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THE MEDITATIVE POETRY OF EDWARD TAYLOR:

A REASSESSMENT

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. THE CRITICAL RECEPTION OF EDWARD TAYLOR AS THE LAST OF THE METAPHYSICAL POETS	1
I I. BACKGROUNDS OF THE MEDITATIVE TRADITION	30
The Baxterian Meditative Method (30)	
Anglo-Catholic Meditation and Metaphysical Poetry (43)	
Puritan Dogma and Edward Taylor's Meditative Method (52)	
I I I. EDWARD TAYLOR'S MEDITATIVE POETRY ASSESSED IN TERMS OF THE PURITAN MEDITATIVE METHOD	59
IV. CONCLUSIONS	82
NOTES	88
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY	98

CHAPTER I

CRITICAL RECEPTION OF EDWARD TAYLOR AS THE LAST OF THE ENGLISH METAPHYSICALS

The works of the Puritan minister, Edward Taylor, were first published in 1939, a time when two trends in literary history were in vogue: the critical rediscovery of the English metaphysical poets and the tendency of critics to approach literature largely through the character of the work itself. Both of these were to have a profound, if not appropriate, effect on the works of the newly discovered Taylor. Given these conditions it is not surprising that Taylor has failed to gain genuine stature as a poet. The problem for the present study, however, is not so much one of altering the total stature of the poet as it is providing a new avenue of approach to his works. There is, I believe, a need to re-examine certain fundamental criteria for judging Taylor's art as new information about the so-called metaphysical tradition is revealed. Equally necessary is the application of Puritan meditative and rhetorical practices to the poetry of Taylor. It is time to question the basis for including Taylor within the metaphysical framework and the inferences made as a result. Such questions should lead to a more accurate appreciation of Taylor's

poetry and a better understanding of his literary achievement.

The history of Taylor criticism reveals how Taylor came to be known as a metaphysical poet and how he has fared in such a genre. In spite of Thomas H. Johnson's initial determination that Edward Taylor's poetry was of real rather than historic value,¹ Taylor's verse has lost stature steadily in terms of literary accomplishment. At the present time Taylor occupies a position called "the least negligible American poet before Bryant,"² and representative of the decadence of a great metaphysical tradition.³

It is not difficult to trace the development of Taylor's reputation, for it has followed an almost predictable course since Johnson's discovery of Taylor's works. The qualities to which Johnson called attention have precipitated an almost inevitable line of inquiry.

Generally, Johnson saw two paramount qualities in Taylor's verse, a deep devotional sincerity and a tendency toward inventiveness. The former could be praised in general terms with few reservations. Johnson briefly cites exemplary tender passages, emotionally intense flights of imagery, and moving self examination.⁴ The latter, however, prompted no such unblemished praise. Certain defects suggested that Taylor's piety on occasion "lacked wings."⁵

Johnson, like subsequent critics, gives more detailed attention to Taylor's inventiveness, and in this he could not overlook the defects in language, stock phrases, harsh elisions, and imperfect rhymes that often accompanied Taylor's technique in spite of occasional brilliance. By way of balancing these two realms and suggesting some overall achievement, Johnson concludes that Taylor's meditative verse is "conceived in a spirit so emotionally intense that the reader is more ready to overlook occasional bad rhymes or strained figures."⁶ This assertion has not been substantiated by later critics, who have found little comfort in such generalities on subjective elements beyond the scope of "the work itself."⁷

In spite of his own warning that parallels or analogies to Taylor's works are not evidence of sources, Johnson points the way that future investigations of influences and indebtedness will take when he correlates both facets of his critical observations with the metaphysical school. He says Taylor is "one whose fertility in image making, tenderness, rapture, and delicacy, as well as intense devotion ally the staunch Puritan with the 'sacred poets' of the early seventeenth century."⁸

It is possible to see in the comparative emphases of Johnson's arguments a foreshadowing of future criticism. For

although critics have been willing to give passing tribute to Taylor's devotional qualities, they have found, like Johnson, little in this observation that is analytically accessible beyond a few laudatory comments. The explanation for this is not difficult to surmise, for investigations of devotional sincerity tend to describe religious motivation rather than artistic accomplishment. Piety is not necessarily poetry; hence modern critics tend to leave such considerations to biographers and to concentrate on the work itself. Johnson, like those who followed him, seemed satisfied to recognize in the devotional quality just one more parallel with the Anglo-Catholic poets of the seventeenth century, but little more.

The second of Johnson's observations has become the basis of intense analytical scrutiny and resultant generalizations. The "obvious defects" in imagery, rhyme, and phraseology that Johnson mentioned (and piously hoped would be overlooked) have been seized by modern critics, who have subjected them to microscopic examination. And, following the lead of Johnson, they have compared systematically each structural and technical facet of Taylor's inventiveness to English poets from Southwell to Crashaw until they found an acceptable precedent.

Wallace C. Brown, an early writer, catalogued ten of

the "simplest and most obvious links between Taylor and the English metaphysicals." Among these are metrical roughness, syntactic roughness, wit, ambiguity, paradox, distance between image and referent, and specialized vocabulary.⁹ Thus, although Taylor was associated with a metaphysical tradition on two accounts by Johnson - - the devotional nature of his verse and the inventive quality of his technique - - it was soon apparent that only the latter supplied the required stability for modern critical approaches.

The irony of this exterior approach is that while the critics grappled with the "simplest and most obvious links," they also were emphasizing those qualities of Taylor's work which compared least favorably to the standards of the Anglo-Catholic poets of England. Comparisons to determine achievement were inevitable. Taylor was to be endowed almost from the start with the peculiar position of being enough like Donne and Herbert to justify comparison with all the confidence that graphic evidence affords. But on the same empirical basis, Taylor's inferiority within the genre could be asserted equally.

Although Brown's central concern is finding metaphysical parallels to Taylor's poems, he cannot avoid the inevitable comments on Taylor's inability to achieve what Donne and others had accomplished within the same framework. He notes, for example,

that Taylor employs the same ingenious technique in image making' but adds that Taylor's success is limited because images and ideas are often yoked violently together. The effect of this yoking, he continues, is to impose too much intellectuality on the imaginative sense, which in turn destroys the organic unity of these elements characterizing good metaphysical verse.¹⁰ Further, he is disturbed by what he sees in Taylor as a "fanciful elaboration of theme" in certain meditations. This mars the metaphysical ideal of tight logical structure and gives the imagery a decorative rather than a functional character. The resultant effects seem irrelevant to the desired end of the poem.¹¹

More often than not, however, Taylor's inclusion in a metaphysical genre has been assumed to be self-evident and is rarely stated as a critical observation apart from other pronouncements. When Taylor's works are evaluated negatively, the framework for consideration is an implied or perfunctorily stated minor premise. So well established is this view that a recent literary historian runs no risk of misinterpretation when he says, "It would be a sad mistake to place Taylor among the great metaphysical poets: he does not have their eagle's flight nor ocean's surge."¹² Taylor, it is claimed, is tied to the metaphysical school by technique, but separated from it by achievement. Brown suggests much the same

view in his final sentence: "With the exception of tight logical structure, which he does not always manage to achieve, Taylor's work exhibits all the 'earmarks' (as he himself would say) of the metaphysical esthetic."¹³

Similar statements are either made or implied in the bulk of Taylor criticism. Taylor's affinity for the pun and oxymoron are pointed to with the notation that this is found also in Quarles and Fletcher, save that Taylor puns in serious poetry.¹⁴ Charges have also been leveled at Taylor's language. Stanford has called it strident, crude, harsh, and over-written in comparison with the subtly modulated, quiet tones of Herbert.¹⁵ Austin Warren has accused Taylor of being "unaware of the stratifications in his vocabulary."¹⁶ He is particularly critical of certain poems in Gods Determinations:

Infinity, when all things it beheld
In Nothing, and of Nothing all did build,
Upon what Base was fixt the Lath, wherein
He turn'd this Globe, and riggalld it so trim?
Who blew the Bellows of his Furnace Vast?
Or held the Mould wherein the world was Cast?¹⁷
("The Preface," 11.1-6)

Taylor fares no better in other areas. Norman S. Grabo flatly states that if Taylor belongs with any class or group it is certainly with the metaphysicals, but he does not share in their

achievement. While Taylor shares the meditative pattern and general verse form of Herbert, he lacks Herbert's skill.¹⁸ Warren notes also that while Taylor apparently had the iambic rhythm in mind, he seems chiefly to have counted syllables.

Glory! Oh Glory! Wonderfull, and more.
How dost thou Croude with all thy Ranks most bright?
Thou never playdst such Glorious Cast, before
Nor ever wor'st such flourishing delight.
(2:73, ll. 1-4)

The reader is parenthetically reminded that Donne had a five stress line.¹⁹

Taylor's facility with the metaphysical image is held in equally low regard. Again the yardstick of Taylor's success is the achievement of the finest metaphysical poets. Critics seldom fail to mention that the connection between Taylor's images and symbols and their referents is vague to the point of suggesting random selection. Stanford refers to the often-cited poem, "Huswifery," to support this charge²⁰

Make me, O Lord, thy Spining Wheele compleate.
Thy Holy Words my Distaff make for mee.
Make mine affections thy Swift Flyers neat
And make my Soule thy holy Spoole to bee.
(ll. 1-4)

Warren uses equally popular poems, "The Reflexion,"

and Meditation 1:8, to reach much the same conclusion. However, he pursues the case one step further by commenting in depth on the creative process that produced such poetry. He sees Taylor as uncertain of what he is trying to do in words; consequently, images "occur" to the poet in impressionistic fashion, resulting in verse that contains a boldness "too libertine for Donne." Only by virtue of unplanned but happy accidents do Taylor's works experience "tolerable" success.²¹

It is not uncertainty that prompts critics to submerge the metaphysical classification of Taylor in a sea of observations on the imagery, metrics, or language of the verse. Quite the contrary is the case. It is the unquestioned assurance with which they make the assumption that relegates such remarks to the position of a minor premise. A careful search of the criticism will uncover direct statements of what is implied throughout. In a recent anthology Warren states, "Taylor clearly belongs to the Metaphysical school - the school of John Donne, George Herbert, Richard Crashaw" ²² Stanford states that because of the metaphysical style and the obvious influence of Herbert and others, Edward Taylor must be ranked below the achievement of these English poets.²³

In all of this certain things are clear. First, Taylor has

been approached almost entirely through the imagery, metrics, vocabulary and other incidentals of "the work itself" to the almost complete exclusion of the devotional or motivational accesses. Second, on this basis Taylor is ranked among the English Metaphysicals. And finally, the basis for approach is also the basis for evaluating his achievement. Taylor falls far short of the recognized achievement of Donne, Herbert, and other poets generally conceived of as metaphysical.

The assurance with which the foregoing has been pursued has served to place other criticism in a peculiar light. The sternest of Taylor's critics are willing to admit his occasional excellence. Austin Warren grudgingly admits that seven poems have real value by virtue of some "primitive vigor and naivete" that is wanting in other metaphysical verse of the period.²⁴ In like manner Stanford says that Taylor's expression of spiritual experience is moving in spite of frequent lapses in style and taste.²⁵ In some quarters Taylor is credited with being original and creative.²⁶ Even by comparison to Quarles and Donne, Taylor does not always come out second best.²⁷ These apparent exceptions to the standard generalizations about Taylor and his crude metaphysical style have fostered a large portion of criticism aimed at reconciling what appears to be a discrepancy between Taylor's creative talents and

the bulk of his poetry. This disparity in the case of Taylor is more avidly pursued because of the different theological and geographical backgrounds that set the New England Puritan apart from the mainstream of English Anglo-Catholic poetry. Taylor's theology and environment are inevitably seen as standing between the poet and his poetry.

One such observation is the belief that the relatively untamed wilderness of Westfield, Massachusetts, had a detrimental effect on Taylor's metaphysical poetry. Stanford says that the isolation of the frontier increased Taylor's "stubborn dogmatism." Such a rigorous preoccupation with dogma leaves an imprint on the works of the Puritan poet.²⁸ Another critic sees in Taylor's metaphors a kind of colloquial or provincial quality, which he judges to be an unfortunate domestication of the elaborate conceit of Herbert.²⁹

On a more intense level of scrutiny, Taylor's lack of achievement with the metaphysical style is attributed to a deteriorating meditative tradition, which was becoming too theological in its conception. This view seems to have the blessing of many commentators who would like to recognize Taylor's literary deficiencies, while being numbered among those who admire the sincerity of the poet's attempt. The blame can be shifted subtly

from the poet to the tradition in which he operates since, as Black states, the fault in the tradition was unavoidable.³⁰ Stanford and others point with assurance to Crashaw and Vaughan as evidence of this increasing dogmatism in religious poetry. Taylor, then, represents the ultimate decadence of the great tradition.³¹ The effect of the dogmatic emphasis is purported to be a deliberate avoidance of the close knit, logical development that characterizes Donne and Herbert, but in spite of the parallels between the two, little genuine cause-effect evidence is offered. Grabo must have something of this view in mind when he expresses his willingness to excuse the "weaknesses in versification" in the Meditations because of their essentially religious aims, but when the aims appear to be literary, as he feels is the case in Gods Determinations, no such justification is applicable.³²

Taylor's Puritanism could hardly avoid critical notice. From the start it has been an item of considerable interest, but like most other areas it has been viewed as a kind of intrusion between a metaphysical poet and his metaphysical poetry. It could hardly be anything else after Taylor was generally included in an Anglo-Catholic tradition whose achievements seemed to outstrip the curious Puritan's efforts. It is not just the dogmatic character of Puritan theology that had its unfortunate effect on

Taylor; it is the dogma that Puritans esteemed that stood between Taylor and literary achievement. The typical view is expressed by Norman Grabo when he lists the similarities between Taylor and Herbert in meditative patterns, emblematic manner, verse form, and the like, but rounds out his point by asserting that Edward Taylor's theological and dogmatic differences led him to quite contrary aesthetic results in spite of the superficial similarities.³³

Generally, critics have used Taylor's Puritanism to explain individual poems,³⁴ to account for recurring technical and structural peculiarities, or in some instances to offer an explanation for the whole body of Taylor's work. The first of these has little significance for the present study, but the latter two areas warrant some exploration, since they inevitably attribute some fault by metaphysical standards to an interposing Puritan theology.

