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***A WARNING FOR FAIR WOMEN* and the Puritan Controversy**

by Charles D. Cannon

The purpose of this paper is to examine the relationship of *A Warning for Fair Women*, anonymous Tudor domestic tragedy, to the Puritan controversy over the profaneness and immorality of the stage.¹ Though the Puritan controversy has been the subject of a number of studies,² there has as yet been no suggestion that the staging of domestic drama may have been an accommodation of the hostile Puritan criticism of stage plays. A number of items of evidence, both external and internal, testify to the alignment of *A Warning for Fair Women* with the Puritan controversy and support the hypothesis that the author of *A Warning for Fair Women* was consciously accommodating the adverse criticism of the Puritans by writing a play least calculated to arouse further the already-aroused Puritans.

The hostility of the church to stage plays is no innovation of sixteenth-century English Puritanism. Notwithstanding the fact that the Christian church served as a matrix for the development of English drama, clerical hostility to stage plays had existed for centuries. The hostility of the early Christian church may be noted in Tatian's second century characterization of the

¹I wish to express my appreciation to the Faculty Research Committee of the University of Mississippi for financial support of this study.

²See E. N. S. Thompson, *The Controversy between the Puritans and the Stage, Yale Studies in English* (New York: Henry Holt, 1903); E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1923), I, Chapter 8; Aaron Myers, *The Representation and Misrepresentation of the Puritan in Elizabethan Drama* (Philadelphia, Pa.: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1931).

actor as a man who “is one thing internally, but outwardly counterfeits what he is not.”³ Moreover “In 305 one of the earliest councils forbade women to give actors their garments for stage use.” In addition to this injunction the council “prohibited . . . the marriage of Christian women with players” and required players to “renounce the calling before admittance to the church.”⁴ Thompson points out “all through the Middle Ages, down into the 16th century, repeated edicts of church councils attempted to curb the passion ... for public entertainments,” but the passion was so thoroughly ingrained that “their production could never be totally suppressed.”⁵

Despite the ancient hostility of the church to plays, the hostility was not always so thoroughgoing and unremitting. In fact, during the early Elizabethan period in England “the majority of the prominent churchmen took a moderate view of many things later abhorred.” In 1576, for example, Northbrooke complained “that his brother divines seldome spoke of the great and growing abuse” that the stage constituted.⁶ The seeds of the controversy, however, appeared early, for “as early as February 4, 1565, Richard Beaumont, Master of Trinity College, and Vice Chancellor of Cambridge, reported to Archbishop Parker that ‘ii or iii in Trinity College thinke it very unseeming that Christians sholde play or be present at any prophane comoedies or tragoedies.’ ”⁷

Especially during the earlier years of the controversy there was likely to be a distinction made between academic performances of plays and the professional performances. Though in the earlier years “the two Universities ... presented a united front against the invasion of their precincts by professional companies,” each university had differences of opinion about the “legitimacy of amateur performances by its own members.”⁸

³Thompson, *Controversy*, p. 131.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 20.

⁵*Ibid.*

⁶*Ibid.*

⁷F. S. Boas, *University Drama in the Tudor Age* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1914), p. 227.

⁸*Ibid.*

Leicester observed the distinction between the professional and the academic performance of drama when he "as Chancellor of Oxford, approved in July 1584, the statute against 'common Stage Players.'" Though he approved the statute against "common Stage Players," he did not interdict the performance of plays by the university. In fact he styled them "great funderances of Learning" and urged that they "be continued at set times and increased."⁹

Thompson has suggested that the absence of hostile treatment of Puritans in the drama during the early years may be accounted for the fact that "The greatest patrons of the early theater, Leicester and Essex, were themselves of the Puritan party, and out of respect for them their proteges may have kept silent."¹⁰

As representative as Leicester's statement of the academic sentiment was at the time he made it,¹¹ there were undoubtedly kindred spirits at Oxford of the "ii or iii" at Cambridge who in 1565 questioned the wisdom of Christians' acting in or viewing plays at the university. As Puritan sentiment increased "there arose a party in both Universities eager to extend the ban upon professional performances to acting in any form, and to proscribe even the edifying plays which had been approved by Martin Bucer."¹²

The time between 1576 and 1583 was a "critical" one for "the writings against the stage." According to E. K. Chambers, the significant works against plays were written by clergymen and "playwrights who had embraced conversion," the contribution of the clergymen being *Dicing, Dauncing, Vaine Playes, or Enterludes* (1577) by John Northbrooke, and the *Anatomie of Abuses* (1583) by Phillip Stubbes.¹³

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Thompson, *Controversy*, p. 196.

