such a move was seen as a constructive attempt to form a new synthesis of science and religion.² But for Newton such a synthesis had a rationalistic-empirical base.³ Private assessment was a growing feature implicit in this epistemological method. It was with such groups as the Socinians that this achieved its most uninhibited development. Private judgement was centrally important to them, with rational method as the means of assessing all truth.⁴ Similarly with the Unitarians we see a reliance on rational method⁵, with any credibility in religion and revelation judged through rationalism.⁶ Because of this miracles were natural phenomena to Toland.⁷ When we turn to the Deists we see an even more developed belief in the law of a Natural Theology which denied the existence of supernatural revelation.⁸ Even though some saw this attitude as little short of atheism⁹, the Quakers used such scholarship at times.¹⁰

Another common theme was the centring of perception and truth in the human mind. This is shown by the Cambridge Platonists, especially in the way they associated morality with the reasonable

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1. Solt, *art. cit.*, p. 22.
 2. Koenigsberger, *op. cit.*, p. 231.
 3. *Ibid.* p. 232; Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 187.
 4. Sullivan, *op. cit.*, p. 87.
 5. *Ibid.*
 6. *Ibid.*, p. 92.
 7. *Ibid.*, pp. 127, 208.
 8. *Ibid.*, pp. 208, 228.
 9. Redwood, *op. cit.*, p. 14.
 10. Raistrick, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

perceptions of the mind.' In the same way the Latitudinarians emphasised personal assent², as did the High Anglicans.³ Rationalistic empiricism was certainly the main impulse of the Virtuosi, with the individual's rationality a means of making a synthesis of all knowledge.⁴ The Socinians were even clearer in their emphasis on the importance of private judgement and assent.⁵ On the basis of such empiricism, Unitarianism attempted, "The impossible task of a purely, radically rationalist interpretation of Scripture..."⁶ For the Deists personal restraint of any kind could not be tolerated. Matthew Tindal, [1655-1733]⁷, believed that only human knowledge was relevant.⁸ The whole Deist movement was aimed at the average educated man's conception of rationalistic religion.⁹ The Quakers are different in that there was no real rationalism, but their development of the 'inner light' can be regarded as empiricist.¹⁰ For them all religious experience was understood to proceed from the individual's heart.¹¹

1. Sullivan, *op. cit.*, pp. 53-5.

2. McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 174.

3. Cragg, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

4. Koenigsberger, *op. cit.*, p. 232; Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 188.

5. Sullivan, *op. cit.*, pp. 87, 95.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 92.

7. Matthew Tindal. One of the leading Deists. Went to Oxford. Except for a short time he stayed in the Church of England. He, "sought to show that, common to all rational creatures, 'there is a law of nature or reason, absolutely perfect, eternal, and unchangeable; and that the design of the Gospel was not to add to, or take from this law, but to free man from superstition.'" Cross, *op. cit.*, p. 1360.

8. Tindal, Christianity as Old, pp. 13, 69, 232.

9. Cragg, *op. cit.*, p. 161.

10. Raistrick, *op. cit.*, p. 25; Horton Davies, *op. cit.*, p. 531.

11. Horton Davies, *op. cit.*, p. 494.

We have already seen that after the strictures of Calvinism the Cambridge Platonists sought a *via media*.¹ To do this they tended to have a moralistic view of faith², which was based on an optimism in human nature.³ For the Latitudinarians such a moralistic stance was combined with a similar idea of reason.⁴ Therefore for Newton all truth was unified, with moral truth rational in character.⁵ In the same way the Socinians emphasised the congruity of reason with morality⁶, with all assent to religious truth based on the individual's clear understanding of it.⁷ Developing this the Unitarians understood religion to be parallel to the rationalistic principles of Lord Herbert of Cherbury.⁸ Accordingly Christ's mission was regarded as the arrest of the decay of natural religion.⁹ Similarly the Deists, "...sought to establish a tangible standard with which to evaluate a doctrine."¹⁰ Hence for Charles Blount, [1654-93]¹¹, Natural Theology and morality

1. Cragg, *op. cit.*, pp. 68-9.

2. Essays and reviews, p. 291.

3. New, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

4. Sullivan, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

5. Koenigsberger, *op. cit.*, p. 232.

6. Sullivan, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 95.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 85.

9. *Ibid.*

10. *Ibid.*, p. 228.

11. Charles Blount. English Deist. "He is best known by his Anima Mundi, [1679], a sceptical discussion of the subject of immortality, and the Two First Books of Philostratus, concerning the Life of Apollonius Tyaneus, [1680]. The notes of the latter gave offence, by their attacks on 'priestcraft' and sympathy with the free thought of Hobbes. Cross, *op. cit.*, p. 179.

were the same.' In a similar way the Quaker emphasis on personal integrity, simplicity and honesty, was the by-product of their belief in the integrity of man.

Just as liberal method changed the view of religion, it also changed the perception of revelation. For the Cambridge Platonists this was inevitable because of their belief in there being no conflict between reason and revelation.² Even though the High Anglicans had great respect for tradition and Scripture, their rationalistic methodology tended to dictate their view of Scripture.³ For the Latitudinarians there was no inhibition in their emphasis on rational method. Hence for Tillotson, natural revelation became the dominant means of assessing the nature of special revelation.⁴ The Virtuosi synthesised this conception, with all knowledge being unified and natural.⁵ Accordingly it was from a base of Natural Theology that Boyle looked upon science as a means to study the way in which God was revealed in the universe.⁶ This was developed by the Socinians to mean that only reason's assessment of Natural Theology was a sound basis for knowledge, thereby excluding supernatural revelation.⁷ Similarly the Unitarians undermined the credibility of revealed religion⁸, so that all revelation was explicable through Natural Theology⁹. In the same

1. Sullivan, *op. cit.*, p. 228.

2. Aaron, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

3. Cragg, *op. cit.*, p. 71; McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 184.

4. *Essays and Reviews*, p. 267.

5. Redwood, *op. cit.*, p. 29; Solt, *art. cit.*, p. 21.

6. Solt, *art. cit.*, p. 21.

7. Sullivan, *op. cit.*, pp. 87, 90.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 95.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 127.

way the Deists insisted that belief should be vested in natural religion, with a denial of the possibility of supernatural revelation.' Although the Quakers did not set up any great intellectual challenge to special revelation, their emphasis on the 'inner light' led to empiricism.² So that for them, "...the worship of the New Testament...is spiritual, proceeding from the heart."³

The Common Rational Interpretation of a Natural God.

There was a common move away from viewing Scripture as a primary authority. So that Deists such as Tindal wanted credal statements which were independent of special revelation, and which achieved universality only when conceived, "...by unaided human reason..."⁴ If we look at the work of the Latitudinarian Tillotson, we see it as part of a movement by which religion was put on a rational base.⁵ Hence for Boyle the world was, "...a school for rational

1. Sullivan, op. cit., p. 208.

2. Raistrick, op. cit., p. 25.

3. "The Christian convent and monastery are within, where the soul is encloistered from sin; and this religious house the true followers of Christ carry about with them; who exempt not themselves from the conversation of the world, though they keep themselves from the evil of the world in their conversation... True godliness don't turn men out of the world, but enables them to live better in it and excites their endeavours to mend it." William Penn, The Witness of William Penn. New York, 1957. p. 48.

