THE HERBAL TRADITION IN THE POETRY OF JOHN MILTON

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ABSTRACT

THE HERBAL TRADITION IN THE POETRY OF JOHN MILTON

By

Charlotte Fennema Otten

So erudite a man as John Milton had his practical side: he urged his students to learn to "manage a crudity" and to procure the helpful experiences of gardeners and apothecaries. Among the major practical books available were the herbals. Operating with the belief that a knowledge of herbs put a man in touch with Paradise, the herbalists bent every effort to supply the reading public with encyclopedic information on every plant known to them. The three well-known English herbals, those of Lyte, Gerard, and Parkinson, represent a body of literature with which, one may fairly assume, Milton was well acquainted. This study, although it does not claim to exhaust Milton's use of the herbal tradition in his poetry, does claim to be representative, touching on the medical, magic, ceremonial, horticultural, and aesthetic aspects of it.

Milton's medical uses are quite apparent in Book XI of Paradise Lost. His description of the Apple of Disobedience, his characterization of Adam, and his conception of the nature of poetry prompted him to introduce drugs made from herbs. His choice of rue to cure the harmful effects of Adam's eating of the apple is especially appropriate because of its association with Homer's moly. In addition to the botany and mythology clustered around rue and moly, the Renaissance herbals testify to rue's efficacy. Combined with euphrasie and three drops of water from the Well of Life, rue serves as an antidote to the physical, psychological, and spiritual

poisons ingested by Adam when he ate the forbidden fruit.

Plants were associated not only with pharmacy but with magic. In Comus Milton uses the wholesome natural magic of plants to combat the unnatural magic of urchins and elves. He introduces his most famous herb, haemony, gives it a complete herbal index, and shows it functioning as a vulnerary and as a perception-heightening drug. Attributing to Comus unnatural magic (associated with aphrodisiacs and metamorphosis), Milton counteracts this with herbs and pure water.

Nor are the ceremonial aspects of the herbal tradition ignored by Milton. In Lycidas he draws on three ancient funerary plants--myrtle, laurel, and ivy. Combining the historico-mythological tradition with the botanical one, he transplants them into an honorary form to celebrate a death. Milton's use of this botanic metaphor is understandable only in the light of the herbal tradition.

One of the most delightful uses of the herbals is in horticulture. Milton supplements the herbals with gardening manuals and with real gardens, creating a Paradisal horticultural architecture with a distinctive English touch. His Garden, not a mere fiction, is the more real for participating in the English gardening tradition.

In his use of three specific plants in Paradise--laurel, myrtle, and acanthus--Milton is influenced by the herbals and by contemporary horticultural aesthetics. His companionate planting of roses and myrtles shows an awareness of plant arrangement to achieve the English blend of expectation and surprise. Milton and the herbalists could not have been aware of the scientific implications of allelopathy, but they built their horticultural aesthetics on the best herbal knowledge of the day.

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By

Charlotte Fennema Otten

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INTRODUCTION

One can hardly read Milton's poetry without noticing plants: Milton puts them to medical, horticultural, and aesthetic use in Paradise Lost, to magic use in Comus, to ceremonial use in Lycidas. Although Milton could and did draw on his theoretical knowledge of classical plants, he was also a practical man. To Master Samuel Hartlib he stressed the importance of learning to "manage a crudity" and of procuring the "helpful experiences of hunters, fowlers, fishermen, shepherds, gardeners, apothecaries." This practical bent undoubtedly led him to the herbals, the most efficient of plant manuals. The herbals show not only how to treat oneself in sickness and in health and so to save expense, but they also give detailed information on botany, pharmacy, and horticulture. Perhaps no books, other than the Bible, enjoyed such universal appeal and acceptance. Addressed to physician, scholar, botanist, housewife, packed with information for both amateurs and professionals, the extant editions show the thumbprints and notes of gardeners and housewives, apothecaries and physicians. No books had such multiple uses and such multiple delights. Leonhart Fuchs, an early German herbalist (1501-1566), remarked in the Preface to De historia stirpium (1542):

> . . . there is nothing in this life pleasanter and more delightful than to wander over woods, mountains, plains, garlanded and adorned with flowerlets and plants of various sorts, and most elegant to boot, and to gaze intently upon them. But it increases that pleasure and delight not a little, if there be added an acquaintance with the virtues and powers of these same plants.