Critics have used the Puritan theological emphasis on the workings of divine providence to explain Taylor's tendency to employ trivial, everyday occurrences as reflective of serious theological thought. The effect of such a tendency, according to Stanford, is to ignore incongruent connotations in favor of obscure similarities.³⁵ As a result, the conceitist method employed by Donne with success has lost the delicate balance of plausibility and surprise through Puritan theology.

The most influential critic of Taylor, Austin Warren, says that Puritans rejected the aristocratic Donne, Carew, and Herbert of Cherbury in favor of the more domestic Herbert and Quarles.³⁶ This favoritism on theological grounds is preserved by Edward Taylor in New England long after it had disappeared in England. The resultant poetry Warren calls "Colonial Baroque," an especially bad baroque.³⁷

On a more comprehensive plane is the belief that the Puritan aesthetic did not admit to an art of poetry at all, that the primacy of doctrine over all other human activities accounts for Taylor's inability to produce poetry comparable to the 'sacred poets' of Anglican derivation: "What we find in short is not poetry which embodies doctrine, but doctrine cast in poetic form."³⁸ The case made by critics on this point is startling in its simplicity and scope.³⁹ In isolating a single statement by Perry Miller,⁴⁰ Lind asserts that Taylor sacrificed beauty to expound orthodox Puritan doctrine. Yet one can easily recognize that Taylor saw some function in his poetry apart from the dogmatic goals of his sermons by the mere fact that they are "cast in poetic form." The vast majority of Taylor's poems were written to complement in some way the thorough explication of doctrine that occurred in a companion sermon on the same doctrine.⁴¹ Like certain critics

mentioned earlier, Lind also seems to accept without question the fact that a concern for dogma requires the sacrifice of structural and technical effectiveness. In view of such an assumption one wonders why Herbert prompts such esteem since the first stanza of "The Church Porch" announces a didactic purpose.

Thou, whose sweet youth and early hopes enhance
Thy rate and price, and mark thee for a treasure,
Hearken unto a verser who may chance
Rhyme thee to good, and make a bait of pleasure
A verse may find him who a sermon flies,
And turn delight into a sacrifice.

The extent to which the belief that Taylor's Puritanism served to disrupt his quest to imitate the style of Donne is given striking illustration in criticism quite removed from the mainstream of commentary. Willie T. Weathers is willing to grant Taylor a purposefulness and effectiveness beyond that usually ascribed to Taylor. Through a complex system of "concealed images" in Taylor's poetry, Weathers ascertains that certain poems, and particularly the curious Gods Determinations, suggest that Taylor possessed a "personal Platonism" verging on "natural religion," a kind of secret unorthodoxy. This he feels is the key to Taylor's poetic achievement.⁴² He sees the impulse for Taylor's poetry in aesthetic experience which leads to a perception of the beauty

of the spiritual by way of natural reason. The superficially commonplace imagery all the while hints of pagan symbols, Greek forms, and the language of Eros.⁴³

The feature of this singular view that is most significant is not so much the bizarre conclusion as it is the machinery for reaching the conclusion. While Weathers proposes that the Jonson-Donne tradition inclined Taylor's taste to the Hellenistic school of poets, he gives equal attention to severing Taylor from the Puritan. The consistent belief that Puritanism negates successful poetry remains, the only difference in this case being Taylor's abandonment of the Puritan dependence on the revealed word of God.

It must be pointed out here that Taylor's Puritanism, though frequently offered as something of an apology for his inferiority in an Anglican tradition, has never offered a challenge to the metaphysical gauge of his success. The consistent inclusion of Taylor in the Donne tradition through implication and direct statement has prevailed in spite of the theological differences. The reason for this is two-fold. Since the rediscovery of seventeenth-century poetry, there has been general agreement that there is a metaphysical tradition, a school of poetry principally distinguished by the similar methods poets in the tradition employ in a

common revolt against the conventions of Elizabethan poetry.⁴⁴ The "similar techniques" embodied in this definition are exactly those qualities of Taylor that critics have sought out with apparent success. Recent attempts to call this school devotional or meditative⁴⁵ have not sufficiently altered the original concept of the tradition to warrant its reclassification on a theological basis. This is not to say that there is no recognition of the analytical approach to faith contained in this poetry, but until the discovery of Taylor there seemed no reason to dissect what would no doubt have been minor theological points among the English poets.

Austin Warren's preference for the term "baroque" to cover the various seventeenth-century poems that are "historically near and . . . sharing large traits"⁴⁶ misses the point. Later statements in his article clearly indicate that no matter how the terminology has changed, the traits are the same - - bold figures, wit, verbal and imaginal mixtures, and so on. Even the new terms he offers such as "incarnational" and "admitting of miracle" suggest the standard criteria. If any doubt should persist, it is removed when Warren writes for a later anthology, "Taylor clearly belongs to the Metaphysical school - - the school of John Donne, George Herbert, Richard Crashaw. . . ." ⁴⁷

Even if the poets of the metaphysical school had been

approached as a literary tradition based on religious meditative practices, it is doubtful that this would have inhibited the comparison of Taylor and the Anglican poets. Recent critics have cited evidence that the Anglo-Catholic meditative practices of Donne and Herbert were not just reconcilable to Puritan theology, but actually recommended by Puritan belief. Taylor is supposed to have derived the procedure for meditation from the fourth part of The Saints Everlasting Rest by the English Puritan Richard Baxter,⁴⁸ a work which enjoyed great popularity as testified by the multiple editions appearing in the latter half of the seventeenth century. The three faculties of the soul that Baxter urges his reader to employ -- memory, understanding, and will -- are identical with those found in the Anglo-Catholic system. Beyond this, however, the parallels between Baxter's method and especially Taylor's use of Baxter's recommendations have never been investigated in detail. Critics seem satisfied that Baxter succeeded in making the Anglican system Puritan.⁴⁹ As a result no serious attempt has been made to ascribe to Taylor's poetry any genre other than the one which includes Donne and Herbert. Taylor has remained the inferior metaphysical whose excessive orthodoxy and want of creative powers made him incapable of the English achievements.

There is some reason for attributing to Taylor a rather stern orthodoxy. In spite of Weathers' elaborate attempt to suggest the contrary, the simple fact is that Taylor's entire life is testimony to his complete acceptance of the Calvinistic doctrine practiced in New England. Taylor was born in Sketchley, Leicestershire, England, probably in the year 1642, although no document has been discovered to substantiate this date. At this turbulent time Leicestershire was strongly non-conformist. By virtue of his parentage and environment, which included a non-conformist schoolmaster, Taylor no doubt acquired an early dislike of Anglicanism.⁵⁰ At any rate Ezra Stiles, the poet's grandson, described his ancestor as a vigorous advocate of Oliver Cromwell.⁵¹ As such the restoration of Charles II in 1660 promised certain difficulty for the youthful Taylor. Francis Murphy says that one of Taylor's descendants said the Act of Uniformity in 1662 settled Taylor on emigration.⁵² If so, the six-year delay of his departure exemplifies the tenacity with which Taylor held to his convictions. By refusing to subscribe to the Act of Uniformity, Taylor was not only denied the right to teach, preach, or attend universities, but doubtless was exposed to harassment and persecution. The entry in his diary for June 19, 1668, while on voyage to New England, records a dream he had of his "oppressed

brethern" in England. Taylor was so moved by their situation that he nearly wept.⁵³

Upon arrival in Boston Taylor began three years at Harvard, during which time he held the position of college butler, a position reserved for mature, responsible clerics. There is no doubt that Taylor attained more than mere acceptance in the eyes of Charles Chauncy, Increase Mather, and other New England leaders. Taylor's appointment as scholar of the house and his selection as one of four to declaim in College Hall upon graduation would suggest he was regarded with real favor.

After accepting the call to Westfield, Taylor and his yet unorganized flock experienced severe hardships during King Philip's War. Compounding this for Taylor was the death in infancy of five of the eight children by his first wife, Elizabeth Fitch, whom he had married in 1674. The effect of these events on the minister who had spent three years at Harvard is not difficult to imagine. Evidence of his discouragement is seen in the request made by several members of the Westfield settlement that David Wilton, a reputable citizen in Northampton, be permitted to come to Westfield "for the further encouraging of Mr. Taylor."⁵⁴ The request was refused.

Whatever his discouragement, Taylor's faith apparently was sufficient for the task, for on August 27, 1679, Taylor was able

to organize his faithful into a formal New England congregation. This required that the minister draw up a confession of faith or covenant in which he stated his acceptance of God's will as expressed in Puritan doctrine. Besides this, each member of the congregation was required to provide evidence of the workings of divine grace in his life. It was probably Taylor's sincere conviction that no one could doubt his orthodox faith that prompted him to omit the preparation of a written confession until the ministers assembled for the ceremony insisted on one. At any rate, the written covenant that Taylor produced has, in Grabo's words, an "utterly conventional character."⁵⁵ In like manner, the sermon Taylor preached that day, "A Particular Church of Christ is built up an Habitation of God through the spirit," expresses his complete acceptance of covenant practice.

The most dramatic evidence of Taylor's acceptance of orthodox Puritanism is found in the poetry written during his term at Westfield. Basic to the New England creed was the belief that Christ intended those predestined by special grace to form holy communities. These were formed in the manner described above. The original covenanters served as guardians of the covenant by requiring of all who would enter the holy fellowship a satisfactory relation of some spiritual experience indicative of

special grace. If approved, the new member was permitted to take the Lord's Supper. The strict institutional nature of New England Puritanism and Taylor's adherence to it is reflected in many of his poems. Taylor had a fondness for including covenant terminology with essential Christian ideas such as grace, communion, and redemption. In Meditation 2: 78 a "bucket of Grace Choice" pours down "Covenantall blood." Equally noteworthy in this regard is Taylor's choice of titles for crucial poems in his versified story of man's fall and redemption, Gods Determinations. After man's predicament is told through a complex and sometimes enigmatic combination of allegory, dramatic dialogue, and lyrics, Taylor clearly equates ultimate salvation with church membership in the final group of poems. Three of these are titled, "The Soule Seeking Church-Fellowship," "The Soul admiring the Grace of the Church Enters into Church Fellowship," and finally, "The Joy of Church Fellowship rightly attended." It was not random selection that prompted the poet to name institutions rather than individuals in one of his meditative poems.

What Grace is here? Looke ery way and see
How Grace's Splendor like the bright Sun, shines
Out on my head, and I encentred bee
Within the Center of its radien lines,
Thou glories King send out thy Kingly Glory
In shining Institutions laid before mee.

.
And as the King of Zion thou putst out
Thy Institutions, Zions Statutes, th' Laws
Of thy New Covenant, which all through out
Thy bright Prophetick trumpet sounds, its Cause.
(2: 102, ll. 1-6, 13-16)

After the Synod of 1662 proclaimed in the so-called Half-Way Covenant that the children of church members were entitled to receive the sacrament of Baptism but not the Lord's Supper, the only remaining sign of full church membership was the Lord's Supper. Probably the best indication of true orthodoxy can be found in the attitudes toward this practice. Unlike the doctrine of election and the covenant, which all New England clergy accepted in principle, the prerequisites for receiving the Lord's Supper inspired a lesser degree of uniformity. It was Solomon Stoddard's practice of admitting all Christians of good behavior to the sacrament that prompted Taylor's sermon on the day of Westfield's entry into church covenant. The "Particular Church" in the title is the church founded on the testimony of election rather than mere good behavior. This difference divided Taylor in Westfield and Mather in Boston from the Stoddardeans in Northampton in spite of their agreement on doctrine.

The literature that this disagreement provoked in the early eighteenth century is well known,⁵⁶ and judging from Taylor's

Meditations during this period, there is no doubt that his acceptance of orthodox doctrine had not altered since 1679.

Now Types good night, with Ceremonies strict,
The Glorious Sun is risen, its broad day.
Now Passover farewell, and leave thy Place.
Lords Supper seales the Covenant of Grace.
(2: 103, ll. 33-36)

A Meditation the following year shows that the controversy had only solidified his belief.

He his last Night them feasts and at that meale
His Supper institutes his Cov'nant Seale.
(2: 107, ll. 29-30)

Taylor seems always to have held an especially high regard for the Lord's Supper. His conviction of Christ's spiritual presence is implied time and time again in his poetry, which Taylor himself called "Preparatory" to his "Approach to the Lords Supper."⁵⁷ It is little wonder that he should adhere to the orthodox view that it is reserved for those who have given adequate proof of special grace. Taylor calls such persons "Living Souls."

What? Bread, and Wine, My Lord! Art thou thus made?
And made thus unto thine in th' Sacrament?
These are both Cordiall: and both displai'd
Food for the Living. Spirituall Nourishment.
Thou hence art food, and Physick rightly 'pli'de
To Living Souls. Such none for dead provide.