4. Sullivan, op. cit., p. 206; M. Tindal, Christianity as Old. pp. 69, 236.

5. McAdoo, op. cit., p. 177.

souls to learn the knowledge of God."¹ Against this background grace was equated with morality, so that Nye viewed Christ as a moral crusader.² It was upon such a basis that Locke in his Reasonableness of Christianity, proclaims Christ as Messiah.³ However, whilst referring to Jesus as Messiah, the tendency was to do so within a framework of Unitarianism⁴. Therefore Newton's work moved away from Christocentrism⁵, and stressed that the common core of belief was the conception of, "...a supreme Being, the immortality of the soul, and the obligation to moral conduct."⁶

A tendency to subjectivism paralleled these views. One of the most distinct manifestations of this came with the Quaker's belief in the indwelling spirit.⁷ Such an empiricism had a theological history in the Reformed emphasis on the priesthood of all believers in general, and movements such as the Anabaptists and Antinomians in particular. Whilst taking this into account, Quaker individualism can nonetheless, be seen as part of mainstream liberalism. We see this in a 1662 letter of Penn to his wife concerning the education of their children, "For their learning be liberal...but let it be useful knowledge, such as is consistent with truth and godliness...I recommend the useful parts of mathematics."⁸ When we turn to men such as Nye, this

1. McAdoo, op.cit., p. 271.
 2. Sullivan, op.cit., p. 85.
 3. Aaron, op.cit., p. 39.
 4. Redwood, op.cit., p. 162.
 5. Barbour, op.cit., p. 40.
 6. Barbour, op.cit., p. 39.
 7. Raistrick, op.cit., p. 17.
 8. Ibid., pp. 32-3.

emphasis on an individual, rational method was more overt.' Therefore only those principles evident to reason were accepted², with Tindal emphasising that such knowledge was preferable to faith.³ In such a system God's function, "...in the present was thus reduced to the preservation of the cosmic order..."⁴ This view was parallel to Descartes'.⁵ So that the Virtuosi's methodology was isolating and invalidating any spirituality in their epistemology.

This balance between a spiritual and mechanical epistemology was mirrored in their concept of God. Hence God was seen as a wise mind who will judge man rationally.⁶ Nye's concept of such a mind was wholly materialist, "...his God worked through the mechanical order of nature, so that prayers and supplication were useless to him."⁷ This was part of a move away from Christocentrism.⁸ Some semblance of the Trinity was maintained by the Latitudinarian Sherlock when he argued that the Trinity is made up of three, eternal minds.⁹ Tillotson recognised the implications of such a conception, especially when Sherlock's pupil,

1. Sullivan, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

2. McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 271.

3. Sullivan *op. cit.*, p. 96; Tindal, Christianity as Old, pp. 2, 69.

4. Barbour, *op. cit.*, pp. 37, 41-2.

5. *Ibid.*

6. Sullivan, *op. cit.*, p. 102.

7. *Ibid.*, Barbour, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

8. *Ibid.*

9. Sullivan, *op. cit.*, p. 98; Sherlock, The Doctrine of the Catholic Church. London, 1697. p. 5.

Joseph Bingham, [1668-1723]¹, said much the same.² Liberal methodology was making them loose touch with the traditional concept of the Trinity.

The Place of Scripture within this Epistemology.

For Tillotson revelation was set within a framework of Natural Theology, "...all our reasonings about revelation are necessarily gathered by our natural notions about religion, and therefore he who sincerely desires to do the will of God is not apt to be imposed on by vain pretences of divine revelation."³ Accordingly special revelation became acceptable only so far as it fulfils the natural concept of God.⁴ This inevitably led to an emphasis on revelation as reason,⁵ which in turn was expressed through empiricism.⁶ This was taken a step further by Tindal who stressed that all truth must be conceived by unaided human reason, and therefore be independent of special revelation.⁷ Such a stress on reason inevitably led to Scriptural authority being expressed

1. Joseph Bingham. Educated at Oxford. Got into trouble in 1695 for preaching Tritheism. His most famous work, the Origines Ecclesiasticas, [10 vols, 1708-22], with its wealth of systematically arranged information, on the hierarchy, organisation, rites, discipline, and calender of the early church, was the fruit of some twenty years' labours and has not been superseded. Cross, op.cit., p.173.

2. Sullivan, op.cit., p.105.

3. Essays and reviews, p.267.

4. Ibid; Sullivan, op.cit., p.131.

5. Sullivan, op.cit., p.70.

6. Williams, op.cit., p.151.

7. Sullivan, op.cit., pp.102, 207.

through it.¹ We see a clear shift in authority from spiritual grace to nature², whereby nature and not historical revelation was seen as the key to a knowledge of God.³ We should not imagine that such a development of the concept of scripture was a thoughtless by-product of scientific method. For Scripture had been changed into a secondary authority⁴, into pious allegory.⁵

Therefore religion became less a matter of living experience, than of intellectual demonstration.⁶ So that Latitudinarians such as Tillotson condemned the pagans for, "...sinning against the law written on their hearts", rather than for not believing in Christ.⁷ The upshot of this was that it was impossible to be doctrinally and rationalistically orthodox. With the emphasis on the latter, religion became moralistic.⁸ Tindal showed this to be the inevitable outcome of seeing reason as primary.⁹ Whilst Joseph Glanvil insisted that such a stance did not make them neglect Scripture.¹⁰ It was for this reason that Stillingfleet in his *Sacrae*, [1662], emphasised the reasonableness of Scripture.¹¹ This was a general trend¹², which can be seen as

1. McAdoo, *op.cit.*, pp. 200, 286.

2. Wallace, *op.cit.*, p. 159.

3. McAdoo, *op.cit.*, p. 207; Barbour, *op.cit.*, p. 40.

4. Sullivan, *op.cit.*, p. 65; Koenigsberger, *op.cit.*, p. 233.

5. Barbour, *op.cit.*, p. 53; Sullivan, *op.cit.*, pp. 128, 175.

6. Barbour, *op.cit.*, p. 40.

7. J. Tillotson, *Six Sermons*. London, 1694. p. 258; Sullivan, *op.cit.*, p. 64.

8. Sullivan, *op.cit.*, pp. 55, 137.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 207.

10. J. Glanvil, *A Seasonable Recommendation*. London, 1670. p. 1.

11. McAdoo, *op.cit.*, pp. 287, 182.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 286.

severely weakening the traditional concept of revelation and religion.¹ For the tendency we see in the work of those such as Locke and Toland, is one of allowing reason to be its own authentication.² In this we see a significant shift from the former concepts of spiritual reason, "There was inevitably more emphasis on measurement, calculation and proof, so that the idea of reason with which theological method was working was unable to escape being affected...by the current stress on ratiocination and demonstration."³

Accordingly Locke viewed Scripture as far simpler than people imagined, being a synthesis of reason, simplicity and morality.⁴ Therefore faith was increasingly associated with precise concepts in words, "...rather than the meanings behind the faith."⁵ Such an attitude peaked with the Unitarians and Deists⁶, but was by no means uncommon.⁷ It was for this reason that the Latitudinarian Burnet explained revelation through moral necessity,⁸ as did Locke⁹; with Newton for his part attempting, "...to make a statement in mathematical terms of the ratio between present and future happiness..."¹⁰ Above all there was a unified emphasis on expounding a moralistic duty for all men.¹¹ Toland showed this to be a duty with no mystery¹², with whatever

1. McAdoe, *op. cit.*, p. 285.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 384.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 303; Sullivan, *op. cit.*, p. 194.