In addition, persistent in the herbals is the religious belief that a knowledge of herbs is a return to Paradise. John Parkinson began his Paradisi in Sole Paradisus Terrestris with an acknowledgement of God as the planter and source of all gardens and Adam as the ideal man, who knew "all the things that grew . . . and to what uses they serued."

Throughout this study I have used the herbals of three major English herbalists: Henry Lyte's A Nievve Herball (1578); John Gerard's The Herball (in the Thomas Johnson revised and enlarged edition, 1633, 1636); and John Parkinson's Paradisi in Sole Paradisus Terrestris (1629) and Theatrum Botanicum (1640). Preceding the three major herbalists is William Turner, known as the "Father of British Botany." Turner deplored the botanic ignorance of the times, bemoaning the fact that even at Cambridge there was "ignorance in simples." He wrote A New Herball (Cologne, 1568) containing not only the history but also the empirical verification of plants. The quality of his herbal springs from his personal observations: "And because I would not be lyke unto a cryer y^t cryeth a loste horse in the marketh, and telleth all the markes and tokens that he hath, and yet never sawe the horse, nether coulde knowe the horse if he sawe him: I wente into Italye and into diverse partes of Germany, to knowe and se the herbes my selfe." Arranged alphabetically, his herbal describes 238 native British plants.

One of the most erudite of Continental herbalists, the eminent scholar and professor at Leyden, Rembert Dodoens, was the author of Cruydtboeck, published in Flemish in 1554, and translated into French by Charles de l'Écluse. Using this French translation,

Henry Lyte wrote A Nievve Herball (1578), which was to become a standard herbal in England. Divided into six books, Lyte's herbal contains descriptions of about 1,050 species, complete with annotations and observations stemming from his own reading and botanic competence. This herbal is generally acknowledged as the herbal of poets like Spenser and Drayton.

John Gerard's Herball appeared in 1597. Gerard was not only a surgeon but a famous gardener. His own activities in his garden at Holborn (about which he published a catalogue of plants in 1596) and his superintendence over Lord Burleigh's gardens in the Strand and at Theobalds in Hertfordshire, gave him the opportunity to observe plants first-hand. Since Gerard's Herball was actually a version of Dr. Priest's translation of the Latin herbal of Dodoens, and since Gerard's London publisher heard rumors that a John Parkinson was preparing a competitive herbal, Thomas Johnson, distinguished apothecary and botanist, was commissioned to prepare a new edition of Gerard for the press. This edition, called The Herball or Generall Historie of Plantes. Gathered by John Gerarde of London Master in Chirurgerie Very much Enlarged and Amended by Thomas Johnson Citizen and Apothecarye of London, was printed in 1633 and reprinted in 1636 with the errata corrected. Although Johnson was the editor and reviser of Gerard's Herball, the herbal continued to be known as "Gerard's." Sir Henry Wotton, writing to Johnson, requested "one of your Gerrards, well and strongly bound." Gerard's herbal enjoyed a sustained popularity.

John Parkinson is usually considered the last of the old English herbalists. He served as apothecary to James I and was

named "Botanicus Regius Primarius" by Charles I. His Paradisi in Sole Paradisus Terrestris, published in 1629, was designed mainly for the gardener. It traces the knowledge of herbs back to Adam and emphasizes the aesthetic and horticultural aspects of herbs rather than the medicinal. His true herbal, Theatrum Botanicum, was published in 1640. Almost a materia medica, the Theatrum contains the opinions of Greek, Roman, and Arabian physicians, in addition to much original work, although his debt to his Renaissance predecessors (particularly to l'Obel) is obvious. In Parkinson's herbal the English reader first met the Welsh-poppy and the strawberry tree; and with Parkinson, the English reader always returned to the perfect herbal knowledge of the first man, Adam, who appears in the frontispiece of the Theatrum.