.
Food though its ne're so rich, doth not beget
Nor make its Eaters; but their Lives mentain.
This Bread and Wine begets not Souls; but's set
'Fore spirituall life to feed upon the Same.
This Feast is no Regenerating fare.
But food for those Regenerate that are.
(2: 104, 11. 1-6, 55-60)

With similar imagery but slightly different emphasis,
Taylor ridicules the practice of using the Lord's Supper as an aid
to conversion for people of good behavior.

Food is for living Limbs, not Wooden legs;
Life's necessary, unto nourishment.
Dead limbs must be cut off: the Addle Eggs
Rot by the heat the dam upon them spent.
A State of Sin that takes this bread and Wine
From the Signatum tareth off the Signe.

A Principle of life, to eate implies,
And of such life that sutes the Foods desire.
Food naturall doth naturall Life supply.
And spirituall food doth spirituall life require.
The dead don't eate. Though Folly childish dotes
In th' Child that gives his Hobby horses oates.
(2: 106, 11. 43-54)

Taylor attacks other digressions from orthodox Puritan
theology and practice with equal vigor, disputing them with a
rationality typical of orthodox New England ministers. Finding
his arguments in the adjuncts of bread and wine, Taylor upbraids
in systematic fashion pantheistic ubiquitarianism, Lutheran con-

substantialion, and Catholic transubstantiation.

The Bread and Wine true Doctrine teach for faith
(True Consequence from Truth will never ly)
Their adjuncts teach Christs humane nature hath
A Certain place and not Ubiquity.
Hence this Condemns Ubiquitarians
And whom deny Christ's Manhood too it damns.

It Consubstantiation too Confounds.
Bread still is bread, Wine still is wine its sure.
It Transubstantiation deadly wounds.
Your touch, Tast, Sight, say true. The Pope's a whore.
Can Bread and Wine by words be Carnified?
And manifestly bread and Wine abide?

What monstrous thing doth Transubstantiation
And Consubstantiation also make
Christs Body, having a Ubique-Station,
When thousands Sacraments men Celebrate
Upon a day, if th' Bread and wine should e're
Be Con-, or Trans-Substantiated there?
(2: 108, ll. 7-24)

Taylor's sermons at this time could hardly provide a more dialectic picture of Taylor's view than this poem does. Regardless of what might be lacking in Taylor's biography, there is no reasonable doubt of his orthodoxy from his beginnings in England to his death in 1729. Ezra Stiles' judgment that Taylor was a man of exceptional piety especially in his observance of the Lord's Day⁵⁸ is perfectly consistent with all we can learn of Taylor.

Stanford's study of Taylor's "Spiritual Relation" at the time of the foundation of his church has led him to the conclusion

that "Taylor was an orthodox New England Congregationalist in full agreement with Calvinistic doctrine defined by the Westminster Assembly . . . and the Synod of 1662."⁵⁹

The only real question is how orthodoxy should be included in criticism. The external means of identifying metaphysical poetry has had an unfortunate effect on the Puritan Taylor. Since the time of Johnson's initial observations, the overwhelming majority of Taylor criticism has either centered itself on a search for metaphysical traits and parallels or used the findings of such studies to make subsequent judgments. Even the purported metaphysical traits themselves have not escaped consideration by the standards of the established achievement of poets like Donne and Herbert. It is little wonder that Taylor is "an awkward, often inept, metrist compared . . . with George Herbert."⁶⁰

The most damaging effect of this metaphysical framework has been the peculiar bias that studies of Taylor's distinctive qualities have taken. Taylor is seen so firmly imbedded in a metaphysical tradition that inquiries into his chronological, theological, and geographical differences have been largely an apology for his deficiencies. Puritanism is viewed as a restriction of a metaphysical intent. It is claimed that New England isolation caused Taylor to give a crude, frontier quality to a metaphysical

mode that had virtually disappeared in England.

What has been neglected is the fact that a genre has an inner as well as an outer form, that besides meter, stanza, and conceit, literature can and should be equally classified in terms of attitude and purpose,⁶¹ regardless of which seems to be the more conspicuous. Critics have not denied that the similarity between a Herbert and Donne goes beyond the form of their work to a devotional cause, even if this cause has not warranted much attention. But to include Taylor in this group on the basis of superficial similarities is to deny the Puritan any dissimilarity of inner compulsion.

Taylor needs to be granted at least a degree of literary independence. His theological and geographical differences need to be approached not as something that stood in the way of a metaphysical purpose and technique, but as elements that formed the purpose and fostered a technique that is distinct from the Anglican. This does not mean we must ignore what may be parallels or even influences between the manner of a Herbert and Edward Taylor. It means only that whatever the influence in terms of technique might be, it is unfair to judge Taylor in terms of Herbert without equal consideration of what Herbert did not influence.

A better understanding of Taylor can be gained by approaching his poetry as a combination of poetic impulse and devotional practice. Such unique Puritan beliefs as predestination, covenant theology, and divine omnipotence, as well as the curious practice of these beliefs in New England must have demanded a meditative system unlike any practiced by Donne and Herbert. Even the efforts of Richard Baxter to reconcile Anglicanism and Puritan dogma could not have had the effect in New England that is usually implied in Taylor criticism.

The intent here is not to transform Taylor from obscurity to literary prominence. But by approaching Taylor apart from his superficial similarities to the English Metaphysicals, we may obtain a fairer and more accurate judgment of his works.

CHAPTER I I

BACKGROUNDS OF THE MEDITATIVE TRADITION

The Baxterian Meditative Method

Before any examination of the meditative poetry of Edward Taylor can be undertaken, attention must be directed to the relationship between theology and religious meditation. Particularly important is the meditative system proposed by Richard Baxter, since Taylor is often credited with following the Baxterian method. Important too is an examination of the impact meditations have on the art of poetry.

In his study of the internal genre of metaphysical poetry, The Poetry of Meditation, Professor Martz poses as his overall thesis that metaphysical poets may be seen as a wide variety of writers and temperaments drawn together by resemblances in their poetry resulting from certain methods of religious meditation.¹ Important also is his judgment that the influence of one poet on another is of secondary importance. Rather, their individual mastery of the art of meditation lying behind the poetry forms the essence of their kinship.²

But criticism has not approached Taylor's verse in the light of Martz's view of metaphysical poetry, as the preceding chapter has shown. If, as Martz states, there is a meditative

tradition rather than a Donne or conceitist tradition, then the external similarities between Taylor and the metaphysicals are only incidental to an inner method of meditation which both possess. Thus, differences in the techniques of these two, or a disparity in outer form, may be the product of some inner difference. In Taylor's case, Puritan theology and practice are more a part of the inner force of the poetry than a barrier between poet and poetry. A more valid approach to Taylor would center on discovering the meditative system which provided the discipline and, in Martz's words, the "vital center"³ of his poetry.

Obviously, meditation is not poetry, yet there is a middle ground where these two arts meet to form a poetry of meditation, a poetry whose organizing impulse is centered in the discipline of meditation.⁴ Martz does not suggest that such a poetry exists apart from other poetry or mental disciplines. The meditative process itself works in cooperation with logic and rhetoric. In the case of the English poets who form the subject of his study, Martz cites especially Renaissance logic and rhetoric.⁴

Critics in the past have worked from the outer resemblance between Taylor and the metaphysicals to construct what they contend is a general inner resemblance. Since Taylor does employ memory, understanding and will, a procedure recommended by the English Puritan, Richard Baxter, and found in Anglo-Catholic meditations, it

is assumed that Puritan and Anglican meditations are alike in all essential respects. What has been forgotten, however, is that while Taylor's meditative practices conform with the Anglican in terms of the general procedure - - what Martz calls "the three powers of the soul . . . the central indispensable action of meditation" - - in terms of specific qualities Taylor is quite removed from both Baxter and the Anglican tradition.

It is doubtful that Baxter could speak for all Puritans, especially the Congregationalists in New England. The Reverend Richard Baxter is something of a curiosity even in seventeenth-century England. Even though he is generally credited with having produced a Puritan treatise on meditation, his chief goal as minister and writer seems to have been the establishment of a kind of informal, comprehensive church. In all of his works, Baxter emphasizes the universal nature of all churches.⁶ He seems to have held a belief in the universal application of redemption without membership in particular churches or even knowledge of Christ. This did not eliminate the belief in divine election,⁷ but it certainly altered its essential quality. Numerous efforts by Baxter speak of his concern for Christian fellowship. In The True and Only Way of Concord of all the Christian Churches (1680) Baxter longs for a comprehensive church shared by Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Independents, and

some Baptists.⁸ The only persuasions Baxter could not accommodate were those Calvinist groups that formed closed, covenantal congregations.⁹

It is in light of this patently non-Puritan background that Baxter's Saints Everlasting Rest must be viewed. Rather than making an Anglican system Puritan, he was providing a rationale whereby those who held to the tenet of Calvinistic predestination could practice the good work of meditation that Anglicans so esteemed. The meditative procedure Baxter suggests is virtually the same as that practiced by the Anglicans, but as Martz says, the pursuit of self-examination for the Puritan has "an aim considerably different from that [of the Anglicans]."¹⁰ As the title of Baxter's work implies, the author intended to use meditation as a means of providing comfort to "saints" who doubt their sainthood. He says it is "a Truth too evident . . . that many of Gods Children do not enjoy that sweet Life and blessed Estate in the World which God their Father hath provided for them."¹¹

The last part of the book contains the "Directory for the getting and keeping of the Heart in Heaven," but the major portion, nearly 700 pages, is concerned with circumventing the seemingly prohibitive Calvinistic doctrine of Grace, which, as Martz states, was not conducive to the art of meditation.¹² The reasons are

fairly apparent. For the Calvinist, salvation could never be merited; it is little wonder that he found no motivation for meditation. The Catholics and Anglicans could urge man to cooperate with Grace; the Puritans had to wait for the power of the special grace of election to move them. All spiritual life depended on this grace; efforts without it were bound to end in failure. By the same token, a Puritan had no need for any "method," since special grace would certainly provide the means to exercise its presence.

Through splendid rhetoric which takes both Papist and Calvinist to task for their contrary but equally wrong concepts of good works,¹³ Baxter prepares the way for justifying an Anglo-Catholic meditative exercise. By granting that the "rest" which it provides "must be enjoyed but by few,"¹⁴ Baxter finds the motivation for Puritan meditation. "What wise man would not follow the search of his heart both night and day till he were assured of his safety?"¹⁵ As Martz aptly puts it, it is "no wonder, then, if meditation leading toward the love of God tended to wither away before the burning presence of this question."¹⁶ No matter how Baxter's system may parallel the Anglican, Puritans were looking for an answer to this question, while Anglicans were attempting to deepen their love of God and thereby earn heaven. This difference had to be a factor in the manner of meditation. One fundamental

difference is that the Puritan was much more interested in the scrutiny of Scripture and of himself for signs of his personal salvation and the individual possession of such signs.¹⁷

Anyone acquainted with the meditative poetry of Edward Taylor is aware of the poet's concern for signs of personal salvation. As previously mentioned,¹⁸ Taylor finds the source for his meditations in doctrine drawn from Scriptural quotations. Among his favorites are those passages from John promising a place for redeemed souls. In Meditation 2:94, Taylor uses the text, "In my Father's House are Many Mansions." The first stanza begins in typical fashion by describing the magnificent house of God, but before the stanza ends, we see that this magnificence is but a background for repugnant man.

Celestiall Mansions! Wonder, oh my Soul!
Angells Pavillions surely: and no Halls
For Mud walld Matter, wherein Vermins rowle,
Worm eaten'd ore with Sin, like wormhold Walls.
Shall Earthen Pitchers set be on the Shelve
Of such blesst Mansions Heavenly Plate of Wealth?
(2:94, ll. 1-6)

By the beginning of the third stanza Taylor particularizes the general question in Stanza One of "Earthen Pitchers" in "Angells Pavillions" to his own predicament.

Oh, that thy Spirit would my Soule Inlay

With such rich lining, Graces Web, that would
While in my Loom, me in these Tents convey
And that thy Sovereign Love might ever hold
Me in the paths that to these Mansions bring,
That I might ever dwell with thee therein.

Oh! that my Meditations all were frindg'd
With Sanctifying Gifts: and all my wayes
Borderd were with Obedience rightly hindg'd
Lord on thy word thy Honour bright to raise.
Oh! that my Paths were pavde with Holiness
And that thy Glory were their shining dress.
(2: 94, 11. 13-24)

The prominence of the question of grace in all of Taylor's meditations is evidenced by Taylor's own statement in this poem. Taylor also gives a clue to the Puritan test of these "Sanctifying Gifts" when he follows his overt wish for grace with the desire that his behavior be "hindg'd Lord on thy word."

The question of his election is answered in the final stanza in a tone expressive of Taylor's usual confidence.

Array me, Lord, with such rich robes all ore
As for their Matter, and their modes usd are
Within these Mansions, Dye them all therefore
Deep in thy blood: to make them gracious Ware.
If with thy precious robes will't dress me here
My present tunes shall sing thy praise when there.
(2: 94, 11. 25-30)

The same general pattern is visible in Meditation 2:95 based on John 14.2, "I go to prepare a place for you." It begins

with, "What shall a Mote up to a Monarch rise?" and concludes,

Lord Let me bee one of these Crumbs of thine.
And though I'm dust adorn me with thy graces
That though all flect with Sin, thy Grace may shine
As thou Conductst me to these furnisht places.
Make mee, thy Golden trumpet, sounded bee,
By thy Good Spirits melody to thee.
(2: 95, 11. 43-48)

Taylor's concern for his salvation takes many forms. In Meditation 2:61 Taylor takes the text from John 3.14, "As Moses lift up the Serpent in the Wilderness so must the Son of Man be lift up." The way Taylor turns this simile to the question of his election is expressed in the final stanza.