¹¹ Boas, *University Drama*, p. 227.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Chambers, *Elizabethan Stage*, I, 254.

The repentant playwrights had “the advantage of speaking from inner knowledge of the profession they were attacking.” Of the three pamphlets written by the two converted playwrights, “*The Schoole of Abuse* (1579) and *Playes Confuted in Five Actions* (1582) were by Stephen Gosson, who became vicar of St. Botolph’s in the City, and the third was by Anthony Munday, who, as Gosson put it, returned to his own vomit again, and resumed playwriting.”¹⁴ Munday’s contribution to the polemical literature against the stage was *A Second and Third Blast of Retrait from Plaies and Theatres* (1580).¹⁵

With evidence derived from the works of Gosson and Munday, Ringler finds the major objections of the attackers of drama to be that “plays were a waste of time and a waste of money; that they were inciters of sin and teachers of vice; that acting was counterfeiting and so was a species of lying; and that the playing of women’s parts by boys was prohibited by the Bible because Deuteronomy (22.5) forbade men to dress in women’s apparel.”¹⁶

The falseness of counterfeiting was attacked by Gosson who derived “from Aristotle ... a theory that acting, being essentially the simulation of what is not, is by its very nature ‘within the compasse of a lye.’” Moreover “the condemnation of *histriones* by the Fathers and by the austerer pagans are applied without discrimination to their Elizabethan successors” who were also being branded with “the more recent stigma of vagabondage.” Gosson “justifies himself from Tertullian in finding the efficient cause of plays in none other than the incarnate Devil.”¹⁷

Though the “frequency of the literary attacks to some extent subsided” after the 1580’s, they “flared up again with renewed

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 255.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 254.

¹⁶ William A. Ringler, Jr., “Hamlet’s Defense of the Players,” *Essays on Shakespeare and Elizabethan Drama in Honor of Hardin Craig*, ed. Richard Hosley (Columbia, Mo.: University of Missouri Press, 1962), p. 202.

¹⁷ Chambers, *Elizabethan Stage*, I, 254.

violence” near the end of the century. It is not that new arguments against plays and players enlivened the controversy, for the ancient arguments continued to be quite serviceable, but the eminence of the participants in the controversy attracted great attention. John Rainolds’s *Overthrow of Stage-Plays*, published in 1599 and reissued the following year, “received special attention because of the prestige of Rainolds,” president of Corpus Christi College at Oxford and “one of the most eminent and respected theologians of the day. ...” William Gager answered Rainolds’s work, and though Gager, an academic dramatist, “upheld the legitimacy of amateur performances, [he] was unwilling to defend the professional theater.”¹⁸

Rainolds’s four objections are familiar ones. His first objection was the “*infamia* with which the Roman praetors had ‘noted’ *histriones*”; furthermore he would not accept Gager’s “pleas that this applied only to those who played for gain. ...” Second, he “adopted Calvin’s Deuteronomic prohibition of the change of sex-costume as an absolute one, belonging to the moral and not merely the ceremonial law.” Rainolds’s third objection was “based on the moral deterioration entailed by counterfeiting wanton behaviour in a play.” His fourth objection was based on the “waste both of time and money.”¹⁹

The response of the playwrights to the hostile Puritan criticism was by no means unified. The responses were, in fact, quite varied, and the nature of Puritanism being what it is, it is not possible to posit adamant hostility on the part of all playwrights to Puritans. Moreover, though there is adequate evidence to support a generalization that Puritans disapproved of plays, not all Puritans disapproved, especially during the early part of the controversy.

If such playwrights as Gosson and Munday could repent of writing plays (though Munday returned to writing them), it seems quite likely that playwrights who fell somewhat short of

¹⁸ Ringler, “Hamlet’s Defense,” p. 202.