With all these materials available to him, Milton could not complain, as did William Turner a century earlier, of a general ignorance of simples in his time. My brief description of the herbals is based on the work of Agnes Arber, Herbals (Cambridge, 1912, 1953); H. M. Barlow, Old English Herbals, 1525-1640 (1913); E. S. Rohde, The Old English Herbals (London, 1922); and R. W. T. Gunther, Early British Botanists and Their Gardens (Oxford, 1922). Although I have consulted most of the other herbals (including Continental and Assyrian), encyclopedic works such as Batman vppon Bartholome (1582), and even 170 or more of Dr. Theodore Diodati's handwritten medical prescriptions (in the British Museum, Ayscough Mss.), my impression is that, although these sources may confirm what the three major herbalists say, they do not add any information pertinent to this study. Also, since Milton's more technical

knowledge of science has already been studied by Lawrence Babb, The Moral Cosmos of Paradise Lost (East Lansing, 1970); Paul Kocher, Science and Religion in Elizabethan England (San Marino, 1953); and Kester Svendsen, Milton and Science (Cambridge, Mass., 1956), it seemed feasible to study the herbals apart from this larger scientific tradition.

On the other hand, the Renaissance herbalists owed much to the ancients, perhaps primarily to Dioscorides. If the references in this study to his De materia medica seem unduly numerous, I can only say that the seventeenth century (and centuries thereafter) held his work in very high esteem. The herbalist William Turner referred to the holder of the Chair of Botany at Bologna as the "reder of Dioscorides in Botony"; John Goodyer made an interlinear translation of it (1655); it served as the impetus for Renaissance botanic studies; and as late as 1934 an Official Botanist Monk on Athos was seen using four volumes of manuscript Dioscorides to identify plants (Arber, pp. 11-12).

While this study does not claim to exhaust Milton's use of the herbal tradition in his poetry, it does claim to be representative, touching on medical, magic, ceremonial, horticultural, and aesthetic aspects of it.

Since Milton's poetry is so rich in the erudite traditions, it is easy for the reader to overlook the presence of the lowly herbal, "unknown, and like esteem'd," and like the dull swain to tread "on it daily with his clouted shoon." It is hoped that this study of the Herbal Tradition in the Poetry of John Milton, although it may not bring to light a rare, exotic bloom, may, nevertheless,

uncover not only a "small unsightly root" but also "a bright golden flowre."

CHAPTER I

HOMER'S MOLY AND MILTON'S RUE

MEDICAL ASPECTS OF THE HERBAL TRADITION

While clusters of meanings and interpretations have sprung up for two centuries around Milton's famous drug haemony,[1] the drugs which Milton prescribed in Paradise Lost for his sick Adam have been ignored. Of course, most Milton editors have glossed the drugs;[2] but only Jon S. Lewry has examined them, and that very recently; and he does not treat them as drugs but as allegory: "That birth [Sin and Death] is projected metaphorically in Satan's destructive invention of gunpowder. Such choice for non-being is creatively opposed first by the third-day victory of the Son, which joins paschalian rue with eschatological euphrasy, and then by the Son's creation of the world."[3]

Milton, no stranger to allegory, was no less familiar with disease and medicine. The man who complained about "inveterate mists in his forehead and temples" and about "disturbed viscera"[4] speaks with an intimate knowledge of Adam's eye disorders and of the cure:

> but to nobler sights
> Michael from Adams eyes the Filme remov'd
> Which that false Fruit that promis'd clearer sight
> Had bred; then purg'd with Euphrasie and Rue
> The visual Nerve, for he had much to see;
> And from the Well of Life three drops instill'd,
> So deep the power of these Ingredients pierc'd,
> Eevn to the inmost seat of mental sight,
> That Adam now enforc't to close his eyes,
> Sunk down and all his Spirits became intranst:

> But him the gentle Angel by the hand
> Soon rais'd, and his attention thus recall'd.
> (XI.411-422)[5]

If the drugs of Paradise are to be explored, two questions must serve as the focus of the study: (1) Why did Milton use drugs? and (2) Why did Milton use these particular drugs-euphrasie, rue, and three drops of water from the Well of Life?