I by the fiery Serpent bitt be here.
Be thou my brazen Serpent me to Cure.
My Sight, Lord, make thy golden Charet cleare
To bring thy remedy unto my Sore.

Likewise, "The Reflexion," a poem included in the meditative series,¹⁹ presents God sitting at "Table Head" with the poet asking "Be n't I a bidden Guest."

The tendency of Puritan meditation to concern itself with the question of election through an examination of Scripture and self can be appreciated by comparison with poetry in the spirit of Anglo-Catholic meditations. Martz indicates that Donne's "Goodfriday, 1613, Riding Westward" like the "Holy Sonnets" reflects an Ignatian

meditative system.²⁰ After the first ten lines recall the conflict between soul and body, which is then analyzed in the body of the poem, the selection ends with an invocation unlike anything in Taylor. Donne asks God to lash his body into submission, to correct his faults that he may be worthy of heaven and grace.

O Saviour, as Thou Hang'st upon the tree.
I turn my back to Thee but to receive
Corrections, till Thy mercies bid thee leave.
O think me worth Thine anger; punish me;
Burn off my rusts and my deformity;
Restore Thine image so much, by Thy grace,
That Thou may'st know me, and I'll turn my face.
(11. 36-42)

There is nothing of Taylor's search for evidence of salvation here. Donne is not looking for Scriptural evidence of salvation that is obscured for the moment. He is rather conforming to St. Ignatius Loyola's injunction

. . . to look at myself, asking what I have done for Christ, what I ought to do for Christ; and then seeing Him that which He is, and thus fixed to the Cross, to give expression to what shall present itself to my mind.²¹

Donne's meditative poetry, like Herbert's, has as its motivation the stirring of affection, the formation of more proper attitudes and actions that the poet may be more worthy of salvation on the final day. Martz testifies to the universality of this motive in all the meditative practices that found their way to England in the Counter-

Reformation.²²

Although he seldom begins his poems in this manner, Taylor is not lacking in this quality in his meditative verse. Quite often the final lines of his poems show him heaping praise and honor upon Christ. The difference is that the Puritan saw all spiritual life, including proper praise and behavior, as a product of special grace. Taylor interposes a search for knowledge of salvation between the recognition of his faults and the overflow of proper praise. Only after he has successfully tried his case through Scripture does he ask that his election be made manifest in praise. In fact, Taylor's knowledge is seldom revealed in any declarative statement, but it is implicit in the final mood.

In Meditation 1:40, for example, the poet begins by upbraiding himself for his dullness of heart.

Still I complain; I am complaining still.
Oh! woe is me! Was ever Heart like mine?
A Sty of Filth, a Trough of Washing-Swill
A Dunghill Pit, a Puddle of mere Slime.
A Nest of Vipers, Hive of Hornets; Stings.
A Bag of Poyson, Civit-Box of Sins.
(1: 40, 11. 1-6)

The charges he levels at himself are reminiscent of the questions posed directly in other poems where he has doubts of being a "bidden Guest," for to the Puritan impotence of heart was

just as damning. Perhaps Taylor is recalling past exuberance in the knowledge of election when he says,

Sometimes me thinks the serpents head I mall:
Now all is still: my spirits do recreute.
But ere my Harpe can tune sweet praise, they fall
On me afresh, and tare me at my Root!
(1:40, ll. 31-34)

As Taylor approaches the final stanzas, the Scriptural quotation, "He is a Propitiation for our Sin" (John2.2), cited as the title, begins to have meaning for the poet. The complaining heart begins to turn to a praising heart after the poet realizes the meaning of the Scriptural passage.

Its grace's wonder that I wrack not so.
I faintly shun't: although I see this Case
Would say, my sin is greater than thy grace.

Hope's Day-peep dawns hence through this chinck, Christ's name
Propitiation is for sins. Lord, take
It so for mine. . . .
(1:40, ll. 46-51)

The poet has applied his condition to Christ's promises and found the key to his dullness. The selection ends with praise.

And let thy Sun shine on my Head out cleare.
And bathe my Heart within its radiant beams:
Thy Christ make my Propitiation Deare.
Thy Praise shall from my Heart breake forth in streams.
This reeching Vertue of Christs blood will quench
Thy wrath, slay Sin and in thy Love mee bench.
(1:40, ll. 61-66)

This is a basic, motivational difference from the "What am I doing for Christ" that follows meditations of the type used by Donne and Herbert.

Since the question of divine election was most important to a Puritan, it is only natural that numerous conditions existed for determining the validity of the answer. For Edward Taylor the conditions took on special significance because election in a very real sense was a public matter in the New England covenant communities. Miller says this ecclesiastical doctrine was "the unique and distinguishing feature of New England Puritanism," which sets it off not only from Anglicanism but from other Puritanism and from continental Calvinism.²³

There is no reason to believe that Taylor would exempt himself from what was considered the proper means of answering such a question. This singular fact enters into every meditative technique and procedure and distinguishes Taylor from the poets of England.

Baxter merely says that "A heart set upon heaven, will be one of the most unquestionable evidences of thy sincerity, and a clear discovery of a true work of saving grace upon thy soul."²⁴ At once Baxter has summarized the need for meditation and satisfied that need. It is here that one must become skeptical of his influence on a Puritan such as Edward Taylor.

Baxter may well have satisfied the mass of Calvinists in urging meditation as a means of discovering or rediscovering grace, but when he declares that the search is also the discovery and later when he attempts to justify the Anglo-Catholic use of the senses in that search and discovery, he has trespassed on inviolable areas of New England thought. These very points separated New England Congregationalists from both Anglican and Puritan in England. It seems that here Baxter is attempting to find again the broadest base of appeal exclusive of the congregationalists. While Baxter and others like him were forced by circumstances to seek out points of agreement between Anglicans, Presbyterians and Puritans, New England Puritans vigorously rejected any such tendency. Differences of opinion were branded unflinchingly as heresy, and dissenters in New England were exiled. What was left in religious communities such as Westfield was an unblemished orthodoxy which allowed complete adherence to doctrine and practice in all aspects of daily life, including the exercise of meditation. Perry Miller says,

A certain caution must be exercised in construing the ideas of any Englishmen after 1640 as wholly synonymous with those of New Englanders, for Puritanism at home expanded and proliferated rapidly with the beginnings of the Civil Wars and was obliged to take stock of innumerable questions which never arose in the colonies.²⁵

While Taylor accepted the injunction to meditate on the general grounds indicated by Baxter, there is every reason to believe that he pursued meditation in a manner consistent with New England belief and practice. The congregational practice with its conditions for entering the fellowship of saints undoubtedly fostered the same conditions in meditations in which the public process is made private.

Anglo-Catholic Meditation and Metaphysical Poetry

Before a detailed examination of the particular meditative practice that Taylor followed can be undertaken, it is necessary to explain something of the Anglo-Catholic system of meditation. Also, since the purpose in part is to disassociate Taylor's poetry from the English religious poetry, some attention must be given throughout to the manifestations of Anglo-Catholic meditation in the works of the English poets.

Meditation as a religious exercise is not unique to the seventeenth century, though meditation during this time does have a character; unlike anything preceding it. Simply stated, the seventeenth century saw the synthesis of the theological and affective tendencies of religious thought which in previous times had been distinct or even warring. As early as the first part of the fifteenth

century, religious thinkers like Jean le Charlier de Gerson (1363-1429) saw no conflict in clarifying theological points in the manner of Aquinas, while urging the necessity of meditation in the manner of St. Bonaventure (1221 - 1274) and St. Bernard (1090 - 1153). By the sixteenth and seventeenth century, abstract theological issues had developed side by side with exhortations to a devout life.²⁶

In the seventeenth century and the Counter-Reformation the concern of Catholic and Anglo-Catholic spirituality was to teach the integration and balance of these two elements in prayer and meditation. The proliferation of treatises on the Continent and in England dealing with the manner in which these natural religious tendencies might be integrated affected every dutiful Christian. But in the case of the poet, the effects are most apparent. In the individual integration and balance of doctrine and affective poetry, according to Martz, "resides . . . the central tension of English religious poetry of the seventeenth century,"²⁷ regardless of similar technical eccentricities. The inability fully to account for differences between Herbert and Donne and finally Taylor through technical affinities and influence can be at least partially resolved through an examination of their meditative preferences.²⁸ If the entire scope of religious verse in the seventeenth century is to be defined, that definition must be considerably more inclusive than

a list of technical peculiarities will permit. One must turn, as Martz does, to something like the definition offered by James Smith. Smith says that the distinguishing quality of metaphysical verse is the "concern . . . with problems either deriving from, or closely resembling in the nature of their difficulty, the problem of the Many and the One."²⁹ Religious poetry reflects precisely the concern of the religious treatises, the fusion of understanding and will, theology and emotion.

One point not directly involved in the meditative process itself needs some attention here. Meditation was an activity urged on every Christian as a duty. As such it was available to all through ordinary grace. One need not be motivated by the lofty ideal of pure love for God. Such ordinary grace is given to men for such basic motives as fear of damnation. Meditation in itself cultivated the lower levels of spiritual life and was not a mystical experience, even though some saw meditation as a kind of first step toward mysticism.³⁰

The philosophy of meditation that developed in the seventeenth century was made workable in the "methods" which religious writers prescribed. Although it would be a mistake to call the various methods identical, there is a marked similarity in the various methods.³¹ Basically meditation was the primary ingredient of a

somewhat larger act known as "mental prayer." The other elements, however, were simply a pre-meditation, the devising of a subject and scheme for the meditation, and the affectionate praise and colloquy that followed a meditation. Since the pre-meditation is expressed in the meditation proper, and the affections following the meditation are an extension of the principal component, it is sufficient here to deal with the meditation itself.

Once the first power of the soul, the memory, had supplied the subject for meditation, that mystery was made concrete and dramatic in the imagination. This was accomplished by forming a mental picture of some appropriate religious scene. One might envision Christ on the cross, the horrors of hell, or the nativity scene, depending on the spiritual subject of the meditation. Such a picture was composed with all the realism the individual could muster.³²

An important facet of this procedure for poets was the method used when the religious subject did not readily suggest a familiar religious picture. Several alterations were possible under such circumstances. One could imagine himself at some holy place or imagine some divine person or phenomenon occurring in the same room. Usually it was suggested that one engage in a composition by "similitude or comparison."³³ This permitted an unlimited variety

of images both in meditation and in poetry. Images could be drawn from the world of man-made objects, science, or nature. It was not unusual to have elements from more than one realm combined in a single vision. A scene could be far removed from the religious and still befit the supernatural goal. The important thing was that the scene before the senses embodied both a spiritual implication and the proper affective response. Martz says, "In this ability to keep the external scene firmly before the senses, yet all the while drawing spiritual implications from it - in this lies the peculiar power . . . of all poetry written under the impulse of meditation."³⁴

It is ironic that de Sales cautions that composition through comparison and similitude might lead to "searching out curious inventions."³⁵ Whatever the inherent danger for meditation, such a composition of place served well for literature. Martz gives several convincing examples in his first chapter.³⁶ Once the meditative process is understood, many poems by the Metaphysicals reflect such a discipline. A few examples will serve as a backdrop for considering Taylor's method.

In Donne's "Holy Sonnet 11" the poet presents a moving scene of the crucifixion. The drama is achieved by the realism of the poet's own presence in the scene.

Spit in my face you Jewes, and pierce my side.

Buffet, and scoffe, scourge, and crucifie mee, . . .
(11. 1-2)

In similar fashion Southwell gives a vivid picture of the manger scene in "New Prince, new pompe."

Behold a silly tender Babe
In freesing Winter night;
In homely manger trembling lies,
Alas a pittious sight.
(11. 1-4)

More typical, however, is a scene chosen for the "similitude" it bears to doctrine and affection. Death is personified in "Holy Sonnet 10." As such, the person of death can dwell with poison and war, be a slave to desperate men, appear proud, and most important, die. Such sensuous depths are less readily available in a vision of the cross. In similar fashion Herbert draws spiritual implications from the dying flower in "Life." One can almost see the process of composition by similitude in the opening lines of Donne's "Goodfriday, 1613, Riding Westward."

Let Man's soul be a sphere, and then, in this
The intelligence that moves, devotion is,
And as the other spheres, by being grown
Subject to foreign motions, lose their own
And being by others hurried every day,
Scarce in a year their natural form obey,
Pleasure or business, so, our souls admit
For their first mover, and are whirled by it,

Hence is't, that I am carried towards the west
This day, when my soul's form bends toward the east.
(ll. 1-10)

By comparison with such poetry, Taylor has been criticized for his lack of a comparable fusion of intellect and affection in some dramatically composed vision. Austin Warren's comments on "The Reflexion" typify this view. Warren feels the vision of the Rose sitting at "Table Head" invites and repels visualization, and thus the metaphysical intensity is lost.³⁷

Lord, art thou at the Table Head above
Meat, Med'cine, sweetness, sparkling Beautys to
Enamour Souls with Flaming Flakes of Love,
And not my Trencher, nor my Cup o'reflow?
Be n't I a bidden Guest? Oh! sweat mine Eye.
Oreflow with Teares: Oh! draw thy fountains dry.