4. Moorman, *op. cit.*, p. 256. 5. McAdoe, *op. cit.*, p. 93. 6. Sullivan, *op. cit.*, p. 228.

7. *Ibid.*

8. e.g. T. Burnet, *Telluris Theoria Sacra*. London, 1681; and T. Bennet, *Sacred Theology*. London, 1965. pp. 213-7.

9. McAdoe, *op. cit.*, p. 306. 10. *Ibid.*, p. 297.

11. J. Toland, *Letters to Serena*, p. 9; McAdoe, *op. cit.*, p. 183.

12. Sullivan, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

value religion has resulting from its rational credibility.¹

The right of individual judgement was seen as central, "...they tried to accomodate both the right of every individual to interpret the Bible as he thought fit, and the insistence that articles of faith could only be established on the basis of express revelation and comprehensibility."² Therefore Toland and Locke emphasised the discoveries of individual sense and intellect³, and stressed the integrity of reasonable conscience.⁴ So the Socinians regarded the right of private judgement as fundamental.⁵ This in turn had close simlarties with the Cambridge Platonist concept of natural man's capacity to prove by reason whether any proposition came from God.⁶ Much the same could be said of the High Anglican Jeremy Taylor.⁷

Reason became the standard against which all knowledge of God was set. For Jeremy Taylor reason was more than ratiocination, he saw it as guided by divine revelation.⁸ Hence whilst Taylor compromised Scripture to reason, his emphasis on spiritual reason seemed to overcome this⁹; but significantly he stressed, "...Scripture, tradition, councils and Fathers, are the evidence in a question...reason is the judge."¹⁰ This was continued by the Latitudinarians Seth Ward¹¹, Bentley, Glanvil, Wilkins and Ray.¹² This led them to think that, "...Scripture should

1. Sullivan, *op. cit.*, p. 123; McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 304.

2. Sullivan, *op. cit.*, p. 70. 3. *Ibid.*, p. 123. 4. *Ibid.*, p. 131.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 87.

6. Henry More, *An Antidote against Atheism*. London, 1683, pp. 53-72; Bass, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

7. Bass, *op. cit.*, p. 67. 8. McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 65. 9. *Ibid.*, p. 67.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 74. 11. *Ibid.*, p. 200. 12. *Ibid.*, p. 286.

read with the same critical presuppositions which applied in studying a profane text."¹ Within such a system Ray and his followers attempted to stress the harmony of Scripture, while Blount and Burnet criticised biblical integrity, and doubted that it was to be taken seriously.² At best Nye used reason to conceive of God as a materialistic mind parallel to the laws of nature.³ It was for this reason that Boyle assigned an architectural role to God.⁴ A wholly natural view of God was emerging.⁵

These Trends Grew out of a Subjective Emphasis on Natural Theology.

The Latitudinarians emphasised that all doctrine should be self-validating. If it is not, though, "...an Angel from heaven should bring it, he...[viz the individual]...will not receive it."⁶ Even with Scripture, "...no other doctrines which are not sufficiently revealed in scripture, either in express terms, or by plain necessary consequence...are to be esteemed any part of that faith in religion."⁷ Hence when Synge undertook to list twenty-one tenets of gentlemanly Christianity, only the last, the existence of angels, was not implicit in Lord Herbert of Cherbury's five self-evident propositions of natural religion.⁸ Such an approach was a mixture of validation and individual

1. Sullivan, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

2. John Ray, Three Physico-Theological Discourses. London, 1693. pp. 65-77.

3. Sullivan, *op. cit.*, p. 102.

4. Barbour, *op. cit.*, pp. 41, 50.

5. Sullivan, *op. cit.*, pp. 61, 128.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 65.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 68.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 67.

assent. All knowledge was conceived as propositions which need to be assessed.¹ We can see this as an attempt to, "...accomodate both the right of every individual to interpret the Bible as he saw fit and the insistence that articles of faith could only be established..." by their rationality.² Therefore Anthony Collins, [1676-1729]³ "...sought to treat free-thinking as the effective medium of conscience, so that man could not be moral without searching for the truth."⁴ Therefore there was a growing emphasis on personal freedom and reason.⁵ So that Patrick wrote, "...nor is there any point in divinity, where that which is most ancient doth not prove the most rational."⁶

Toland showed that a different conception of authority was emerging. For him the discoveries of Scripture were less certain than those of the senses and of the intellect, which were seen as the seat of authority.⁷ Collins developed this with great emphasis on the thinking conscience.⁸ So that religion was increasingly placed on a

1. Sullivan, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 70, 93.

3. A. Collins. Deist. Educated at Cambridge. Greatly influenced by Locke. He denied that the Old Testament contains prophecies of Christ. As he held prophecies to be the only valid proof of the truth of Christianity...his work was intended as an implied rejection of it. He also denied the canonicity of the New Testament, as well as the immeteraility and immotality of the soul. Cross, *op. cit.*, p. 312.

4. Sullivan *op. cit.*, p. 231; McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

5. McAdoo, *op. cit.*, pp. 163, 359, 349.

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 193, 207-9.

7. Emphasising that the intellect should not be burdened with supertsition. See: Toland, Letters to Serena. pp. 2-4.

8. Sullivan, *op. cit.*, p. 231.

natural base, which peaked in the views of Deism.' The stress on individual intellect was rational², "...reason steers by so excellent a compass...things cannot be believed unless there is reason..."³ Faith was increasingly conceived as elevated reason, "...[faith as]..the highest improvement of reason..."⁴

1. McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 158.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 177.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 196-200; Higham, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

Conclusion.

We have been concerned with the Theory of Knowledge. Our special interest has been to study the developments of Puritan conceptions of Natural Theology, and the way in which this group integrated its understanding of man's knowledge of the natural world with its theology. Whilst saying this, we need to bear in mind the difficulties we encountered in the Introduction when we tried to define Puritanism. This inevitably means that references we make to Puritans and Puritanism are by no means binding on the whole of the movement, or for that matter on all of the work of the Puritan or Puritans to whom we are referring.

Protestant thought in England was certainly not a homogeneous construct. It drew its inspiration from several sources. The men whom we are discussing had been deeply influenced through their education by the classical culture of Greek and Rome. But they were even more deeply influenced by the Bible. It was inevitable that these two influences should create severe intellectual tensions. How were the presuppositions of human knowledge as understood in Greco-Roman culture to be reconciled with those of the Bible? But we must be aware that Puritanism was by no means a unified movement.

Of course, English Protestants were not the first people to be confronted by this challenge. Classical culture had filtered into the European mind through medieval scholasticism. That, in turn, had

influenced the Protestant Reformers. Thus John Calvin had striven to create an acceptable synthesis of Scripture and Scholasticism. But his synthesis involved a radical criticism of medieval thought, not least because he wished to preserve the Biblical insight into the Divine ordering of history. The Puritans took Calvin as their starting point. While seeking to be faithful to his guidance, they had their own contribution to make to Calvinistic thought. It has been asserted that Puritanism wove together three strands.- rationalism, moralism and mysticism. There is much to be said for this assertion, if only because it helps us to understand how Puritan piety, while seeking to respect the role of reason, was eager to commit itself with enthusiasm to the pursuit of moral excellence and communion with God.