The first question has a tripartite answer. Milton's description of the Apple of Disobedience, his characterization of Adam, and his conception of the nature of poetry prompted his use of drugs.

The history of the Apple of Disobedience has long engaged theologians and intrigued the critics of Paradise Lost. Although Milton emphasized, almost clinically, the multiple harmful effects of the apple on Adam and Eve--elevated blood pressure, psychological intoxication, released inhibitions, post-coital depression, uncontrollable weeping, delusions of grandeur, and damaged eyes (IX.790ff)--most critics reject this as evidence of the fruit's toxicity. Even C. S. Lewis argues that only the bad characters see any importance in the apple.[6] But the actions of the good character, Michael, contradict this position: Michael is sent by God with a medication to cure Adam's optic nerve and to induce mystical visions. This apple is no more like an ordinary apple than LSD is like an ordinary drop of juice in a sugar cube. Milton, designating the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil as the "root of all our woe" (IX.645), meant precisely what he said, and he made its pernicious effects immediately observable.

Milton's Adam, no stylized representation of Right Reason or a link in the Chain of Being, is fully human: he fits into the

garden of enormous bliss, enjoying gardening, wreath-weaving, food, and sex, as well as metaphysical speculation and heavenly conversation. He has an "inward ripeness" along with a physical attractiveness. Although he is a representative of man, he is also a man. This human being is a body-soul; and when he eats a toxic fruit, the poisons blur his physical and spiritual vision, disturbing his viscera and his psyche.

For Milton, poetry, in relationship to logic, is "subsequent, or indeed rather precedent, as being less suttle and fine, but more simple, sensuous and passionate."[7] Poetry must be didactic in intent but not forbiddingly theological in form. Its appeal is through the senses: "But because our understanding cannot in this body found it self but on sensible things, nor arrive so clearly to the knowledge of God and things invisible, as by orderly conning over the visible and inferior creature, the same method is necessarily to be follow'd in all discreet teaching."[8] Contrasting such dissimilar works as Milton's De Doctrina Christiana and Paradise Lost, Maurice Kelley distinguishes between epic and straight theology: "Paradise Lost is concrete and strives for artistic verity by means of the speaking picture and the feigned image of poetry. . . . In the poem . . . form is the primary determinant of content: the epic tradition necessitates that Paradise Lost contain a certain type of plot, narrative technique, and characters, and the fact that the work is poetry not only requires that it be concrete,but also permits its author a judicious exercise of his imaginative and inventive powers."[9]

This is why Milton invests the fruit with such an exotic fragrance and why Adam and Eve enjoy its mouth-watering flavor. This is also why its effects are so potent and so disastrous. Avoiding the strict analytic technique of logic, which is the buttress of his theology but would be a stumbling-block to his poetry, he wrote an epic with an appeal to both the divine and the human. Its spirituality is not diminished by its corporeity but rather enhanced by it.[10]

Since Milton's use of drugs in his epic is appropriate, the drugs themselves can now be examined. Rue, demanding the most concentrated attention, will be treated first, then euphrasie and water.

Milton, bringing both his literary and medical acumen to bear on his choice, must have selected rue for its association with the well-known drug moly, though no Milton scholar has established a connection between the two.[11] Hugo Rahner, S.J., a member of the Eranos group associated with Carl Jung, has in his fundamental researches on the relationship between Christianity and the myths of the Greco-Roman world uncovered the fact that rue and moly are identical. Going back into ancient medicine, he finds Dioscorides saying, "Moly is also the name . . . given in Cappadocia and Asiatic Galatia to the plant called <u>peganon agrion</u> which seems to be identical with what the Germans call <u>Bergraute</u> or mountain rue."[12] Digging deeper into the history of these two ancient plants, Rahner unearths the fact that Galen also considers moly and rue identical: "The Aramaic term for mountain rue is besas and in the Syriac version of Galen, who has copied his wisdom from Dioscorides,

moly is called besaso. Galen states that mountain rue has a black root and a white flower, and thus corresponds to the herb mentioned by Homer. So it is that rue, famed already for its magic powers, enters human tradition under the name of moly, and all the properties ascribed to rue are now assumed to be possessed by the flower of Hermes."[13]