Shall I not smell thy sweet, oh! Sharons Rose?
(ll. 1-7)

Here perhaps more than any place else Taylor's poetry must be reassessed in terms of Puritan meditative practice. Baxter is expressing precisely the Anglo-Catholic meditative method when he urges the use of the senses to excite the spiritual affections. He begins in a way that is Puritan enough when he asks that Christ be viewed in heaven, but before long the omnipotent God is on earth in human form.

Draw near and behold him: Dost thou not hear his voice? . . . He that calls to them who pass by, to behold his Sorrow in the day of his Humiliation, doth call now to thee to behold his Glory in the day of his Exaltation: Look well upon him; Dost thou not know him?³⁸

Baxter intends that the senses be used to arouse the affections in searching out the "Truth" of doctrine and the certainty of one's "Interest" in such truths. But in urging the use of the senses in the discovery of faith, Baxter takes on a distinctly argumentative tone, which in itself suggests that there existed stern opposition to such a practice. In Martz's words "Such use of the senses in devotion is suspect, as Baxter well knows."³⁹ If such devotion was dangerous in England, it was heresy in New England.

To the Catholic and Anglican, the Redemption provided Sanctifying Grace to all men who would accept Christ and his teachings. Moreover, the existence of both divine and human natures in the person of Jesus Christ and the sacrament of communion sanctified the sensory in achieving the promised grace. Like the communion host itself, sensory objects had spiritual implications which could be enlarged through an exploration of the sensory. Donne believed the sacrament of communion to be a sensible assertion to help our infirmity, the soul aided by the body.⁴⁰

Puritan belief did not conceive such a relationship between

soul and body. The Redemption was the act of God made man, but the importance of the act was more theological than physical. While admitting that Christ was both God and man, Puritans, especially those in New England, saw not a charitable human Christ, but a spiritual, incomprehensible God composed of abstract superlatives. The most prominent was omnipotence.⁴¹ The redemption was important because it instituted a covenant for the elect, not because it provided a human model for behavior. The presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper was a spiritual presence reserved for the elect, not a carnal presence aimed at stirring the acceptance of the spiritual implication. The symbolism of the Nativity and passion came to mean little. William Haller says,

The Puritan saga did not cherish the memory of Christ in the manger or on the cross, that is, of the lamb of God sacrificed in vicarious atonement for the sins of man. The Mystic birth was the birth of the new man in men. . . . Hence the preachers lavished their powers upon describing all existence and every human life as a phase of conflict between Christ and Satan.⁴²

The Puritan could not so easily enlist human sensibility in the war against Satan since the passions were Satan's chief weapons. Even the elect were not exempt from the treasonous quality that the senses possessed. The Puritan first had to be certain that the sensibilities flowed from divine rather than human motives, a consideration that

was imperative in every act of devotion.

Puritan Dogma and Edward Taylor's Meditative Method

Without getting involved in an intricate study of Puritan philosophy, it is possible to account for distinct meditative methods for New England Puritans. Puritans admitted that the Bible was a simple statement of God's will and that even unregenerate man would see what is expected of him. The unregenerate man, however, could not possibly perform such good works without special grace no matter how he tried. The human being was too attached to things of this world to perform the laborious tasks Christ demanded. The only means for such righteous behavior came with special grace that first permitted the individual to discover the intentions of God in making such demands. The unregenerate could know only the revealed will, but the elect were acquainted with His "secret will."⁴³

What this special knowledge permitted was a love of duty. With such a love the tasks became acts of the will. It was the understanding that permitted this change. When the wishes of God were made reasonable, the love of duty was possible. To Puritans sensibility was inseparable from dialectic and doctrine. Theological principles properly understood dramatized the needs of the soul.

Doctrine itself was beautiful and attractive.⁴⁴

The function of the sermon was principally to show the logic of doctrine.⁴⁵ The final phase included an exhortation to take the doctrine to heart, but such urgings were limited. It was a matter well understood that unless such affections for doctrine were grounded in the genuine understanding provided by grace, such superficial affections would soon wear thin.

It was the duty of the individual to examine the reason of the doctrine in all its uses, to attempt to find God's secret will, to hope that his degenerate human reason would be enlightened by special grace so that he too might understand not on the level of human dialectics which is imperfect, but on the level of spiritual understanding. If such a level was attained, the affections were sanctified. Loving God and his doctrine for their reasonableness made disobedience contrary to nature.⁴⁶

Such an act of devotion, of course, was urged on all men, but even those elect in the covenant continued to hear sermons and engage in meditation to revive and rekindle the fire of divine understanding and love. The minister's function was to provide the natural means as much as humanly possible for individuals to find the grace for understanding and love. His sermons attempted to bridge the gap between knowing God's will and understanding and

loving God's will. At his disposal was the imperfect, but necessary, system of logic, which was available to man after the fall.

In providing the means it was necessary that the minister appeal to the intellect and demonstrate something of the joy and comfort genuine understanding provides. It was therefore recommended that the minister first engage in a private consideration of the reasons for the doctrine. When the minister's understanding was blessed with the light of his special grace, he was prepared to preach to his congregation. Taylor's meditative poems are in a sense a record of such private meditations. The Meditations were composed regularly at about six-week intervals as part of the minister's preparation for administering and receiving the Lord's Supper. The subject of the Meditations is, in Taylor's own words, "the Doctrine preached upon the Day of administration." The texts cited prior to each poem are the texts which provided the doctrine for the sermon. According to Professor Grabo, who has studied the relationship between the poems and the sermons, the sermon was composed first.⁴⁷

Taylor in a sense was allowing his own sermon to act as a means of rediscovering the enlightenment of grace in his own being. At any rate, he was contemplating doctrine in an act of meditation. And it is reasonable to believe his devotional methods are consistent with the Puritan view of the senses. Only in a qualified way can we

regard Taylor as having love as the object of his devotional exercise, for the love Taylor seeks flows naturally with understanding. It is not the love that flows from the strong, almost uncontrollable human passions. It is not natural passions made spiritual, but moral passion precipitated by grace's enlightenment of defunct human reason. In the Anglo-Catholic practice the natural passions precede judgment and in fact form the judgment of doctrine. Taylor's passions follow judgment. Taylor as a New England Puritan would have been delighted to leave to Donne all preoccupation with passions that could not be ruled.⁴⁸

If evidence of his orthodoxy seem insufficient to attribute such a view to Taylor, we have his own statements on such matters. All of Taylor's sermons follows a standard procedure designed to reveal the reasonable foundation of doctrine. He opens by citing a text from which he infers a doctrine or truth, the revealed will contained in the quotation. The body of the sermon involves an intricate, logical explanation of the truth. Taylor explained the causes, and necessities, of such a doctrine. Grabo calls attention to the especially rational character of Taylor's sermon even for New England.⁴⁹ Such an emphasis would indicate Taylor's full acceptance of the Puritan concept of the passions, especially in view of Taylor's remark at the beginning of Sermon XIV of the Christographia: "I have endeavored by the Grace of God to affect your hearts with the ex-

cellency of Christ Jesus my Lord."⁵⁰ Taylor obviously did not affect those hearts by direct appeals to the emotions. As Grabo states, "passions could be reached legitimately only by the often circuitous labyrinthine paths of the reason."⁵¹

Taylor himself said as much in Sermon IV when he told his congregation that man is drawn to Christ as "the Object of all Rational Desires."⁵² And in Sermon X he asserts again that the proper means of praising and glorifying God is "as a Sacrifice . . . from and upon the Alter of the Rational Creature."⁵³

Such a belief did not come to Taylor only after he was an established New England clergyman. Evidence is also found in his "Spiritual Relation" at the organizing of Westfield.

The time was, that I never looked within doore,
but now by meditation and heart examination I
finde it a harder matter to keep Rule than the
victor hath in taking a City: and as for the [work]
whereas it was a burden Since it's become [a]
delight.⁵⁴

Delight in duty has come in meditation from an understanding of God's secret will.

The Englishman Richard Baxter could trust natural affections for worldly objects on the grounds that "Faith is imperfect, for we are renewed but in part; but Sense hath its strength, according to the strength of the flesh."⁵⁵ Baxter hoped to influence the

Puritan Independents, not the congregationalists. Independent Puritans could judge their own love of God without reference to the objective examination of motives that occurred in New England. Along with this is the fact that the principal threat to Puritanism in England came from the Anglicans, who accused Calvinists of lacking active virtue. With these things in mind, Baxter's popularity is not so surprising. But for Taylor's views, we must refer to the New England condition.

The most prominent threat to Puritan orthodoxy in New England came from within its own ranks. Enthusiasts like Anne Hutchinson and Roger Williams attempted to reduce reason in religion and substitute emotional sincerity.⁵⁶ Antinomianism of this sort made the orthodox Puritan even more careful of the proper relationship of mind and will. Taylor's stern opposition to Stoddardeanism⁵⁷ is no doubt founded on his firm belief that the motives for good behavior can and must be distinguished. If the motives of the heart proceed from mere natural affections without reference to divine understanding, the individual is not just unworthy of the Lord's Supper, he is the victim of Satan's sophistry.

Recognizing this fundamental distinction between Anglican and Puritan devotional practices makes the metaphysical and even the meditative classification less useful in assessing Taylor as

a poet. Taylor was loyal to a method unlike any other meditative method. In the light of this distinction, Taylor's poetry is certainly more accessible and possibly even more satisfying.

CHAPTER III

EDWARD TAYLOR'S MEDITATIVE POETRY ASSESSED IN TERMS OF THE PURITAN MEDITATIVE METHOD

The history of religious devotion indicates that an orthodox Puritan minister such as Edward Taylor would not have approached meditation in the manner of an English clergyman, whether Anglican or Puritan. Taylor stood apart from the Anglican because he accepted the Calvinistic doctrine of grace and the implications such doctrine had for religious meditation. He was separated from English Puritans by the unique practice of doctrine fostered by the New England situation. Viewed in terms of the Puritan meditative method, Taylor's poetry is less confusing to the modern reader.

It is not surprising that Taylor characteristically "repels visualization" where Donne and Herbert pursue the sensual scene with vigor. Taylor avoids giving a complete picture of Christ's human nature in any composition. The sensuous tableau could only serve to channel meditation into dangerous realms. None of Taylor's Meditations attempt to imply the poet's presence at the scene of Biblical events, nor do any delineate some natural picture in the imagination. On the occasions that Taylor's poetry seems to approach such a visualization, he directs the attention away from the natural

sense to the understanding of doctrine that the image suggests.

The first line of Meditation 1: 7 seems to be a prelude to an affective dramatization. "Thy Humane Frame, my Glorious Lord, I spy," But Taylor chooses to explore the logic of this image, not the sensuous qualities of Christ's body.

A Golden Still with Heavenly Choice drugs filld;
Thy Holy Love, The Glowing heate whereby,
The Spirit of Grace is graciously distilld.
Thy mouth the Neck through which these spirits still,
My Soul thy Violl make, and therewith fill.
(11. 2-6)

The vision of Christ's body is used to clarify the doctrine of redemption. It is made a container of grace. The particulars of mouth and neck, though affective almost in themselves, are employed primarily in the service of understanding the doctrine. Taylor it seems has no special aversion to connotative words like "Glowing heate," but natural affections such as these words suggest function entirely for intellectual appreciation. Instead of a sensuous apprehension of thought, Taylor's poems suggest the logical apprehension of the senses.

One must also remember that Taylor was a practitioner of Ramist logic. This controversial system, first proposed by Petrus Ramus in 1536, was still fiercely contested in 1640. Donne might well have been acquainted with the system, but it is doubtful that

he employed it in his writings. By the 1600's Ramist logic became synonymous with Puritanism in England, and while Cambridge accepted the system, it was opposed at Oxford.¹ As might be expected, there was no controversy in New England; Harvard was definitely Ramist.²

Among other things, Ramist logic contended that truth does not need proof through categorical deduction. Instead, this system saw logic as a matter of words and speech where truth merely needed assertion.³ The world of natural objects was seen as an argument of God's order. Images in such a system functioned in a unique way. The qualities of an object were the arguments of that subject. The Ramist preacher would not reiterate the phraseology and imagery of the Bible. Instead he reduced the imagery to logic and grammar to find the literal arguments of the images.⁵ Such is the case in Taylor's analysis of Christ's body. Instead of an affective response to the Biblical description, Taylor uses the physical Christ as an argument of redemption.

Taylor apparently preferred not to root his doctrinal truth in Biblical passages where sensual delight might compete with the logic and grammar of the imagery. The majority of Taylor's poems are based upon such relatively neutral Biblical passages as "Shall the Sun of Righteousness arise," "Through him we have an Access

unto the Father," "In Him should all Fullness Dwell," and "In Whom are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom."⁶

When Taylor does choose a passage that offers a sensual approach, he focuses attention on the logic or grammar of the image. In several Meditations, Taylor uses the passage from Canticles 2. 1-2 that describes Christ as "The Lillie of the Vallies." But just as Taylor made Christ's body a logical correlative of abstract doctrine, so does he make the flower denote doctrine in a rational sense. In Meditation 2:69, for example, Taylor does not relish the delicacy or beauty that the image implies for the referent. The fragrance serves only to remind the poet of his vile nature.

The Lillies Beautie, and its Fragrancy
Shews my ill-favourdness, and Nauseous Stink:
(2:69, ll. 31-32)

After a fairly standard opening where Taylor berates himself for his dull soul, he settles on calling his dullness a sickness.

Soule Sickneses do nest in mee; and Pride.
I nauseous am; and mine iniquities
Like Crawling Worms doe worm eat on my joys.