The Puritans were not an isolated group. We have considered others who were engaged in the effort to provide philosophical justifications for Christianity. And we have seen that at several points these groups were in agreement with each other. Respect for reason and the conviction that belief should be tested in the light of reason, was common to almost all of them. This attitude of mind is not to be wondered at since so many of them shared a common pattern of education in the Bible and classical studies.

We have already said that we have been mostly concerned with the theory of knowledge. All the groups we have looked at related such knowledge to God. For many of the Puritans we looked at this meant

balancing ideas of a transcendent God against the immanent God of history. They also had to strike the right balance in the sources of this knowledge, between Scripture and reason. Their own faith, and the testimony of Reformed Theology, put Scripture first. But this was a time when confidence in reason was increasing. This went beyond the belief that reason is a technique of understanding, to a belief in reason as the locus of authority, viz. to rationalism. More especially, there was a widespread belief that the Age of Light had dawned. In part we are referring to the emergence of science. This would challenge Puritanism in many ways. Most importantly it would question the nature of Scriptural authority. Science also questioned many of the scholastical presuppositions of the Puritans. But whilst science was obviously different, it can also be seen as a logical development of aspects of Puritanism. Federalism might well be the bridge between them. This was a technical elaboration of predestination which set Scripture and scholasticism within a rigid system. It was very influential. Basically it sought to set all creation within a plan of salvation. This inevitably led to a reconsideration of the definitions of God, man and the world. These were in turn set within given systems. Thus a unified Theory of Knowledge, or an epistemology, emerged. Against this background we can see that there was a common preoccupation with the need to produce an epistemology.

The Anglicans were involved in this process. For various reasons they had failed to develop their faith in the same way as Federalism allowed the Puritans to develop theirs. Laud was aware of this, and by a system of patronage sought to encourage an acceptable development of the Anglican faith. The work of men such as Jeremy Taylor, John Hales and Robert Sanderson was the result. But the Civil War checked this. Hence there is a sense in which contemporary scholasticism failed to go to the heart of Anglicanism; whereas with Puritanism it did. But whilst Anglicanism was not leading the way in the development of the Theory of Knowledge, it certainly used it, and supported all the developments. This does not mean that great scholars were absent from Anglican ranks. Richard Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity [1594] was revolutionary in the way it explained authority in terms of reasoned, individual choice. However, his thoughts were in many respects isolated in Anglican circles. This is evident from the way his papers were mishandled after his death. Lancelot Andrewes showed very little understanding of Hooker's thought when he was putting these papers into some sort of order. No, the fact is that it is to the Virtuosi that we have to look for the heirs of Richard Hooker; and even beyond them to Edmund Burke in the eighteenth century.

Accordingly the Anglicans were not united in the way that Federalism united the Puritans. This meant that Anglicans such as Jeremy Taylor could stress that reason is spiritual, whereas Sanderson

was more modern in regarding it as mathematical. Now in philosophical terms they were very far apart, but they were united in the authority they set in rationalism. Both believed that knowledge is unified, and that reason is the only way of expressing this. Therefore differences were swept away by the process of reasoning. Basically this was regarded as a process of observation, deduction, and systematization. Clearly the Anglicans were influenced by the principles of the developing physics, and since this had no real basis in their own thought, they must have looked to the Puritans to some extent. The point is reinforced by the Cambridge Platonists who deliberately set out to challenge Puritanism. Although aspects of their ideas of a spiritual reason were influential, they failed because of the increasing strength of physics.

Therefore the Puritans, Anglicans and Cambridge Platonists were all linked by a common interest in epistemology. In this sense they have important parallels with the Virtuosi. It is true that the scientists can seem far removed from Puritan or Anglican theology. But they had much in common, especially in regard to scholasticism. From the Puritans' standpoint the Federal world-view is similar to the Virtuosi's concept of the world. Both took it for granted that there is a single law of reason against which everything must be measured. Going beyond this there was also a shared belief in the Chain of Being, along with classical ideas of microcosm and macrocosm. The important point is

that scientists such as Newton and Boyle did not formulate their theories from practical observations alone. Many of the key concepts within their epistemology are present within Puritanism and to a lesser extent in other groups as well.

Hence the development of a Theory of Knowledge was really a matter of achieving clarity of system. This was a time of great intellectual change, but this was not just for the sake of change. The Puritans and Virtuosi were driven on by the need to express knowledge more clearly. The common reason for this was that it brought them into closer communion with 'God'. Of course, 'closer communion', could mean many things. Part of this clarification was to concentrate on the thinking mind. This was not wholly for scholarly reasons. Indeed, here we must underline the celebrated Reformed concept of the 'priesthood of all believers'. The Puritans undoubtedly drew on this in the revolutionary way they related all knowledge to the position of the individual. Perkins' chart in his Aurea Arnilla (1592) sets the man, whether he be a saint or sinner, within a system which contains God himself. It was this idea which drove scholars such as Ames, Chillingworth and Locke to express knowledge in terms of individual perception. However, in using 'reason' to define the individual, the tendency was to depersonalise. In this sense they moved back into the innumerable generalisations of the Schoolmen. But this did not retard development, for the same push for clarity continued despite the

changes. Newton was not like Perkins or Owen. Perkins had explained knowledge from the vantage point of the individual. Newton explains any object from the basis of universal mechanistic principles. We should underline the impersonalism of Newton's system, but in that it clarifies thought through rational authority, Newton is faithful to the preceding developments. In short, the century leading up to Newton has one great theme: the emancipation of knowledge through Natural Theology.

The Drift Towards Scholasticism.

From our standpoint Puritan Federalism can seem a very complex combination of Reformed Theology and scholasticism. We should bear in mind the definition of Scholasticism in the Introduction. This is the use of scholastical method to achieve clarity of system. It was not the embracing of Medieval Scholasticism. The key point for us is that scholastical method took aspects of Puritanism down the road to rationalism. The basic reason for this is that if one expresses God through such a rational methodology, the definition which you get out at the other end is scholastical. Aspects of this were present from the earliest times, certainly in Perkins' Arilla Aurea of 1592. However, there was great development as we see in Ames' Madulla (1627), Charnock's Existence and Attributes of God (1672), Howe's Living

Temple [1676], and Theophilus Gale's Court of the Gentiles [1670]. Even this approach was uniquely suited to people in the seventeenth century. It helped to shape ideas on many levels of life. Part of this was the development of a physics based on Natural Theology. Now whilst it is most difficult to quote chapter and verse, it is hard to believe that the Virtuosi were not affected by these developments. Considering the standing and contribution of Puritan scholars such as Perkins, Ames, Owen, and Howe, along with the mass appeal of men such as Baxter in the publication of these views, the probability is that the Virtuosi were deeply influenced. But the most that we can do is to draw parallels between all the movements we have looked at.

If we turn to Newton and Locke we see something akin to a Puritan vocation. Newton strove to make knowledge intelligible through the unity of natural concepts of being. This is essentially the same as Puritans such as Howe and Charnock. It is true his terms of reference are more refined. The Laws of Nature are in clearer focus, but just like some of the Puritans he sought to explain the unity of being through the authority of rational method. The inevitable consequence was that ideas about authority changed. What happened was that they had moved from the model of allowing reason to explain Scripture, to Scripture explaining reason. This inevitably drew in the individual as interpreter and assenter. Nevertheless, this was still a system where Newton, like the Puritans and other groups, sought to define God.

Authority had moved from Scripture to a rational system which placed Scripture amongst other authorities.