¹⁹ Chambers, *Elizabethan Stage*, I, 252.

repentance may have accepted part of the Puritan criticism. As short shrift as Ben Jonson gave to the Puritans in his plays, he nonetheless asked Selden for his interpretation of the Deuteronomic interdiction of persons' wearing the dress of the opposite sex. According to E.N.S. Thompson, Selden concluded "that the Jews' sole objection to the exchange of apparel by the sexes—its connection with pagan worship—was no longer valid, and the text, therefore, had no application to the stage."²⁰

A number of responses were possible for the playwrights. Playwrights might respond to the Puritan attack by writing tracts in defense of plays or players as Thomas Heywood's *Apology for Actors* or Lodge's *Defence of Poetry, Music, and Stage Plays*. On the other hand, a playwright might use the dramatic text to respond to the Puritans by presenting Puritans in a ridiculous manner. Both Thompson and Myers have cataloged references to Puritans in Elizabethan plays. The complexity of the hostile response varies from playwright to playwright and from play to play even for such playwrights as Jonson²¹ and Middleton,²² who often disparage Puritans in their plays.

Another possible response is self-defense without necessarily attacking the Puritans. Thomas Heywood in a note "To my good Friends and Fellowes, the Citty-Actors" preceding *An Apology for Actors* says "I am profest aduersary to none, I rather couet reconcilment, then opposition, nor proceedes this my labour from any enuy in me, but rather to shew them wherein they erre." (A3v)²³

²⁰ Thompson, *Controversy*, p. 100.

²¹ Myers in *Representation* finds "an aggressive zeal . . . at the base of each of Jonson's various Puritan figures. . . . To Jonson zealotry was so synonymous with Puritanism that he gives to his most representative character the title Zeal-of-the-Land Busy," p. 62.

²² Myers in *Representation* speaks of "Middleton, who constantly exhibits the Puritans as ignorant, flighty creatures." p. 46.

²³ Richard H. Perkinson (ed.), *An Apology for Actors* (1612) by Thomas Heywood (New York: Scholars' Facsimiles and Reprints, 1941), A3v.

A third response was for the playwrights to join the Puritan cause, renouncing the folly of writing plays. Gosson²⁴ and Anthony Munday²⁵ made this response and produced polemical tracts; but Munday, lacking the staying power of Gosson, returned to writing plays again.²⁶

A fourth response to the Puritan attack would be an accommodation to the Puritan criticism, a turning of the other cheek by writing a kind of play least calculated to arouse further the already-aroused Puritans. The author of *A Warning for Fair Women* appears to have followed this course and did accommodate the Puritan criticism in a number of ways.

There is no assumption, of course, that *A Warning for Fair Women* or any other play could meet all the objections of the Puritans. There is, for example, no reason to assume that a select body of actors from the Chamberlain's Men, persons of unimpeachable probity and virtue, presented *A Warning for Fair Women*. The actors would be considered rogues and vagabonds by many Puritans. Nor is there any reason to believe that the Deuteronomic interdiction involving dress was obeyed in staging *A Warning for Fair Women*, for the parts of Mrs. Saunders and Mistress Drury were undoubtedly played by boys. For those in the audience who agreed with Tertullian and Gosson that the efficient cause of plays is "the incarnate Devil,"²⁷ *A Warning for Fair Women* would still be unsatisfactory.

Despite the fact, however, that some Puritans would object to all plays and all actors, there are a number of items of evidence that the author of *A Warning for Fair Women* not only was responding to the Puritan attack by defending plays but that at the same time he was accommodating some of the Puritan criticism against plays. Evidence to support such a hypothesis may be derived from the principal source, the genre, and from the play itself.

24 Chambers, *Elizabethan Stage*, I, 254.

25 *Ibid.*

26 *Ibid.*, p. 255.

27 *Ibid.*, p. 254

The primary source of the play is *A Briefe Discourse*, a pamphlet published in 1573, detailing the murder of George Saunders by Captain George Brown and the arrest, trial, and execution of the principals, including Anne Saunders, wife of Saunders and paramour of Brown. In 1573, the year of the crime, *A Briefe Discourse* bore the initials "A. G." at the end of the work, but the re-issue in 1577 bore the name of the author, Arthur Golding.