All black though plac'de in a White lilly Grove:
Not sweet, though in a bed of Lillies rowle,
Though in Physicians shop I dwell, a Drove
Of Hellish Vermin range all ore my Soul.
All Spirituall Maladies play rex in mee.
Though Christ should Lilly of my Vally bee.
(2:69, ll. 10-18)

As expected, the lily image is explored in terms of the medicinal qualities it possesses. Such properties lie beyond the apprehension of the senses.

But, Oh! the Wonder! Christ alone the Sun
Of Righteousness, that he might do the Cure
The Lilly of the Vallies is become
Whose Lillie properties do health restore
It's glory shews I'm filthy: yet must spring
Up innocent, and beautifull by Him.

Its Vally State and Bowing Head declare
I'm Haughty but must have a Humble minde.
Its Healing Virtue shew I'm sick: yet rate
Rich Remedies I'st in this Lilly finde.
Yea Christ the Lilly of the Vallies shall
Be to mee Glory, Med'cine, Sweetness, all.

(2: 69, ll. 19-30)

Ramist logic made beauty virtually synonymous with truth.⁷

Therefore, instead of being a discipline in itself, rhetoric was confined to certain relatively minor problems in style and delivery.⁸ For all practical purposes the most eloquent was also the most logical. This fact held true, for both poem and sermon. It is not surprising then that Taylor is less interested in perceptual truth than conceptual truth. Images like Christ's mouth and the lily are not so much sensuous experiences as they are relationships. This

does not mean that Taylor is merely "relating what he himself knows" as Pearce charges.⁹ There is still the drama of discovering the proper relationship of image to doctrine.

The logical foundation of Taylor's meditative poems is even more apparent in certain poems where the doctrine is the subject of disagreement among ministers. In the first decade of the eighteenth century, the arguments over the Lord's Supper dominated both sermon and treatise. Meditations 2: 102 through 2: 111 by Taylor reach a peak in argumentative structure. The process is most visible in Meditation 2: 108.

Taylor's doctrine appears to be an assertion of the truth of Christ's spiritual presence in the bread and wine. He identifies the text as Matt. 26. 26. 27., "Jesus took bread - and he took the Cup." In the first stanza Taylor grasps the "adjuncts" of the feast. This is one of the nine loci or places in which Ramus said arguments may be found.¹⁰

What Royall Feast Magnificent is this,
I am invited to, where all the fare
Is spic'd with Adjuncts, (ornamentall bliss)
Which are its robes it ever more doth ware?
These Robes of Adjuncts shining round about
Christs golden Sheers did cut exactly out.
(ll. 1-6)

Having found the place for the argument, Taylor need only make

assertions of natural fact to confirm the spiritual truth.

The Bread and Wine truth Doctrine teach for faith
(True Consequence from Truth will never ly)
Their Adjuncts teach Christs humane nature hath
A Certain place and not Ubiquity
Hence this Condemns Ubiquitarians
And whom deny Christs Manhood too it damns.

It Consubstantiation too Confounds.
Bread still is bread, Wine still is wine its sure.
It Transubstantiation deadly wounds.
Your touch, Tast, Sight say true. The Pope's a whore.
Can Bread and Wine by words be Carnified?
And manifestly bread and Wine abide?

What monstrous thing doth Transubstantiation
and Consubstantiation also make
Christs' Body, having a Ubique-Station,
When thousands Sacraments men Celebrate
Upon a day, if th' Bread and wine should e're
Be Con-, or Trans-Substantiated there?
(11. 7-24)

Later in the sixth stanza of the poem, Taylor finds another argument in what Ramus would probably have called the locus of "comparative name." The appearance of the bread prompts Taylor to call it the seal of the Covenant of Grace.

It is the Signet of the Kings right hande,
Seal to the Covenant of Grace Gods bande.
(11. 35-36)

The difference between this technique and Donne's is subtle but important. The sensations of touch, taste, and sight

are applied to the images in a logical sense. Since the bread tastes like bread, it is bread. The taste may be sweet, but the affective sensation does not carry the argument. The existence of bread as a separate substance proves Christ's particular presence.

Donne and Herbert pursue an affective analysis of objects. In viewing Christ on the cross in "Holy Sonnet 13," for example, Donne makes a judgment on his salvation because his affections, not his mind, are convinced.

To wicked spirits are horrid shapes assigned
This beauteous form assures a piteous mind.
(11, 13-14)

Taylor's pursuit of rational understanding leads to compositions that must transcend the purely affective. Taylor reacts to scenes that are more abstract than real.

Could but a Glance of that bright City fair,
Whose walls are sparkling, Pretious Stones, whose Gates
Bright polliisht Splendent Pearls, Whose Porters are
Swash Flaming Angells, and Whose Streets rich Plates
Of pure transparent Gold, mine Eyes enjoy,
My Ravisht heart on Raptures Wings would fly.
(2: 93, 11. 1-6)

Considered as metaphysical, this stanza seems less than satisfactory. There is no vivid picture of the "City fair," nothing to

awaken the hypothetical response. Taylor is imagining a heaven that appeals to the rational sense of value. The world is called a "Silver Box of Winde" with "Crystall Skies" in the following stanzas. In an effort to define heaven's rational worth, Taylor is required to use imagery that draws upon rational rather than affective desires. Yet the heart is "Ravisht" in a manner reminiscent of natural passions.

Like the Metaphysicals, Taylor engaged in a composition by similitude. But again, it must be recalled that the Anglican system sanctioned the practice because it was possible to find in such compositions spiritual mystery and proper affective response. Taylor's similitudes represent something else. Perry Miller's statement on the New England mind has relevance here.

In the ideal state, reason would sift truth out of images in the imagination and form phantasms which were not concrete and sensual but abstract and spiritual; passions would then react to rational images.¹²

Taylor is not opposed to the affective object as such. In fact critics have noted Taylor's sensitivity to sensuous detail.¹³ But when Taylor uses "Sugar Cakes," he does not drop the image directly into his heart. Rather Taylor takes such an object and searches out the spiritual truth that lies beyond appearances. To the Puritan, no natural object could by itself lead to an understanding of the

supernatural source. But with the aid of grace, human reason could penetrate natural appearances to form a "rational" image of the object. Such a rational image was not answerable to the world of nature, for the world presented things as they seemed to be, not as they really are.¹⁴

This belief gives Taylor's imagery a quality unlike Donne's and Herbert's. Donne and Herbert are always true to the appearances of the disjunctive worlds they join. Taylor finds logical representations of truth in objects that exist nowhere but in the poet's imagination. This is evident in Meditation 1: 5. It is clear that the "Lilly Flower" is a similitude to a doctrine. "My Blessed Lord, art thou a Lilly Flower?" But after this first line Taylor subjects the lily to analysis and projects an imaginary flower whose blossom is rooted in the garden of his soul.

Oh! that my Soul thy Garden were, that so
Thy bowing Head root in my Heart, and poure
Might of its Seeds, that they therein might grow.
Be thou my Lilly, make thou me thy knot:
Be thou my Flowers, I'll be thy Flower Pot.
(1: 5, 11. 2-6)

The similitude is not founded on its natural appearance; it is a valid corollary to spiritual truth only after it is re-formed by the poet's rational perception. After the image is thus rationally

perceived the will reacts.

How shall my Vallie's Spangling Glory spred,
Thou Lilly of the Vallies Spangling
There springing up? Upon they bowing Head
All Heavens bright Glory hangeth dangling.
My vally then with Blissfull Beams shall shine,
Thou Lilly of the Vallys, being mine.
(ll. 13-18)

Taylor's meditative poem, "The Reflexion," operates in the same way. The Lord is first presented sitting at the head of a banquet table, but before the first stanza ends, the "Meat" and "Med'cine" turn into a sparkling of "Beautys."

Lord, art thou at the Table Head above
Meat, Med'cine, sweetness, sparkling Beautys to
Enamour Souls with Flaming Flakes of Love,
And not my Trencher, nor my Cup o'reflow?
(ll. 1-4)

The visually concrete objects are turned into abstract images. Although Taylor still indicates that a trencher and cup will receive the gifts of the host, the natural images of meat and medicine are permanently dropped. This is especially clear in the next two stanzas where the host is addressed as a rose, and the means of receiving the host's gifts is no longer a trencher and cup, but a pipe. Since the rational image was not answerable to the world of

appearances, nothing kept Taylor from seeing pipes, sun beams and roses in one vision, ostensibly a banquet scene.

Donne and Herbert practiced their art in what Malcolm Ross calls a "firmament of belief" that accepted the real presence in its "symbolist and realist conceptualization."¹⁵ In such an environment they could be in the world without becoming a part of it. The natural affections could be elevated to the level of spiritual affection. The Puritan, however, was not really in the world at all.¹⁶ The natural passions were distinct from moral affection, and no amount of natural passion could lead to that affection rooted in sublime understanding. Thus we find Donne moves freely from contemplation of cross to contemplation of creature without inhibiting the goals of meditation. The composition in certain of his poems is strikingly secular. "The Ecstasy" pictures two lovers.

Where, like a pillow on a bed,
A pregnant bank swelled up to rest
The violet's reclining head,
Sat we two, one another's best.
Our hands were firmly cemented
With a fast balm, which thence did spring;
Our eye-beams twisted, and did thread
Our eyes upon one double string.
(ll. 1-8)

The body is the "book" of "Love's mysteries."

The Puritan could not ignore natural affections since they

were created by God. The uses of such affections, however, were carefully prescribed. The Puritan sermon aptly demonstrates the legitimate uses for such powerful instruments, just as the Anglican sermon reveals a contrary view. The Anglican discourse begins with a pianissimo exordium, which is amplified through the body of the sermon. The affective climax, called peroration, is the result of a systematic intensification of feeling.¹⁷ The Puritan sermon, on the other hand, quotes the text and "opens" it as briefly as possible, expounding circumstances and context, explaining grammatical meanings, and reducing tropes and schemes to prose. Finally doctrine is proclaimed in a flat, indicative sentence. From here the minister goes to proofs and applications appropriate to the congregation.¹⁸ The role of rhetoric in such a scheme was for the most part confined to the application. Here is where God intended rhetoric to be used - as a means of calling men to right.¹⁹ The sensory was sanctified in Biblical parables not the Incarnation. So Taylor is not adverse to using connotative words in describing doctrine, but at no time does the connotation impose upon the rational relationship between the image and the doctrine. Any of Taylor's Meditations substantiate this priority of function.

When thy Bright Beams, my Lord, do strike mine Eye,
Methinkes I then could truely Chide our right

My Hide bound Soul that stands so niggardly
That scarce a thought gets glorified by't.
My Quaintest Metaphors are ragged Stuff.
Making the Sun seem like a Mullipuff.
(1: 22, 11.1-6)

As usual with Taylor, the object of affection is treated in terms that tend to abstract the vision. In this instance the object of affection radiates "Bright Beams." In Meditation 2: 9 "this sight" emits "Seraphick Phancies." Equally common are "Glorious Glory," "Bright Rays," "Dazzling Shine," and "Bright Thing." There is nothing here to stir natural affections, but the heart is moved to the abstract object as if by a negative force. The connotative qualities of the "Hide bound Soule" serve to repel affections. When this is coupled with the fact that the hide functions logically to block out the beams "That scarce a thought get glorified by't." we have a hierarchy of affections consistent with Puritan belief.

Taylor was not unaware of the sensations implicit in imagery drawn from nature, but such imagery is seldom pleasing to the reader. Sin is "ink-faced"; the poet's mind is a "Bog of Filth"; and his soul, "blotcht." The natural sensations serve only to turn the affections to the supernatural abstract.

Even in this use of natural sensations, Taylor does not exploit the implicit affective power of words. He hardly could

have been unaware that the tough, animal-like hide offered a variety of sensations. Taylor is satisfied with using the connotative value implicit in a logical referent. The hide functions first as a barrier to the Lord's bright beams. Had the poet intended to use it affectively, he would not have dropped the image so abruptly. In the second stanza Taylor returns to his real subject.

Its my desire, thou shouldst be glorifi'de:
But when thy Glory shines before mine eye,
I pardon Crave, lest my desire be Pride.
Or bed thy Glory in a Cloudy Sky.
The Sun grows wan; and Angells palefac'd shrinke,
Before thy Shine, which I besmeer with Inke.
(1: 22, ll. 7-12)

Taylor is not averse to natural affections as a means of urging acceptance of spiritual truths, but genuine affections stand apart from the natural. Understanding the sublime spiritual beauty is aided by reference to nature's ugliness, but it is the understanding that leads to affection. The sensual calls men to truth, but it is the beauty of truth that prompts acceptance.

This gives an unusual twist to the Ignatian application of the senses in the Anglo-Catholic system. After the composition of place St. Ignatius urged that each of the five senses be applied to the scene "to see the person with the eyes of the imagination. . .

sweetness . . . to feel with the touch . . . to draw fruit from this."²⁰ Such sensual vivification is not easily accomplished when the subject is abstract. The result in Taylor is apparent in the Meditation just discussed. Taylor also applies the senses to the subject of the Meditation, but the sensual occurs as part of an attractive analogy or an unattractive opposite. The sensations of touch and sight are inherent in the "hide Bound soul" and "palefac'd Angells" that appear before the abstract beauty of the Lord. The visual glory of the first stanza is then made audible in the fourth stanza.