This subtle, but profound change, is also shown in their attitude to morality. Time and again we saw the Puritans such as Baxter expecting a man to use his natural reason to act morally. In 1672 Charnock pointed to the common civilisation of men as a proof of natural reason. All this led to less emphasis on the inspiration of grace from God. Morality became the by-product of rational endeavour. So much so, that by the time of Daniel Williams and Joseph Hussey, even the Church was understood in these rational/moral terms. This was also the view of John Toland and Tillotson. The Nonjuror crisis in 1688 is a particularly good example of this. The Nonjurors failed precisely because the majority of Churchmen had a moral view of the Church. They had no time for what they regarded as out-moded ideas about Divine Right. This development also betrays the growing breach between theology and knowledge. For Richard Hooker or Baxter it was unthinkable that the Church should not embrace all knowledge. Whereas for Tillotson and Locke, the Church was a moral institution. This does not mean that they denied Divine Right or Scripture, they simply gave them a lower priority. This was no less true amongst some Puritans. Of course they still had a strong concept of the Church, but the perception had shrunk to a primarily moral role. This is shown by Hyper-Calvinists such as Davis and Hussey, who quoted Puritan scholasticism without understanding

its basis. On the other hand we are struck by contemporaneous Puritan scholars such as Theophilus Gale and Peter Sterry who used and understood Puritan scholasticism, whilst not experiencing the basic religious motivation of the men who wrote it. For both groups morality became most important, for the substance was beyond them as demonstrated by the dramatic decline of Puritanism in the late seventeenth century. These trends were especially evident in New England. Just forty years later the struggles of the mighty Jonathan Edwards, were mostly with those who had this moralistic concept of the Church, and who marched under the banner of the Half Way Covenant, of 1666. Edwards wanted no division between theology and the rest of knowledge. As a result he was shunned for many years.

There is an attractive theory that Calvin and the succeeding Calvinists set about the task of reconstructing the epistemology which had collapsed during medieval times. It is attractive because its broad generalisation is neat. However, closer examination leads us to doubt whether this was their main intention. And even if they did reconstruct an epistemology, the movement was by no means homogeneous. Accepting this, we can nevertheless see important themes of scholasticism in their work. One such was their use of classical, Neoplatonic ideology, especially of the Chain of Being. We discussed its use in Charnock's thought as a means of setting temporal and spiritual being in a rational order. Time and again we have been struck by its use; overt in Charnock

and Baxter, whilst more refined in Perkins's plan of salvation. In fact there seems to be a striking resemblance between the idea of the Chain of Being and Federalism. Both were a means of placing the individual within a rational system which held all being. In this sense Puritans such as Alexander Richardson and Charnock were involved in the production of a scholastical system. But this was the result of their belief in an articulate faith and union with God, not of a faith in scholasticism. This is especially evident in the way they breathed the energy of revival into scholasticism.

But no matter how we qualify the nature of Puritan scholasticism, in the last analysis it began to dominate aspects of their thinking. This became especially evident in our close examination of Charnock's Attributes of God. For eleven hundred pages scholastical ideas are continually taken for granted. Basically he used it to achieve clarity. We should note this against the contemporary concern to refine a Theory of Knowledge. Thus no matter how much the Puritan scholasticism lacked unity, it was involved in a general movement to liberate rationalism. This was the theme of Milton's Areopagitica (1644). But we should not regard this as the intense specialisation of scholars. Assurance in the authority of rational method was only a means of articulating the revival, and it was the revival that impelled pastors such as Charnock to write substantial books. In return it helped to explain the view of man and the world. We

must remember that this was a time of huge political, social, economic and intellectual change. Assurance in a rational system not only helped to bring these about, it also breathed confidence. However, we must stress that Puritans such as Charnock had a methodological, rather than an ideological commitment to rationalism. This inevitably led to contradictions in their work. But it does underline their commitment to a traditionally Reformed faith.

The Anglicans had the same confidence in rationalism. Not being Federalists they expressed it through a more open use of the Chain of Being. Richard Hooker's work was important in the way it expressed rational law as emanating from God in a harmonious chain. Thus we have the same emphasis upon clarifying the Theory of knowledge, the same combination of grace and nature. Of course they had basic differences with the Puritans. But belief in a rational system was probably the most important theme in their thought, and on this issue both groups were united.

Accordingly rationalism became a guiding principle. This does not mean that Scripture was intentionally devalued. But the fact is that if you interpret Scripture with a rational method, the interpretation you will get back will be rational. In this sense Puritans, Anglicans and the Cambridge Platonists were working in the same field. Their work became abstract and philosophical, increasingly concerned with abstract ideas rather than tangible facts. This was the

basic theme of the Whichcote-Tuckney debate(1651). Whichcote stressed that scholars should be free to express God and religion through contemporary Theories of Knowledge. Although this was a clash between a Puritan and a Cambridge Platonist, many Puritans had much in common with Whichcote.

Viewed as a whole, all these groups were using Natural Theology to re-state a Theory of Knowledge in rational terms. The Virtuosi must be included in this. The common theme is of the unity of knowledge, and Newton brought the developments to a logical conclusion by explaining this through a rationalistic physics. In this sense the Virtuosi's work was the plausible conclusion of all prior developments.

The Concept of Authority.

The search for a basis and definition of authority was a constant theme throughout this period. This was most closely associated with philosophical scholasticism. Such an attitude was present from the earliest times, as we saw with Calvin's association of Scriptural authority with revealed propositions. Therefore the basic, and developing premise was one of rational authority. The Puritans combined this with a stress upon interiority. With their Ramist background and also using ideas from the concept of the Chain of Being, Perkins and

Ames outlined an individual rational ascent. Despite the stress on individual understanding, this was really a matter of the authority and freedom of rational thought. This becomes clear with Milton's Areopagitica. It is also the driving force behind Roger Williams' The Bloody Tenet, where we come close to a charter of rights. But equally there are parallels in the actions of Quakers such as James Nayler. We can also include the Anglicans within this process, although ideas were curbed to some extent by theories of 'The Church Visible', 'Ecclesiastical Polity', and 'Divine Right'. Richard Hooker drew up the classic Anglican definition of ecclesiastical polity, and yet his theories of individual rationality were very close to those of Puritans such as John Preston in his Soul's Preparation for Christ. Much the same can be said of William Chillingworth's The Protestant Religion (1638), in which he swept away dogmatism on the basis of the rational man's right to choose. These themes were especially developed after the Restoration in the work of the Latitudinarian Patrick. This, along with the Nonjuror crisis helped to take concepts of authority beyond traditional concepts. These ideas were further developed by the Virtuosi. They set concepts of rational man within the mechanistic operation of nature, and closely associated thought with rationalistic induction.

The development was one of setting authority with rationalism. For all of the groups we have looked at, this had obvious links with 'God'. The fact that they tended to associate 'God' with scholastic

principles meant that there was no great break when they increasingly set authority in rationalism. This was true of Puritan such as Charnock. Although lacking the Puritans' Reformed ideas of a God who has little to do with scholasticism, the Anglicans still had to overcome powerful theories of the 'Church Visible' and 'Divine Right'. They rejected Laudian ideas of authority, just as the Puritans tended to leave Reformed ideals behind them. The most dramatic example of this was at the 1662 Savoy Conference, where High and Low Church fundamentalists were blocked by the majority Latitudinarians who had different ideas about authority. Turning away from the Reformed doctrine which Baxter set before them, or the sacred ideals of Cosin's High Church, they believed in the individual perceiving authority as reason, as manifested by the idea of a great and wise mind behind creation. This was the theme of Glanvil's Philosophia Pia (1671). Basso exemplifies this when he termed natural law as God's intellect. The expression of authority through rationalism was also present in the work of the Virtuosi. It was for this reason that religious men like Newton and Boyle sanctioned the use of the ancient philosophers and alchemists. There is a basic similarity with the Puritans such as Baxter and Howson in the way Toland and Locke linked rationalism with individual assent, and then set this against a background of the unity of knowledge. The parallels are highlighted when Toland developed the idea of the elect as the few who could understand.