A Briefe Discourse is a heavily moralized account of the murder of George Saunders by Captain Brown. Proposing to give "a playne declaration of the whole matter," the work is equally concerned that the reader "use the example to the amendment of ... [his] life."²⁸ Evidence of the latter concern is noted when, having concluded the narrative of the murder, arraignment, trial, and execution, Golding turns to "the admonition, whiche is the conclusion and fruyte of this whole matter."²⁹ According to Golding the ones who were executed were no guiltier than some who witnessed the execution. Turning to the reader of *A Briefe Discourse*, Golding says "excepte their example leade us to repentance, we shall all of us come to as sore punishment in this worlde, or else to sorer in the worlde to come."³⁰

The whole work is intended more for edification than for information, and it is interesting to note that the account of the crime in Holinshed's *Chronicles*, though derived from Golding's account, lacks the moralizing frame around it found in *A Briefe Discourse*. The source of *A Warning for Fair Women*, then, is a work that was likely read with approval by Puritans because the guilty not only were punished but, with few exceptions, were won to amendment, confession, and conversion before suffering death for their sins. Golding in *A Briefe Discourse* carefully delineated the hand of Providence, adjuring people both married and single "to possesse & keepe their vessell in honestie and cleanness. For if the knot between man and wife

²⁸ Louis T. Golding, *An Elizabethan Puritan: The Life of Arthur Golding* (New York: Richard Smith, 1937), p. 165.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 170.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 180.

(whiche ought to be inseparable) be once broken, it is seldome or never knit again."³¹ In addition to the material favorable to Puritanism found in the source of *A Warning for Fair Women*, the choice of domestic tragedy as a play to be represented on the stage would have been less offensive to the Puritan part of the audience than any other kind of drama would have been.

Whether one emphasizes the indebtedness of domestic tragedy to the morality tradition³² or stresses the fact that the dramatic accounts of sensational murders would be good for the box office,³³ it is nonetheless easy to agree with Louis Wright's judgment that domestic tragedy afforded "a vehicle for a theatrical sensation capable of running the gamut of sentimentality or pandering to the grosser appetites of the multitude" while at the same time it "preached a sermon against the crying sins of adultery and murder."³⁴

H. H. Adams finds the "consistent attributes" of domestic tragedy to be "the choice of the hero, the moralizing, and the religious teachings. . . ." ³⁵ The hero of "humble station" (though in this instance with an ampler existence than their own) would be gladly received by the middle class part of the audience, and the "moralizing and religious teachings" would be well received by the Puritans.

A Warning for Fair Women supports the doctrine that murder will out. Support for the doctrine is found when the mortally

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 181.

³² See M. C. Bradbrook, *Themes and Conventions of Elizabethan Tragedy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1935), p. 44; Madeleine Doran, *Endeavors of Art: A Study of Form in Elizabethan Drama* (Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1954), p. 143; Arthur M. Clark, *Thomas Heywood, Playwright and Miscellanist* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1931), pp. 227-228; and H. H. Adams, *English Domestic or Homiletic Tragedy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1943), p. 55.

³³ See Allardyce Nicoll, *British Drama* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1925), pp. 197-199; John Addington Symonds, *Shakespeare's Predecessors* (London: Smith, Elder & Company, 1906), p. 329; and Louis B. Wright, *Middle Class Culture in Elizabethan England* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1935), p. 631.

³⁴ Wright, *Culture*, p. 631.

³⁵ Adams, *Domestic Tragedy*, p. viii.

wounded John Beane, “past all sense and laboring to his end,” was providentially sustained so that he could identify his assailant, Captain Brown, when Brown was brought into his presence. Master Barnes, a witness to Beane’s identification of Brown, commented on “the wondrous worke of God, that the poore creature, not speaking for two dayes, yet now should speake to accuse this man, and presently yeeld up his soule.”³⁶

After the providential sustention of John Beane has been noted, the Mayor of Rochester, Master Barnes, and Master James tell anecdotes supporting the doctrine that murder will out. The Mayor tells how a murderer was found out when someone noticed a nail in the head of a man dug up twenty years after he was buried (11. 2022-2026). Master Barnes tells how a man about to be murdered told his murderer that if nothing else “the fearne that then grew in the place” (1. 2029) would reveal the murder, and seven years later his prophecy was fulfilled (11. 2031-2035). Not to be outdone, Master James tells an anecdote about a woman of Linne in Norfolk who was so moved by viewing a tragedy that she confessed the murder of her husband, having been moved to confession by witnessing the dramatic account of a situation similar to her own (11. 2034-2048). Though such public confessions as this one were undoubtedly rare, *A Warning for Fair Women* is a kind of tragedy which might conceivably lead to such a confession.