But shall the Bird sing forth thy Praise, and shall
The little Bee present her thankfull Hum?
But I who see thy shining Glory fall
Before mine Eyes, stand Blockish, Dull and Dumb.
(ll. 13-16)

Since Taylor's application of the senses serves more analogically than sensually, it is not surprising that he is willing to sacrifice the sensual intensity of a complete natural scene to better the logical appreciation of divinity. In "The Reflexion" the Lord sits at table head and carves sweet tasting foods. As a rose, he is sweet smelling; as a pearl he emits visible beams. Moreover, the ambiguity of the address, Rose of Sharon, permits the added sensation implied when the poet is "halfe ashamede my

sight should on them ly."

Such ambiguity is quite different from the ambiguity of the "wreath of hair" in Donne. In "The Funeral" the symbol of human passion comes to have spiritual implications. Taylor's ambiguity functions to offer various analogies to spiritual essences. Taylor follows the lead of the understanding that such sensual appreciation affords. Donne follows the lead of the affective.

Donne uses the art of profane love in religious devotion. In his "Songs and Sonnets" the central power arises in the way he grips a spiritual love built with theological proofs and religious images, yet finds the source in the physical.²¹ For purposes of comparison The Anniversary, which Martz calls the climax of profane and sacred tendencies, offers the best counterpart to Taylor. In eulogizing the death of Elizabeth Drury, Donne "transmutes the girl into a symbol of virtue that may fittingly represent the Image and Likeness of God in Man -- recognition of which is, according to St. Bernard, the chief end and aim of religious meditation."²²

Taylor's Meditation 2:40 is founded on a contemplation of his son's death.

Under thy Rod, my God, thy smarting Rod,
That hath off broke my James, that Primrose, Why?
Is't for my sin? Or Trial? Dost thou nod
At me, to teach mee: or mee sanctify?
(11., 1-4)

Taylor attempts nothing like the transformation of physical death into enduring virtue, but responds with a painful emotional response. The physical emotion is not elevated to the spiritual, for Taylor seeks comfort in heavenly doctrine. He implies this in the last two lines of the first stanza.

I neede have this hand, that broke off hath
This Bud of Civill, and of Sacred Faith.

(ll. 5-6)

The anguished "Why?" of the first stanza is increasingly subdued in the second stanza until faith in divine doctrine is restored.

But doth my sickness want such remedies,
As Mummy drained out of that Body spun
Out of my bowells first? Must th' Cure arise
Out of the Coffin of a pious son?
Well: so be it. I'le kiss the Rod, and shun
To quarrell at the Stroake. Thy Will be done.

(ll. 7-12)

Taylor certainly recognizes the union of natures that occurred in Christ. He states as much in the fourth stanza.

Thy Humane nature so divinely ti'de
Unto thy Person all Divine's a Spring
So high advanc'd, that in it doth reside
Preheminence large over ev'ry thing.

(ll. 19-22)

Such a recognition does not turn his love for James into a love of

God. It suggests rather the truth of God's absolute kingship over man. And as the final lines state, his son's death has served but to "lead my sight to thy Preheminnence."

In the Catholic system, adepts in meditation were instructed to follow the lead of the affections.²³ Thus, any time the application of senses moved the soul in meditation, the meditator could break into an affective colloquy with God. Such overflows of affective responses either terminated the process or followed an ascending level of intensity through the application of senses until it attained a peak. In Taylor's Meditations there is a conspicuous absence of intermittent colloquy. Emotional outbursts such as the one seen in Meditation 2: 40 are quite rare. And such natural responses never turn into affectuous praise in themselves. Consequently, colloquy is found only in the final stanza of his poetry. Intellectual understanding does not lend itself to intermittent glimpses in the manner of affectionate comprehension. It is the distinctly intellectual nature of Taylor's musings in the body of the Meditations that suppress praise until the mental appreciation of doctrine is complete.

Thy Humane flesh with its Perfections shine
So 'bove all others Beauties in their prime.

The like ne're seen in Heaven, nor Earth so broad.
Adorn'd with Graces all, grown ripe in glory.
Thy Person with all Excellency stowd

Perfections shine is lodgd in ev'ry story.
Here all Created, all Creating faire,
And Incrated Eminences are.

Here all Preheminece of Offices
Priest, Prophet-King-Hood too, their glorys rise
Conferred on thee, my Lord, and all their Keyes
That open us thy shining Mysteries /
Which do enflame our hearts their heads to run
Under the shining Wings of this bright Sun.
(2:40, ll. 17-36)

In the last lines Taylor comes to the understanding of God's "Pre-
heminece" required for praise.

When thy Preheminece doth ply this pin,
My Musick shall thy Praises sweetly bring.
(ll. 41-42)

Even Taylor's tendency to employ the commonplace can be better understood in the light of Puritan meditative practice. As it now stands, Taylor's frontier habitat is usually cited as the cause of the domestication. Donald E. Stanford says that Taylor's rural background is the source for his images.²⁴ Warren seems to think that Taylor was so immersed in the frontier that he became unaware of the implications produced when God is referred to in terms of a carpenter.²⁵ It is difficult to believe that a Puritan minister would somehow become unaware of the implications of words. It is more reasonable to assume that images in Taylor's poems were chosen with reference to their function in meditation rather than to

environment alone.

Imagery in both sermon and meditation had an intellectual function, that is to say doctrine could be started down the road to understanding by explaining it in terms of something more easily comprehended by the intellect. Theoretically such an analogy could move in any direction. It could be ornate, classical, or technical. But such analogies ran the risk of false enthusiasm and theological bewilderment when presented to ordinary men. It was generally accepted in New England that such things could never be the means of grace to common men.²⁶ The minister should first strive to provide some understanding of doctrine no matter how elementary that understanding might be.

Taylor is doubtless following the same technique in his poems that he followed in the previously composed sermon. Taylor compares heaven's grace to a feather stuck in his hat in Meditation 1: 37.

My Soule, Lord, quailles to thinke that I should bee
So high related, have such colours faire
Stick in my Hat, from Heaven: yet should see
My Soule thus blotcht: Hells Liveries to beare.
(1: 37, ll. 1-4)

As in the sermon, Taylor reduces doctrine to terms readily understood by his congregation. He was not guilty of some sacrilege

in following this technique as Warren implies. In reality a Puritan minister sinned against God's word when he failed to simplify truth. The use of obscure phrases and exotic words was immoral not just because they could never be the means of grace, but also because it was blasphemy to attempt to polish or adulterate the perfection of God's word.²⁷

Taylor unquestionably held to this belief. In numerous Meditations Taylor expresses the inadequacy of metaphors to express the glory of God and his doctrine. The first stanza of Meditation 1:13 is typical of this.

Thou Glory Darkning Glory, with thy Flame
Should all Quaint Metaphors teem ev're Bud
Of Sparkling Eloquence upon the same
It would appeare as dawbing pearls with mud.
Nay Angells Wits are Childish tricks, and like
The Darksom night unto thy Lightsom Light.
(1: 13, ll. 1-6)

Besides being a logical counterpart to a spiritual concept, the feather in the poet's hat in Meditation 1:37 was an object of some beauty to the Puritan. Warren and Stanford judge the connotations of seventeenth-century words by modern standards. In reality the Puritan mind saw beauty as a function of utility. The beautiful objects were the dish and the sword, not the statue.²⁸ The feather and hat as well as the spinning wheel, grape vine,

and purse in other poems are not inconsistent with Taylor's Puritan philosophy. Such homely features reflect neither a fascination for environment nor the influence of Herbert's poetry and DuBartas' The Divine Weeks as Warren says.²⁹ It is the Puritan way of achieving understanding on the human level in the hopes that grace would lift it to a vision of the whole.

It is important that future critics realize that Taylor stands apart from both the literary and meditative tradition in England. The absence of this realization in the past has caused critics to expect purposes and techniques in Taylor to conform to those found in Donne and Herbert. It is little wonder that examinations of Taylor's poetry founded on such a belief have led to disappointment. Taylor did not seek to judge doctrine through natural sensations. He did not wish to vivify doctrine in order to earn grace. For Taylor the road to truth was built on the understanding, and understanding indicated that grace had been received.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS

Taylor's poetry owes more to the discipline of religious meditation as it was practiced in Puritan New England than to any literary precedent. This does not mean that Taylor was completely unaware of what Anglican religious poets were doing, but even if Taylor had known and admired the work of Donne and Herbert, there is little reason to assume that Taylor would place his literary allegiances before his theological obligations. As Martz has shown, this is true even among the Anglican poets where religious differences are confined to devotional preferences. Herbert's adherence to the Salesian devotional formula distinguishes his poetry from Donne's in spite of the general similarities that result from the synthesis of affective and rational powers. These general similarities also appear in Taylor's poetry, but the essential character of the poetry is formed by the poet's formula for the synthesis. This was dictated by Taylor's theology and the philosophy of reason and emotion that the theology implied. As Miller says,

. . . the sources of Puritan thought are not to be found among literary masterpieces. Mere enumeration of volumes possessed by one or

another seventeenth-century New Englander will not of itself declare what ideas were taken from them, still less how the appropriated material was worked into the Puritan metaphysic.¹

Taylor's poetry is perhaps one of the last in a tradition to find its controlling impulse in the discipline of meditation, but it is the first, and possibly the only, to rely on a meditative system founded on Puritan theology as practiced in New England. It is the first to insist that the affections be sanctified by reason; it is the first to have a saving knowledge of salvation as its ultimate purpose. On these grounds Taylor must be evaluated apart from Donne and Herbert. No matter how Taylor's poetry appears to reflect the devotional intent and technical ingenuity of the English Metaphysicals, the nature and function of Taylor's poetry is not to be found in the works of Donne and Herbert.

Certainly something is to be gained by recognizing that Taylor shares various traits with the English Metaphysicals. But an error occurs when Taylor's achievement is judged solely by an English norm. As Warren and Welleck prescribe,

We must value things for what they are and can do, and evaluate them by comparison with other things of like nature and function. We ought to evaluate literature in terms and degrees of its own nature.²

The examination of Taylor's meditative poetry pursued in this study will not in itself alter the critical opinion of Edward

Taylor's poetry. The purpose has been to examine Taylor's works in the light of a meditative practice that was unique to New England Puritans, to find its own "nature and function," which much Taylor criticism seems to have ignored. In realizing that Taylor's poetry sought goals and employed techniques not found in poetry of the Anglo-Catholic tradition, certain judgments of the past seem less than fair.

Stanford's belief that Taylor ignored incongruent connotations in favor of obscure similarities³ is less acceptable when the norm of Donne and Herbert is removed. The similarity between Christ's body and a "Golden Still" is obscure only if the reader seeks a similarity of affective response in the manner expected of Donne. Taylor intended no such similarity. Instead he sought a Christ who was more the object of rational desires. In terms of rational similarity the connection is less obscure. This is a fact that holds true in all of Taylor's poems whether he is visualizing a heaven with golden streets, calling himself a purse for God's wealth, or smelling the rose at the head of a banquet table.

As for the incongruent connotations, Taylor remained loyal to the Puritan philosophy of means. Men's souls were reached by treating truth in terms of the commonplace. The function of a still, the value of gold, and the fragrance of a rose were items of

familiarity and therefore were things with easily understood functions. As items of daily concern, they were inevitably endowed with some connotative value depending on their use. But when a thing was useful it became beautiful to the Puritan sense, regardless of what it might suggest to the modern sensibility. Miller says, ". . . the Puritan mind was not yet capable of separating the delight from the utility. . . .It was synonymous with the good and the true."⁴ Taylor draws on the commonplace, but all such commonplace objects were useful in Puritan society. As such Taylor ran less risk of incongruent connotations than usually supposed. Taylor uses the still, the wagon, and the dung cart principally in their denotative sense. He uses such objects to represent rationally a religious concept. In finding a theological use, Taylor diminished even further any connotative dangers to his purpose.

It is not that Taylor was unaware of connotations or "stratifications in his language" as Warren calls them.⁵ Nor is he violently domesticating the traditional conceit employed by Donne and Herbert.⁶ Such criticism would be fair had Taylor viewed the connotative value of words and the function of similitudes in the manner of the Anglo-Catholic poets. But Taylor held a very different view.

The continuous use of Anglo-Catholic norms in these matters has led to the conclusion that Taylor was uncertain of what he was

trying to do.⁷ In reality critics are led to this conclusion because Taylor does not conform to Anglo-Catholic purposes. It is not that Taylor lacked purpose; it is rather that criticism has failed to search for a purpose apart from metaphysical precedents.

The present investigation is only an initial step in the search for a clearer, more accurate view of Taylor's purpose and technique. But even this first look at Taylor's works in terms of his own devotional philosophy suggests that his poetry is more accessible than previously supposed. Instead of assuming an inability on the part of the poet, the theology, or the tradition to produce poetry, it is possible to appreciate and perhaps even admire Taylor's ability to find the means of expressing truth as he sees it and in the manner that he discovered it. He does not find it necessary to fall back on dogma or revelation for his truth. He pursues his faith on grounds that appeal to the rational man with a force equal to but unlike the appeals of the senses.

It is for future critics to make more specific studies of the influence of Puritan logic and rhetoric on Taylor's poetry. Quite possibly Taylor's preference for the disjunctive statement of his condition reveals a source in the dichotomous divisions of Ramist logic. The extent of Taylor's adherence to Puritan rhetorical practice in his poetry has by no means been exhausted. The

particulars of the logical process contained in the sermons doubtless have other counterparts in Taylor's poetry. It is possible that Taylor is more correctly the beginning of an American tradition rather than the end of an English one. In shifting the apprehension of truth from the sensual faculties to the intellectual faculties, Taylor might better be seen as a forerunner of American practicality or English neo-classicism. It may be, too, that Taylor will occupy a place in literary history shared by no other writer.