For the Puritans reason became the key method of assessing the nature and substance of their authorities. It was for this reason that the mainstream Puritans Baxter and Owen, reacted against those Puritan sects which denied the importance of reason. In like manner Laud understood the Anglican faith as a religion he could commend to the reasons of all men. In similar fashion Chillingworth asserted the supremacy of natural reason, thereby allowing the individual to choose. Thus there was a common tendency for all aspects of Scripture and the Church to be expressed through Natural Law. For John Hales this meant the basic acceptance of individual intellectual freedom. Since 'intellectual' meant rational, 'rational' was understood to be central within a unified system of knowledge. Therefore ideas pertaining to intellectual freedom were understood to be deeply religious. Wilkins and Tillotson saw Christianity as a rational religion which rational man should and would choose. With these ideas of man's innate reason the Anglicans were forthright in their weak concept of the fall. In some ways this distances them from the Puritans. But we should remember that the Puritans' attitude to the 'Fall' was full of contradictions, as we saw in the attitude of the Westminster Confession. The important point is that the same exaltation of reason, rational methodology and concept of innate rationality, was present with the Puritans. There was the same development with the Cambridge Platonists with their ideas of reason as

the candle of the Lord within man. The whole idea of rational existence was given added impetus with their idea of reason immersed and plunged into matter: 'plastic reason'. Therefore the idea of authoritative reason stretches throughout all these groups in an unbroken line. It was no less true with the Virtuosi. Their expanding mechanistic physics rested on the sole principle that rational man could perceive the operation of natural law. Clearly we have moved far beyond reasoning as a tool of the understanding, to reason as the locus of authority as in rationalism.

These ideas led the Puritans such as Baxter to ascribe great authority to the concept of rational man. This was characterised by confidence in the inner light of reason, rather than in the Reformed idea of Scripture or in any external ecclesiastical authority. It was against this background that a concept of the rights of man emerged, as can be seen in their developing attitude towards the state. This is clearly seen in the ideas of Roger Williams of Rhode Island, and graphically outlined in his two volumes: The Bloody Tenet, and, The Bloody Tenet yet more Bloody. His work left Reformed ideals behind in its emphasis upon the rights of man in relation to nothing outside himself. We can hardly regard William's work as isolated within the Puritan movement, when Owen wrote the preface to his first volume. Similar themes emerged in the work of Acontius, and also with Richard Hooker's ideas of the natural powers of the human mind. Accordingly

there was a common belief that the nature and ability of man lay in his power of reason, with this in turn set within a unified system of rational knowledge. Such a belief bridges the gulf between the Leveller John Lilburn and Newton. Newton for his part linked ideas of man's rationality to his expanding natural physics by treating man's reason as identical to the rational behind mechanistic nature.

In going this far in our comparison we have touched upon parallel and diverging themes. The role of the Virtuosi assumes great importance in that men such as Newton pulled these themes together. We have outlined very strong ideas of Neoplatonic atemporalism, which defined God and man in terms of an atemporal rationality. Conversely there was the Aristotelianism which was such a feature of early Calvinists such as Beza, Zanchi and Martyr. There was also the emerging Ramism which developed a physics which looked to nature for principles of order and reason whilst scholastic metaphysics collapsed. Against the background of such developments we cannot prove that Newton grew out of a movement which encompassed these themes, but his ideas clearly associated 'man' as reasonable, with 'God' as the same. In such an all-pervading, mechanistic methodology and epistemology 'reason' became a means of preserving an atemporal notion of humanity, whilst setting this ideal within a rationalistic structure.

Whether or not we accept this theory, there is no doubting the common belief in the ascendancy of reason, rather than in a supernatural

religion. We saw this in the work of major Puritans such as Owen, Baxter and Thomas Goodwin. For Owen to believe that God must conform to the dictates of scholastical reason is very close to Chillingworth setting reason above dogma , or Whichcote demanding that reason should be free to judge all things. Clearly religion was moving beyond traditional ideas of the authority of Scripture. It was conceived as very much the product of a rational mind, for reason was regarded as the essence of both man and God. Such ideas were also prominent among the Virtuosi. Tindal, like Whichcote and Chillingworth, dismissed dogmas that didn't tally with reason. Locke articulated what many theologians had implied when he said the mind and soul are synonymous. The same idea was present in Cudworth's work. Therefore information is to be placed before the mind, with authority being vested in the mind's judgment. This was one of the key themes of Richard Hooker's work. Even John Owen at times viewed Scripture as a rational means of persuading the rational creature. John Norton echoes this with his emphasis on the innate qualities of the reasonable soul. It was against such a background that the Latitudinarians have been seen as testing God and dogma at 'the bar of reason'. The common theme is of a faith in the authority of reason as the locus of authority. There seems to have been a clear progression. Downam's immensely influential book, The Christian Warfare, [1604] had declared the relevance of salvific history to the individual and therefore the nation. The Bible was regarded as the

record of how God had saved his chosen people in time. But the development of Natural Theology led to less emphasis upon history, for 'reason' is essentially eternal. Thus the development of a naturalistic epistemology encompassed all being and time. By the time of the Virtuosi this had progressed to the extent that nature and its laws, rather than history was seen as the primary source of a knowledge of God.

Accordingly reason became the dominant theme and methodology. For Puritans such as Charnock 'reason' had been associated with the description and definition of God. The same conceptuality is present in the Anglicans' ideas about reason and grace. This was a common theme, and when Tenison said Scripture must conform to reason, he was only one amongst many. The same approach was present in the Cambridge Platonist's ideas of reason immersed in matter. Similar ideas appear in the work of Locke when he correlated rational proof with faith. It was for this reason that he saw reason as synonymous with God. Hence the Virtuosi seem to be at the peak of this movement, especially when they understood faith in God to be describable with mathematical certainty.

Whilst we can agree with all of the above, we need to qualify what we have said about Puritans and Scripture. Puritans such as Owen and Thomas Goodwin were obsessed with Scripture. Their hefty tomes are strewn with references, and indeed most of their writings were Biblical exegesis. So when we conclude that conceptions of authority took them

away from their Scriptural roots, we are not saying this was deliberate, or by any means complete. We must remember that Puritanism was basically a movement of revival. It was not a unified philosophy, or a single theology. The energy of revival, when combined with world-class scholarship, influenced Natural Theology in a significant way. Now this is not saying that they set out to achieve this. If the Puritans had wanted to produce a perfect system of Natural Theology, they would have done a much better job than they did. We can say the same in regard to theology. The Puritans could number some outstanding theologians amongst their ranks, but they did not produce a unified theology. It was flawed, because they tended to put the heat of revival before the discipline of a system. All this means that Puritanism thrived despite internal contradictions. Hence they could produce a Natural Theology which undermined Scripture, whilst being vehemently Scriptural themselves.