The Greek Herbal of Dioscorides was Englished by John Goodyer in 1655 (it is difficult to determine whether Milton had access to this in manuscript) and contains a large illustration and the following entry:

> 53. Peganon Agrion. Peganum Harmala
> But some call Ruta Sylvestris, both that which in Cappadocia, & that which in Galatia near Asia, is called Moly, but it is a shrub bringing out many shoots from one root having much longer, & tenderer leaves than ye other Rue, of a strong scent, a white flower, & on ye top little heads, a little greater than ye Sative Rue. . . . But ye seed is ripe in ye Autumn being good for the dullness of the sight, being beaten small with honey, & wine & ye gall of Henns, & Saffron, & ye juice of Fennill. But some call it Harmala, ye Syrians Besasa . . . ye Cappadocians Moly. . . .[14]

Of course, there is no absolute proof that Milton knew these passages in Dioscorides or in Galen. Moreover, modern scholars of both myth and botany have carried on vigorous debates on the authenticity of rue or moly, some going so far as to connect it with the Egyptian deity Bes, others only with myth. Milton did know Pliny, however, and he like other Renaissance scholars considered the Naturalis historia medically reliable; in fact, he used it in his tutorials.[15] Pliny classifies moly as a genuine herb:

> The most renowned of plants is, according to Homer, the one that he thinks is called by the gods moly, assigning to Mercury its discovery and the teaching of its power over the most potent sorceries. Report says it grows today in Arcadia round Pheneus and on Cyllene; it is said to be like the

> description in Homer, with a round, dark root, of the size of an onion and with the leaves of a squill, and not difficult to dig up. Greek authorities have painted its blossom yellow, though Homer describes it as white.[16]

While Pliny does not use the terms rue and moly interchangeably, he does assign to rue the power to counteract poisons. In addition to stating that "among our chief medicinal plants is rue,"[17] he notes its effectiveness in treating scorpion stings, serpent bites, cloudy vision, and innumerable and varied illnesses. For Pliny, moly and rue share many of the same properties.[18] It seems safe to conclude, then, that what matters for Milton is not whether the plant existed botanically in the time of Homer and whether there was a real man named Odysseus who used it; what matters is that in the Homeric epic there is a man named Odysseus who put moly to vital use[19] and that Pliny, the great naturalist, considers both moly and rue genuine.

Milton, a great admirer of the Homeric epic tradition, could use moly or rue because of its verified results in epic poetry--it repelled demons and was an antidote for poisons. If Circe, an intimate affiliate of the Power of Darkness, was quelled by it, why could not her true father, the Prince of Darkness, be repelled by it in Paradise?--for he had "made one Realm / Hell and this World, one Realm, one Continent / Of easie thorough-fare" (X.391-393). Milton's use of it on Adam, though less direct than Homer's on Circe, is no less efficacious.

Anyone so familiar as Milton with the epic tradition of Homer must have been aware of the importance of Hermes as the bearer of moly. Hermes fascinated the ancient and medieval mind, appearing in such diversified places as Ovid's Metamorphoses, on an altar in

the Carolingian cathedral of Aachen, and in a hymn of Prudentius.[20] For the Greeks he came to be "the logios, the personification of all that is bright and clear in thought, he is one might say the logos in its articulate utterances. Hermes is the possessor of knowledge and so the mediator of all hidden wisdom. . . . Whoever has obtained from him the magic formula is armed against all the powers of darkness."[21] The Archangel Michael clearly inherits the Hermes-role in Paradise Lost. He, along with the herbs and water he dispenses, is the great Enlightener of Adam. The high value Michael places on knowledge and wisdom is evident in his illumination-instruction and his comment to Adam, "This having learnt, thou hast attaind the summe / Of wisdome" (XII.575-576).