It is essential that critics realize that the "vital center" of Taylor is not merely to be found in poetry that shares technical parallels with the English Metaphysicals. In spite of Wallace C. Brown's conclusion that Taylor exhibits "clear and obvious links" to English poets,⁸ technical parallels are not links regardless of how obvious they are. Whatever the final judgment may be, it should be founded on the recognition of Taylor's individuality as a creative artist.

NOTES

Notes to Chapter I

¹Thomas H. Johnson, "Edward Taylor: A Puritan Sacred Poet," NEQ, X (June, 1937), p. 291.

²Austin Warren, "Edward Taylor," Rage for Order (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948), p. 7. This article first appeared as "Edward Taylor's Poetry: Colonial Baroque," Kenyon Review, III (Summer, 1941), 355-371, before it was revised and included in the collection of Austin Warren's criticism cited here.

³Donald E. Stanford, "Introduction," The Poems of Edward Taylor, ed. Donald E. Stanford (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963), p. xxiv.

⁴Johnson, pp. 291, 317.

⁵Ibid., p. 317.

⁶Ibid.

⁷See Roy Harvey Pearce, "Edward Taylor: The Poet as Puritan," NEQ, XXIII (March, 1950), 31-46; Sidney E. Lind, "Edward Taylor: A Reevaluation," NEQ, XXI (December, 1948), 518-530; William Manierre, "Verbal Patterns in the Poetry of Edward Taylor," CE, XXIII (January, 1962), 296-299.

⁸Johnson, p. 291.

⁹Wallace C. Brown, "Edward Taylor, An American Metaphysical," AL, XVI (November, 1944), 186-197.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 190.

¹¹Ibid., pp. 194-195.

¹²Harold S. Jantz, The First Century of New England Verse (New York: Russell and Russell, 1962), p. 81.

¹³Brown, p. 197.

¹⁴Warren, p. 8.

- ¹⁵ Donald E. Stanford, Edward Taylor ("University of Minnesota Pamphlets on American Writers," No. 52; Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, n.d.) p. 22.
- ¹⁶ Warren, p. 11.
- ¹⁷ This and all subsequent quotations from Taylor's verse are taken from The Poems of Edward Taylor, ed. Donald E. Stanford (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963).
- ¹⁸ Norman S. Grabo, Edward Taylor (New York: Twayne Publishers Inc., 1961), p. 169.
- ¹⁹ Warren, p. 14.
- ²⁰ Stanford, Edward Taylor, p. 37.
- ²¹ Warren, pp. 9, 15.
- ²² Austin Warren, "Edward Taylor," Major Writers of America, Vol I, ed. Perry Miller (New York: Harcourt Brace and World, 1962), p. 59.
- ²³ Stanford, Edward Taylor, p. 43.
- ²⁴ Warren, Rage for Order, p. 12.
- ²⁵ Stanford, The Poems of Edward Taylor, p. xx.
- ²⁶ Jantz, pp. 80-81.
- ²⁷ Grabo, p. 154; see also "Preface."
- ²⁸ Stanford, The Poems of Edward Taylor, p. xxviii-xxix.
- ²⁹ Mindele Black, "Edward Taylor: Heaven's Sugar Cake," NEQ, XXXIX (June, 1956), 160.
- ³⁰ Ibid., p. 163.
- ³¹ Stanford, The Poems of Edward Taylor, p. xxiv.
- ³² Grabo, p. 168.

³³ Ibid., p. 170.

³⁴ See John Clendenning, "Piety and Imagery in Edward Taylor's 'The Reflexion'", American Quarterly, XVI (1964), 203-210.

³⁵ Stanford, The Poems of Edward Taylor, p. xxvii.

³⁶ Warren, Rage for Order, p. 3.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 18.

³⁸ Lind, p. 527.

³⁹ Pearce admits to much the same argument when he says that Taylor's chief concern in his poetry is relating what he himself knows, not the telling of it; the object of discovery, not the drama of discovering it.

⁴⁰ Miller says in The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), p. 360, "Poetry existed primarily for its utility," But to interpret this as meaning that Puritan poetry conscientiously excluded all pleasurable experience to avoid becoming pleasing for its own sake is to misinterpret Miller's intent.

⁴¹ Norman S. Grabo, "Introduction," Edward Taylor's Christographia, ed. Norman S. Grabo (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962), pp. xxxiv-xli. Grabo gives impressive evidence that Taylor's poetic meditations found their subject in the doctrine of a previously composed sermon.

⁴² "Edward Taylor and the Cambridge Platonists," AL, XXVII (March, 1954), 1-31.

⁴³ Ibid., 10-11. See also Weather's article, "Edward Taylor, Hellenistic Puritan," AL, XVIII (March, 1946), 18-26.

⁴⁴ The most recent edition of William Flint Thrall and Addison Hibbard, A Handbook to Literature (rev. C. Hugh Holman; New York: The Odyssey Press Inc., 1960), p. 284, defines "Metaphysical Poetry" as ". . . a school in the sense of employing similar methods and of being actuated by a spirit of revolt against the romantic conventionalism of Elizabethan love poetry"

⁴⁵ Louis L. Martz's contention in The Poetry of Meditation (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962) that the poetry of Donne, Herbert and Crashaw is based primarily upon a similar system of meditation first evident in Southwell will be discussed further in Chapter II.

⁴⁶ Warren, Rage for Order, p. 1.

⁴⁷ Warren, Major Writers of America, I, 59.

⁴⁸ Stanford, The Poems of Edward Taylor, p. xxiii.

⁴⁹ Warren, Major Writers of America, I, 57.

⁵⁰ Stanford, The Poems of Edward Taylor, p. xii.

⁵¹ Cited in Johnson, p. 295.

⁵² "Introduction," The Diary of Edward Taylor, ed. Francis Murphy (Springfield, Massachusetts: Connecticut Valley Historical Museum, 1964), p. 8.

⁵³ The Diary of Edward Taylor, ed. Francis Murphy, p. 32.

⁵⁴ Donald E. Stanford, The Poems of Edward Taylor (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960), p. 513.

⁵⁵ Christographia, p. xii.

⁵⁶ See Norman S. Grabo, "The Poet to the Pope: Edward Taylor to Solomon Stoddard," AL, XXXII (May, 1960), 197-202.

⁵⁷ Stanford, The Poems of Edward Taylor, (1963), p. xxiii.

⁵⁸ Cited in Murphy, p. 8.

⁵⁹ "Edward Taylor's 'Spiritual Relation'," AL, XXV (January, 1964), 467-475.

⁶⁰ Warren, Major Writers of America, I, 51.

⁶¹ Austin Warren and Rene Wellek, Theory of Literature (3rd ed. rev.; New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1956), p. 231.

Notes to Chapter I I

¹ Louis L. Martz, The Poetry of Meditation (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962), p. 2. It would be impossible to repeat all the evidence in Professor Martz's thorough study of the internal genre of metaphysical poetry. It is sufficient to cite only the pertinent conclusions and, when necessary, the component arguments that this study will draw upon.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., p. 175.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 21, 38-39.

⁵ Ibid., p. 38; Martz cites Southwell, Donne, Herbert and Crashaw in his study.

⁶ Irvanwy Morgan, The Non-Conformity of Richard Baxter (London: The Epworth Press, 1946), p. 104.

⁷ Hugh Martin, Puritanism and Richard Baxter (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1954), p. 133.

⁸ Ibid., p. 163.

⁹ Ibid., pp. 70-71.

¹⁰ Martz, p. 154.

¹¹ Richard Baxter, The Saints Everlasting Rest (4th ed., London, 1653), Pt. 4, p. 61.

¹² Martz, p. 156.

¹³ See Baxter, Pt. 3, p. 160.

¹⁴ Baxter, Pt. 1, p. 95.

¹⁵ Baxter, Pt. 3, p. 174.

¹⁶ Martz, p. 161.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 160.

¹⁸ See Chapter I, note 41.

¹⁹ The Poems of Edward Taylor, ed. Donald E. Stanford (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963), p. 14.

²⁰ Martz, pp. 53-56.

²¹ The Text of the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius, Translated from the Original Spanish, with preface by John Morris (4th ed., Westminster, Md., Newman Bookshop, 1943), p. 23, in Martz, p. 55.

²² Martz, p. 14.

²³ Perry Miller, The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), p. 433.

²⁴ Baxter, Pt. 4, p. 55.

²⁵ Miller, p. x.

²⁶ See Martz's complete discussion of this in The Poetry of Meditation, Chapter I I, Pt. 8.

²⁷ Martz, p. 114.

²⁸ See Martz, Chapter VII, pp. 249-287.

²⁹ James Smith, "On Metaphysical Poetry," in Determinations, ed. F. R. Leavis (London: Chatto and Windus, 1934), p. 24.

³⁰ Martz, pp. 16-18.

³¹ Ibid., p. 25.

³² Ibid., p. 27.

³³ St. François de Sales, Introduction, quoted in Martz, p. 30.

³⁴ Martz, p. 209.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 30.

³⁶ Ibid., pp. 35-70.

³⁷ Austin Warren, "Edward Taylor," in Rage for Order (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948), p. 16.

³⁸ Baxter, Pt. 4, pp. 191-196.

³⁹ Martz, p. 171.

⁴⁰ Itrat Husian, The Dogmatic and Mystical Theology of John Donne (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1938), pp. 31, 72.

⁴¹ Miller, pp. 10-20.

⁴² The Rise of Puritanism (New York: Columbia University Press, 1938), p. 151.

⁴³ Miller, p. 19.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 6.

⁴⁵ Norman S. Grabo, "Introduction," Edward Taylor's Christographia, ed. Norman S. Grabo (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962), pp. xviii.

⁴⁶ Miller, p. 27.

⁴⁷ Grabo, p. xxxiv.

⁴⁸ Miller, p. 251.

⁴⁹ Grabo, p. xviii.

⁵⁰ Edward Taylor, "Sermon XIV," in Edward Taylor's Christographia, ed., Norman S. Grabo, p. 439.

⁵¹ Grabo, p. xxx.

⁵² Edward Taylor, "Sermon IV," in Edward Taylor's Christographia, ed. Norman S. Grabo, p. 127.

⁵³ Edward Taylor, "Sermon X," in Edward Taylor's Christographia, ed. Norman S. Grabo, p. 312.

⁵⁴ Edward Taylor, "Spiritual Relation," quoted in Donald E. Stanford, "Edward Taylor's 'Spiritual Relation'," AL, XXXV (January, 1964), 467-475.

⁵⁵ Baxter, Pt. 4, pp. 6-7.

⁵⁶ Miller, p. 75.

⁵⁷ Solomon Stoddard of Northampton did not require members of his congregation to give public testimony of the workings of special grace before he admitted them to the Lord's Supper. Stoddard reasoned that it was impossible to make valid judgments with any certainty. Instead he gave the Lord's Supper to all people of good behavior that it might work as a conversion mechanism. Taylor reacted to this practice in Meditations 2: 102-2: 111.

Notes to Chapter III

¹ Perry Miller, The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), p. 117.

² Ibid., p. 116.

³ Ibid., p. 151.

⁴ Rosemond Tuve, "Imagery and Logic: Ramus and Metaphysical Poetics," Journal of the History of Ideas, III (1942), 283.

⁵ Miller, p. 328.

⁶ See Meditations 1: 24, 1: 27, 2: 14, 2: 45, 2: 67, and 2: 68.

⁷ Miller, p. 328.

⁸ William Kneale and Martha Kneale, The Development of Logic (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1962), p. 302.

⁹ Roy Harvey Pearce, "Edward Taylor: The Poet as Puritan," NEQ, XXIII (March, 1950), 46.

¹⁰ Kneale, p. 303.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Miller, p. 262.

¹³ See Mindele Black, "Edward Taylor: Heaven's Sugar Cake," NEQ, XXXIX (June, 1956), 162; John Clendenning, "Piety and Imagery in Edward Taylor's 'The Reflexion'," American Quarterly XVI (1964), 203-210; Norman Grabo, Edward Taylor (New York: Twayne Publishers Inc., 1961), p. 154.

¹⁴ Miller, p. 262.

¹⁵ Malcolm Mackenzie Ross, Poetry and Dogma (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1954), p. 29.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 53.

¹⁷ Miller, p. 333.

¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 332-333.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 347.

²⁰ St. Ignatius Loyola, Spiritual Exercises, quoted in Martz, p. 78.

²¹ Martz, p. 212.

²² Ibid., p. 238.

²³ Ibid., pp. 46-47.

²⁴ Edward Taylor ("University of Minnesota Pamphlets on American Writers," No. 52: Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, n. d.), pp. 22-23.

²⁵ Austin Warren, "Edward Taylor," Rage for Order (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948), p. 9.

²⁶ Miller, p. 302.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 302.

²⁸Ibid., p. 215.

²⁹Warren, p. 4.

Notes to Chapter IV

¹Perry Miller, The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), pp. 91-92.

²Austin Warren and Rene Welleck, Theory of Literature (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World Inc., 1956), p. 238.

³Donald E. Stanford, The Poems of Edward Taylor, ed. Donald E. Stanford (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963), p. xxvii.

⁴Miller, p. 215.

⁵Austin Warren, "Edward Taylor," Rage for Order (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948), p. 11.

⁶Wallace C. Brown, "Edward Taylor, An American Metaphysical," AL, XVI (November, 1944), 190; Mindele Black, "Edward Taylor: Heaven's Sugar Cake," NEQ, XXXIX (June, 1956), 160

⁷Warren, Rage for Order, p. 9.

⁸Brown, pp. 186-188.

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