The Place of Man in their System of Authority.

The developing concept of man is central to our discussion of authority during this period. As we saw with Norton and Howe, the Puritans regarded 'man' as a rational being within whose mind all information was tested at the bar of reason. Perkins, Ames and Preston

all set the conscience within the understanding. This was why Owen would later regard persons as idealistic essences. For Baxter this was part of the process of seeing the essence of God within each individual: innate reason. In this way they associated 'manhood' with the highest levels of rationality. Therefore Milton's *Areopagitica*, (1644) could demand intellectual and personal liberty in the same terms. For John Norton, (1644) this would mean a personal sovereignty. We see something very similar when the Cambridge Platonists expressed personal consciousness through the intelligible ideas of the divine mind. Before this Richard Hooker had outlined the basis of a personal, rational authority, which was later extended by Chillingworth. Thus like the Puritans the Anglicans closed the gap between man and God, and they used ideas of a common rationality to do this. However, in both of these groups the example of Reformed dogma, Scripture, or the traditions of the Church, masked such developments. This was not the case amongst the Virtuosi. Locke closely associated individuality with mental activity. More importantly he saw such mental activity as completely independent. When at times they stressed subserviance to the Laws of Nature, it was taken for granted that such 'Laws' were rational just like the individual. Hence for Newton the 'Laws of Nature' were the key component of man's religious and intellectual standing. It seems incongruous that the first great exponents of naturalistic physics should define individuality in terms of atemporal reason and rational

reflection. The idea is obviously scholastic and Neoplatonic. But far more important than this observation is that it strongly suggests the chain of development from the late sixteenth century.

Federal Theology had played a significant part in this rational subjectivism. For the Puritans such as Perkins and Ames the logical certainty of predestination had elevated the individual within a system which could neglect the authority of Scripture. The Presbyterians interpreted this as necessitating a personal choice, so there was the development of the idea of 'sufficient election'. In extirpating ideas from this basic 'choice', they tended to associate salvation with something that can be understood. Another corollary was a greater stress on external forms of discipline, because they believed all men had the power to conform, as we saw with Baxter's Holy Commonwealth [1658]. With the Independents there was a more intense emphasis upon the light within. They would explain such a light as the fruit of election, but even so we are dealing with much the same emphasis on rational man as with the Presbyterians. Hence Roger Williams' plea for liberty has much in common with Milton's. Both groups were united in their stress on the rights and abilities of elect man. Therefore from the earliest times Puritanism was characterised by an emphasis upon rational man, combined with spiritual subjectivism. In the post-Restoration period persecution would further encourage inwardness. We can best understand the conceptuality by using Baxter's allegory of man's rational conscience

being like a courtroom. In this courtroom reason, will, and understanding sit in judgment of all received information. Since God's essence was associated with the hypostases of 'reason', 'will', and 'understanding', man's self-sufficiency was understood to be God within. Obviously Proverbs 20:29 comes to mind, and here we have a parallel with the Cambridge Platonist's concept of spiritual reason within man. In similar terms Jeremy Taylor echoed Lancelot Andrewes when he associated faith with reason. Like the Puritans, Stillingfleet regarded this personal rationality as the indwelling divine nature. Anglicans such as Wilkins used this idea of personal freedom to deny predestinarian theology, but the common emphasis upon rational freedom links both groups. In similar fashion Boyle stressed the importance of experimental observation.

The 'freedom' all these groups demanded, was for man as far as he personified rational method. This is a common theme in the work of Milton, Locke, Toland and Tindal. This trend would peak in the work of Newton, but for our purposes it underlines the interrelated development of epistemology and methodology. This is underlined by the fact that all the groups we have looked at had no real time for the 'rights of man', they were really talking about the rights of rational man. They were basically emancipating the emerging physics. This is demonstrated by the difficulty many had in coming to terms with Roger Williams when he demanded rights for the individual. It also explains the reaction

against Hobbes' 'might is right' theory, thereby undermining the developed theories of rationalistic moralism. We should also remember the reaction against Quakerism, and the mid-century attack on Puritan scholasticism by the likes of Webster and Dell, which was strongly rebutted by Owen, Baxter and Waterhouse. Therefore all the movements were more than prepared to defend scholastical conceptions of the freedom of rational thought. We can cite the popular reaction against Cartesianism in this argument. The basis of this reaction against Descartes may well lie in his stretching the implications of the developing physics beyond what they were used to. We have already mentioned that the major religions had factors built into them which masked the dominance of Natural Theology. Descartes built no such masking features into his philosophy. He dramatically demolished theories of extended being. His ideas of non-extended being postulated a machine-universe that was the logical outcome of the developing physics. The reaction against his works did not stop many writers from extensively using his ideas. Baxter, Howe, Cudworth, Wilkins, Stillingfleet, Locke and Newton are all linked by their regard for Descartes. The fact that they could still condemn him underlines the incomplete nature of the developing epistemology.

In his book The Kingdom of God in America, Niebuhr points to the importance of the concept of a free God in religion. This point can be seen as especially important in the make-up of Protestantism. If we

further accept that all of the groups we have been looking at were affected by Protestantism, it is obvious that there has been great development beyond the basic idea of a free God. In the course of events it was rational methodology which became free. This drift towards scholasticism is clearly demonstrated within the development of Richard Baxter's work. In his Welsh Saints, Dr Nuttall implies that Baxter's increasing use of scholasticism led him away from his spiritual roots. This is seen as the reason why he later condemned the spirituality of Powell, Llwyd, and Morgan, men who had been closely associated with him in his earlier years. This underlines development within the attitude of some of the Puritans. In a similar fashion Richard Hooker expressed the concept of God through Natural Law. For Sanderson this meant that the actions of God should conform to the rational method of the individual. Even the conservative Stillingfleet saw the individual sharing substance with God through rationality. None of this means that they were getting any less religious. It does demonstrate the growing authority of the 'rational individual'. Against this background it seems a natural step for the Virtuosi to regard religion as a matter of intellectual demonstration. Therefore there was a common theme of the 'god-like' substance within man assuming a dominant role within religion. Cudworth acutely isolated this 'substance' as mind.

The changing perception of the individual is especially shown in the crucial contemporary issue of Ecclesiastical Polity. We have

already discussed some Puritans rational view of the individual. Because of this Roger Williams' revolutionary work, the rights of man can be regarded more as a political philosophy than theology. His ideas on political authority lying within man were far from easy for most Puritans to handle. This is because Williams was doing what Webster and Dell had tried to do. He was divorcing individual rights from all scholastical concepts of man as a rational animal. But whilst most Puritans would not do this, Williams's call for liberty coincided with the more widespread call for intellectual liberty. As well as this the whole development of the Puritan movement can be understood in social terms. As those who wanted to break the old order and have the power base widened. We have already discussed how the concept of election became a crucial means of articulating this. Because of the obvious links with the status quo, and strong ideas such as 'ecclesiastical polity', 'Divine Right', 'tradition', and the 'Church Visible', the Anglican church did not have the same social outlook as Puritans such as Owen. However, the commitment to the emancipation of individual reason is beyond all doubt. The extent of this was shown by the Nonjuror crisis. Faced with the undeniable claims of James Stuart, the vast majority were at one with the Puritans' theories of corporate authority in backing parliament. Therefore a common theme of the sovereign authority of man's reason emerges.

The Growth of Liberal Moralism.