The concern for the souls of the guilty, not only by the chaplain, the doctor of divinity, but by the members of the court would be satisfying to the Puritan element of the audience. It is not as criminals alone that the court regards the culprits but also as sinners who not only should be punished according to the law but who should as sinners be brought to repentance and confession.

The epilogue of *A Warning for Fair Women* speaks of the lances that have “sluic’d forth sinne,” and the Lord Justice, presiding officer of the court, is as much in the service of God

³⁶ This and succeeding references to line numbers of *A Warning for Fair Women* are to my own edition: “*A Warning for Fair Women: A Critical Edition* (diss. Missouri, 1964)

as of the state. The Lord Justice addressed Mrs. Saunders, being tried for complicity in her paramour's murder of her husband. When he said "But if you spurne at his affliction, / And beare his chastisement, with grudging minds," he spoke of God's chastisement, though he undoubtedly would have perceived no discrepancy between God's justice and his. Shortly before sentencing Mrs. Saunders the Justice said

Go to, Clog not your soule
 With new additions of more hainous sinne.
 Tis thought, beside conspiring of his death,
 You wrongd your husband with unchaste behaviour,
 For which the justice of the righteous God,
 Meaning to strike you, yet reserves a place,
 Of gracious mercie, if you can repent. ...
 (11. 2347-2353)

When the Justice sentenced Anne Saunders, Anne Drury, and Trusty Roger, he said, "You shal al three be hang'd till you be dead, / And so the Lord have mercy on your soules" (11. 2370-2371). If in later times the expression "The Lord have mercy on your souls" has survived as a fossilized utterance with little meaning, it does not appear to have been a perfunctory utterance when spoken by the Lord Justice.

In the play, the magistrates repeatedly mention the culprits' relationship to God. When, for example, the Sheriff tries to extract from Captain Brown the admission that Mrs. Saunders conspired with him in the death of her husband, the Sheriff tells Brown "Thou hast no true contrition, but conceals't/ Her wickedness, the bawd unto her sinne" (11. 2452-2453). The Sheriff tells Brown that Mrs. Drury has confessed Mrs. Saunders' guilt. To Brown's rejoinder that Mrs. Drury can confess what "she thinkes good," the Sheriff says to Brown "thy soule knowes," and Brown responds, "Yea, yea, it does. ..."

The culprits are aware of the dual nature of their transgression. Asked by the court how they will be tried, Mrs. Saunders and Mrs. Drury say, "By God and by the Countrey." Despite this statement, however, it was not until shortly before

their execution that Mrs. Saunders and Mrs. Drury decided to make a full confession. Realizing that her execution was imminent, Mrs. Drury declared that "tis time to turne the leafe,/ And leave dissembling, being so neere my death" (11. 2578-2579). Moreover, she advises Mrs. Saunders to do the same thing. Both of them, Mrs. Drury says, have been "notorious vile transgressors," and dissembling, "joyning sinne to sinne," is "not the way to get remission." Such behavior does not agree "with godly Christians, but with reprobates,/ And such as have no taste of any grace..." (11. 2580-2585).

When Mrs. Saunders realizes that, contrary to her own expectations, her own guilt is about to be exposed by Mrs. Drury, who earlier agreed to conceal it, she asks Mrs. Drury if she will betray a friend. Mrs. Drury then asks herself a question:

Should I, to purchase safety for another,
Or lengthen out anothers temporall life,
Hazard mine owne soule everlastingly,
And loose the endless joyes of heaven
Preparde for such as wil confesse their sinnes?
(11. 2589-2593)

She concludes that she will confess while there is time to obtain divine forgiveness, for she and Mrs. Saunders may yet have God's forgiveness "if we will seeke it at our Saviours hands." The alternative is "endless torments of unquenched fire" (11. 2595-2600).