Further, there is the rhapsodical fifth Orphic Hymn to Hermes: "'O thou messenger of God, O thou prophet of the logos for mortal men!' The divine knowledge that frees us from ourselves, the knowledge that comes anothen and theothen, is the logos prophorikos, the word made audible, and Hermes is that very thing."[22] Milton's Adam echoes this hymn in his ecstatic addresses to the heavenly ambassador: "O Teacher" (XI.450), "O thou who future things canst represent / As present, Heav'nly instructer" (XI.870-871), "O sent from Heav'n / Enlightner of my darkness, gracious things / Thou has reveald" (XII.270-272), "O Prophet of glad tidings, finisher / Of utmost hope!" (XII.375-376), and "Seer blest" (XII.553).

If, in spite of Pliny and the striking parallels, the connection between Homer's moly and Milton's rue still seems tenuous, there is only one course left to follow: to check the great herbals of Milton's day. Because of the researches of Le Comte and Harrison on haemony, we can be reasonably certain that Milton consulted the

basic herbals, those of Gerard and Lyte. Le Comte, documenting all the possible borrowings from Gerard by Milton, shows that Gerard's name was a "household word" in Milton's England and that the educated person who had not seen Gerard's herbal would have been most unusual.[23] Harrison shows the influence on Milton of A New Herball by Henry Lyte.[24] Here is Gerard's entry on rue:

> Rue is hot and drie in the later end of the third degree: and wilde Rue in the fourth . . . it cutteth and digesteth grosse and tough humours. . . .
>
> Noble is Rue, bicause it makes th' eie sight both sharpe and cleere; With helpe of Rue, O blear-eyd man, thou shalt see far and neere. . . .
>
> The leaves of Rue beaten or drunk with wine, are an antidote or medicine against poisons, as Plinie teacheth. . . .
>
> Dioscurides writeth, that a twelve penie weight of the seede drunke in wine, is a counterpoyson against deadly medicines, or the poyson of Wolfes bane, birdlime, Mushroms, or Toodstooles, the bitings of serpents, stinging of scorpions, etc. . . .[25]

And this is his entry on moly:

> The gum which issueth from the tree, being white like unto Manna, disolved in milke, taketh away the web of the eies, and cleereth the sight, being wiped over with it.
>
> This tree is of such estimation among the Indians, that they worship it as a god . . . much like as Pliny reporteth of Homers Moly, the most renowned of all plants, which they had in old time in such estimation and reverence, that as it is recorded, the gods gave it the name of Moly, and so writeth Ovid. . . .

Lyte's entries on rue (more scientific and comprehensive) follow:

> Of Rue, or Herbe grace. Chap. lxxxiij
>
> There are two sorts of Rue, that is, garden Rue, and wild Rue.
>
> The nature
>
> Rue is hot and dry in the third degree: but the wild Rue (and especially that which groweth in Mountaines) is a great deale stronger than garden Rue. . . .
>
> The body that is annointed with the juice of Rue . . . shall be (as Plinie writeth) assured against all poison, and safe from all venemous beasts, so that no poison or venemous beast shall have power to hurt him. . . .
>
> . . . [Rue] quickeneth the sight, and removeth all cloudes and the pearles in the eyes. . . . Also the wilde Rue hath the like vertue as the Rue of the garden, but it is of greater

> force, in so much as the ancient Physitions would not use it, because it was so strong saving about the diseases and webs of the eyes, in maner as is above written. . . .
>
> Of Harmall, or Wild Rue Chap. lxxxiij
>
> . . . the floures [are] of colour white. . . .
>
> The place
>
> Harmala groweth (as Dioscorides writeth) in Cappadocia and Galatia, in this countrey the Herborists do sowe it in their gardens.
>
> The names
>
> This herbe is called . . . Harmala: of the Arabian phisitions and of the late writers, Harmel. The people of Syria in times past called it Besasa, and some Moly . . . [italics mine].
>
> The vertues
>
> Because Harmala is of subtil parts, it cutteth asunder grosse tough humors. . . . The seed of Harmala stamped with hony, wine, saffron, the juice of Fennell, and the gaule of a henne, both quicken the sight, and cleareth dimme eyes.[26]