We have already discussed the common expression of man, God and soteriology through rationalism. Against this background concepts such as innate reason led to strong emphasis upon moralism. If a man could choose, it followed that morality was central to human existence. The Puritans and Anglicans agreed completely on this matter, they did so for scholarly and practical reasons. Lack of medicine, poor living conditions and more brutal standards meant that all lives were lived against a background of pain and suffering. John Owen lost ten of his eleven children. Therefore morality was understood to be essential for civilisation in this life, and for the hope of an after-life, that was all to present in those days. Against this background the great Reformed concept of 'predestination' had a practical role to fulfil. It gave them assurance that God would give them strength to be moral, whilst giving standards against which such action could be measured. For the Presbyterians this meant considerable concentration upon outward actions. The rational became a key part of this, with Presbyterian predestination theology being very much a uniting of the head and heart. This was why the Presbyterians were so repressive during their short time in power. As far as Baxter was concerned it was better to have a Nero, than to let the mob take over. The Independents didn't agree with Baxter's emphasis on outward morality. However, they did share the idea

that a rational being was a moral creature. So that whilst Owen denounced the Anglican Parker for equating morality with faith, Congregationalism and Presbyterianism was moving in much the same direction. There was a widespread notion of making oneself a fit temple for God. The Anglicans shared the same ideas, stressing that 'moral certitude' should be each man's goal. For Tillotson and Stillingfleet this was achieved through using reason to achieve man's innate potential through the consideration of Natural Theology. This idea was close to that of the Cambridge Platonists. In similar fashion, Virtuosi like Toland valued Scripture only so far as it was moral and relative to the individual. Therefore the Deists understood religion as a means of establishing an acceptable standard. Thus the Socinian Firmin understood Jesus as 'Christ-like', because he maintained these 'acceptable standards'.

Hence morality can be seen as a common theme in the emergence of an epistemology. For Puritans such as Baxter, Owen and Howe it meant standards which the individual in society could adhere to. This was the reason why Baxter deplored Hobbes' amorality. It was the same within Anglicanism. Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity, the Clarendon Code, and William Law's A Serious Call, [London, 1728], were all the products of the belief in corporate and individual morality. No less for the Virtuosi, morality was a key part of their view of being. Linking morality to the existence

of God and the soul , they used mathematics to calculate the ratio between present and future happiness. This is based upon the basic premiss that natural man can perceive rational laws in himself and the world, and thereby conduct his life. Because of this juxtaposition of morality and rationality Locke could regard the expansion of natural philosophy and morality as the same.

For the Puritans the joining of rationalism and morality led to complexity. For Howe it would mean God being synonymous with rational morality. No less for the Anglicans morality and reason dictated how a man should act towards his fellow man. For Barrow morality took its place within the unity of rational knowledge. The Cambridge Platonists approached morality within a similar unity. For them it formed the basis of an intellectual communion with God as supreme reason. Similarly for Locke religion took its place within a Natural Theology, with morality as part of this unity.

Accordingly morality developed from the initial practical necessity of living one's life under Christian principles. From this the large-scale ideas of an ecclesiastical polity grew quite naturally. The Puritans were part of this. All their calls for liberty were for liberty for their religion and freedom for the intellect. Rationality became the key factor in unifying ideas of God as other-worldly, and God as attainable. It was for this reason that the 'good' of philosophy was closely associated with morality and God. We saw this in the thought of

the eminent Puritan philosopher John Howe. The Anglicans were of a similar mind. For Jeremy Taylor religion was just a matter of moral obedience. The Cambridge Platonists understood this 'obedience' in terms of man's natural abilities. Hence morality was the rational fulfilment of innate ability. Similarly for Locke morality was a matter of reason and conscience.

The Concept of God.

This was a time when no scholar could avoid the concept of 'God'. For John Downname religion was a matter of the exaltation of God. We have already discussed how this 'exaltation' was subject to great development, especially through scholasticism. But even so, some aspects of scholasticism are in the roots of Puritanism. This is so if we regard Calvin's theology as containing aspects of a Neoplatonic philosophy of history. All these factors combined to develop a theology with a rationalistic concept of God and his attributes. This was present in all the groups we looked at. So that when the Virtuosi viewed God as mechanistic necessity and Natural Law, it was the logical conclusion of these developments.

The concept of God was increasingly expressed through the idea of the unity of knowledge. Locke pointed to the reason within man as

the 'very voice of God'. Therefore Newton believed that to know the rational pattern of creation is to know God. The same belief in reason, and the unity of God through Natural Law, is present with the Puritans such as John Howe. This close association of God with rational system led to them using rationalism to describe the nature of his being. Therefore Howe thought it necessary to assert that God is the highest of excellencies, infinite extrinsically and intrinsically.

Accordingly there is a sense in which scholasticism goes to the very heart of Puritanism. If Federalism can be viewed as a philosophy of history, then all other aspects of Puritan theology would be affected by this. One corollary was a drift towards a unitary notion of God. Howe explains the reason for this as the philosophical standard this God must be 'one'. In a similar light Owen even admitted that the Trinity is contrary to reason. In an attempt to balance this Howe saw Jesus as the perfection of man's innate qualities, and as such an example to which all men could conform. This was the inevitable result of Natural Theology's inability to accept Jesus in scriptural terms. The strength of the concept of a unitary God would mean that the Hyper-Calvinists would regard Jesus' function as idealistic, and infinitely achieved in the unity of the Father.

The Cambridge Platonists also viewed God within the unity of philosophy. They especially stressed the synonymity of God and reason, as proved by the light of individual understanding. Like aspects of

Puritan thought they had great difficulty in accommodating the Trinity within this system. The Latitudinarian, Joseph Glanvil, tried to overcome this problem by using the idea of the Chain of Being. By this he used Neoplatonic ideas to postulate immaterial spirits at the top of the chain. The links in such a chain were rational, and so this inevitably drew in their rational concept of man. This was another way in which Anglicanism helped to close the traditional gap between God and man. This was part of a contemporary trend which had great difficulty in balancing ideas of Trinity and God against 'self'. Rationalism became the standard against which everything was measured. As we see when Sherlock thought he had solved the problem by postulating the Trinity as three eternal minds. More particularly God is expressed through the ideal of rational man. Therefore the seventeenth century was characterised by a developing concept of God. However, the God which it offered was impersonal. He is the product of rational proof.

In many ways the Virtuosi's work was the logical development of these trends. Like all the other groups they expected God to produce reasonable credentials. Because of the testimony of Natural Law they viewed God as 'reason'. Cartesianism exerted a great influence with its concept of God as a universal mathematical law. Looking inwards at man's rational soul, and at nature, they deduced God to be the intelligent designer. Therefore it was nature rather than Scripture that they regarded as a primary authority. As they had done with man, so with

God; the tendency was to express God in and through the certainty of the developing rationalistic physics.

All our discussion has grown out of the wish to explain why aspects of Puritanism in the seventeenth century could be connected with rationalism in the eighteenth century. It is a remarkable historical fact that the Presbyterians [for example], although they were strictly orthodox in the period leading up to the Restoration, began to modify their position subsequently, and step by step, moved through Baxterianism to Arminianism, and later on to Arianism, Socinianism and finally to Unitarianism. Our basic task has been to understand the link between the Puritans' early Calvinistic orthodoxy and their later Liberalism. Within this Conclusion we have especially emphasised the role of Rationalism, Moralism and Scholasticism in this process.

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