Mrs. Drury's words convince Mrs. Saunders that she should repent and soon thereafter the chaplain, the reverend doctor, appears to tell Mrs. Saunders and Mrs. Drury that they should prepare themselves for death. Mrs. Saunders thereupon repents and confesses her guilt to the doctor by whom she had earlier been "seriously instructed." She confesses that she is a sinner and has

provok't the heavy wrath of God,
Not onely by consenting to the death
Of my late husband, but by wicked lust,

And wilful sinne, denying of the fault:
But now I do repent and hate my selfe,
Thinking the punishment preparede for me,
Not halfe severe enough for my deserts.
(11. 2619-2625)

Delighted with her confession, the doctor exclaimed

Done like a Christian and the childe of grace,
Pleasing to God, to angels, and to men,
And doubt not but your soule shall finde a place
In *Abrahams* bosome, though your body perish.
(11. 2626-2629)

Mrs. Drury, the first to decide to confess, is the second to confess. She tells the minister

I am as well resolv'd to goe to death,
As if I were invited to a banquet:
Nay such assurance have I in the bloud
Of him that died for me, as neither fire,
Sword nor torment could retaine me from him.
(11. 2637-2641)

“Spoke like a champion of the holy Crosse,” responds the doctor.

As satisfying as the repentence and confession of Mrs. Drury and Mrs. Saunders to the reverend doctor would have been to a Puritan, the final leave taking of Mrs. Saunders from her children reinforces her repentence and contrition. She beseeches pardon from her children and her husband's relatives, enjoining her children to “learne by your mothers fall/ To follow vertue, and beware of sinne” (11. 2686-2687). Just before her farewell kiss to her children she tells them she will not bequeath them “or gold or silver” since they are sufficiently provided in that respect, but she does give to each of the children a book “Of holy meditations, Bradfords workes/ That vertuous chosen servant of the Lord” (11. 2703-2704). Moreover, concerning the works she made the following suggestion to her children:

Sleepe not without them when you go to bed,
 And rise a mornings with them in your hands.
 So God send downe his blessing on you al:
 Farewel, farewel, farewel, farewel, farewel.
 (11. 2708-2711)

The special blessing which Mrs. Saunders accords Mr. Bradford has been echoed in the four centuries since his death. Protestant martyr, worthy of the church, and a “man of singularly gentle character,” Bradford is spoken of by Bullen as a man who, though he “would reprove sin and misbehaviour in any person,” was nonetheless so “earnest and kindly” in his reproof “that none could take offense.”³⁷

Once a student of law in the Inner Temple, he turned to the study of divinity and proceeded a Master of Arts at Cambridge in 1549, being elected to a fellowship at Pembroke Hall, where his portrait now hangs.³⁸ Honored by Strype as “a man of great learning, elocution, sweetness of temper, and profound devotion towards God,”³⁹ Bradford is represented by Foxe in his *Acts and Monuments* as a person of such trustworthiness that even when he was a “prisoner in the King’s Bench . . . he had license upon his promise to return against that night to go into London without any keeper to visit one that was sick lying by the Still yard.”⁴⁰

Ernest Rupp, almost four hundred years later, comments on the martyrdom of John Bradford:

To Newgate he was hurried by night . . . the next day to Smithfield. . . There now, by the grace of God went John Bradford, Latimer’s convert, Bucer’s pupil, theologian, divine, preacher and a saint beside whose

³⁷ Arthur H. Bullen, “John Bradford,” *DNB*, II, 1067.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ John Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1822), III, Part I, 363.

⁴⁰ John Foxe, *The Acts and Monuments* (London: Religious Tract Society, n. d.), VIII, 143.

shining integrity even Sir Thomas More in some
lights, contrives to look a trifle shabby.⁴¹

Whichever one of Bradford's works Mrs. Saunders gave to her children,⁴² the author of *A Warning for Fair Women* by his allusion to Bradford has consciously appealed to Puritan sentiment, and it seems likely that Bradford himself would have approved the sentiment of the epilogue of *A Warning for Fair Women*:

Here are the launces that have sluic'd forth sinne,
And ript the venom'd ulcer of foule lust,
Which being by due vengeance qualified,
Here *Tragedie* of force must needs conclude.
(11. 2717-2721)

⁴¹ Ernest G. Rupp, *Studies in the Making of the English Protestant Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1949), p. 204.

⁴² A number of his works would have been appropriate, but *A Godlye Medytacyon* and *Goldie Meditations upon the Lordes Prayer, the Beleeffe and Ten Commandements* . . . are two of the works which would commend themselves as gifts to Mrs. Saunders' children.