And here is Lyte's entry on moly:

> Moly is also excellent against inchantments, as Plinie and Homer do testifie, saieng, The Mercurie revealed or shewed it to Ulysses, whereby he escaped al the enchantments of Circe the Magician. (pp. 586-587)

In addition, John Parinson's Theatrum Botanicum makes an unmistakable identification of rue with moly: "Dioscorides saith, [Rue] was called in his time, Moly montanum: and the roote of the Assirian wild kinde, was also as hee saith, called Moly, for the likenesse thereunto, being blacke without, and white within." Under moly Parkinson has the following entry: "Moly montanum latifolium luteo flore."[27]

Rahner's contemporary research is confirmed, then, by the researches of three Renaissance herbalists, all four having drawn on the great Dioscorides, who informed and influenced fifteen centuries of herbalists. Gerard, Lyte, and Parkinson, basing their studies on Dioscoridian botany, reveal the abundant similarities

of rue and moly and show the botanical and medicinal properties which they share; Lyte and Parkinson then go on to make rue and moly identical. Need we doubt further Milton's awareness of the identification of rue and moly with each other?

Besides the obvious Homeric influence, it is plausible to suggest that Milton needed no prodding to put moly or rue to spiritual use to alleviate Adam's desperate condition. Le Comte has shown Milton's knowledge of the allegory surrounding moly, and it seems likely that Milton would have been familiar with Heraclitus' use of moly: "Phronesis is most appropriately represented by moly. This is a gift which can only be given to human beings, and to very few human beings at that. The most essential thing about moly is that its root is black and its flower milk-white. Now the first steps towards insight, which is a kind of simultaneous comprehension of all that is good, are rough, unpleasant and difficult, but when a man has bravely and patiently surmounted the trials of these beginnings, then, as he progresses, the flower opens to him, as in a gentle light."[28] This need for "phronesis," the insight illuminated by reason, and the strength to surmount trials through suffering, is articulated by Adam in his perceptive remarks to the Archangel:

> I follow thee, safe Guide, the path
> Thou lead'st me, and to the hand of Heav'n submit,
> However chast'ning, to the evil turne
> My obvious breast, arming to overcom
> By suffering, and earne rest from labour won,
> If so I may attain. (XI.371-376)

Adding significantly to the burgeoning of moly or rue, the Neoplatonists, as might be expected, gave to it spiritual and psychological properties. Whether Milton knew Themistius direct or

by way of Eustathius[29] is unimportant for this study. What is remarkable is the congruence between the Neoplatonic use of moly and the Miltonic; they share the notion of "paideia": "The rare and heavenly gift of moly is the heavenly paideia by which man, while yet here below, prepares himself for the final ascent into the light. Moly is self-control, circumspection in conduct and that ascetical form of life that has a bitter, black root but a flower that is white and sweet."[30] The Archangel Michael, in a parting admonition to Adam in preparation for life's journey, urges:

> add Faith,
> Add vertue, Patience, Temperance, add Love,
> By name to come call'd Charitie, the soul
> Of all the rest: then wilt thou not be loath
> To leave this Paradise, but shalt possess
> A paradise within thee, happier farr. (XII.582-587)

This mighty triumvirate--moly, Hermes, Odysseus--captivated the imagination for hundreds of years. The Church Fathers (whom Milton knew well) richly adapted the Homeric Odysseus to their Christian message, while the Early Christian artists transformed him into a Christian symbol by putting him at the Mast of the Cross on sarcophagi.[31] Odysseus was always accompanied by the divine moly, alluded to by writers from Clement to Boethius. Boethius' De consolatione philosophiae views Odysseus as a sufferer-leader fortified against temptation by moly. Boethius, capturing the essence of the human struggle by describing the odyssey as an ascent-return,[32] is a forerunner of Milton, whose Adam, a real sufferer-leader, must return and ascend; he weeps as copiously as does Boethius' Odysseus. This journey from "mud to the stars" is tortuous, but its end is sure because both Odysseus and Adam are strengthened by the salvific moly or rue bestowed upon them by a gracious God.

Among the extraordinary traditions to spring up around rue were the medieval benedictions praising rue for its power to exorcise demons: "Benedico te, creatura rutae, ut sis exterminatio diaboli et omnium contubernalium eius."[33] Medieval alchemy, as might be expected, had a heyday with moly or rue and attributed to it both "chymical and psychological powers."[34] Its medicinal and spiritual qualities commingled, as did its properties with the giver of those properties. However the alchemists may have identified moly or rue with planets, tinctures, or gods, one thing is sure--the Middle Ages had respect for its potency, and so did Milton.

Finally, as every schoolboy of Milton's day knew,[35] there was a book written by a sober man for all the temptable young Englishmen who were contemplating educational trips to Italy and who might fall prey to the voluptuous charms of the Italian women. This book was Roger Ascham's Scholemaster. Along with the exhortations to circumspect living, Ascham includes moly or rue in psychotherapeutic and theological dress. Quoting the Prophet David and Homer in the same breath, he warns the young men against enticements to sin and vanity, equates moly or rue with David's "feare of God," and then reiterates his advice: "The true medicine against the inchantmentes of Circes, the vanitie of licencious pleasure, the inticementes of all sinne, is in Homere the herbe Moly, with the blacke roote and white flouer, sower at the first, but sweete in the end . . . this medicine against sinne and vanitie is not found out by man, but given and taught by God."[36]

Milton's use of rue in Ascham's sense is apparent. Already in Book III sin and vanity are coupled: "when Sin / With vanity had

filld the works of men" (ll.446-447). Later Adam, in his infamous condemnation of Eve, lashes out at her vanity: "had not thy pride / And wandring vanitie, when lest was safe, / Rejected my forewarning" (X.874-876). And sin itself stalks through the pages of Paradise Lost, being especially prominent in the last three books. Adam, like Ascham's young men, was ripe for allurements, and therefore Milton prescribed the best medicine available, rue.

Having looked at rue or moly botanically and mythologically (the two are often intertwined), we discover:

the most potent antidote to deadly poisons,

a demon-sorcery-beast repellent,

a tough-humours solvent,

a remover of pearles, webs, cloudes in the eyes; a pain-reliever for eyes,

"Logios": properties conferring spiritual enlightenment,

"Phronesis": psychological and spiritual insight and comprehension of the Good,

"Paideia": education or "Bildung," including self-control and moral asceticism,

a fortifier and salvific in the Ascent-Return,

a psychotherapeutic and theological weapon against sin and vanity.

Euphrasie's mythological impact is nonexistent, its medicinal use quite specific. Says Gerard in 1633: "Eye-bright in wine or distilled water takes away hurts from the eyes, comforts the memory, clears the sight" (pp. 662-663). The 1597 edition has a similar entry.

Says Lyte: "Some call this herbe in Latine Euphrasia. . . . Eiebright pound, and laid upon the eies, or the juice thereof with wine, dropped into the eies, taketh away the darkness of the same, and cleareth the sight. So doth a powder made of three parts of Eiebright dried . . . if a sponefull of it be taken every morning . . . [it] comforteth the memorie very much" (pp. 46-47).

Says Parkinson: "it also helpeth a weak brain or memory, and restoreth them being decayed in a short time" (p. 1330).

Milton, using a standard Renaissance prescription for both foggy vision and muddled thought, gives his Adam the precise drug that he requires, euphrasie.

The last ingredient, the three drops of water from the Well of Life, may well be an allusion to Psalm xxxvi.9, as Merritt Hughes suggests: "For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light."[37] But Milton is also clinical in specifying three drops. He probably was recalling Gerard's instructions accompanying euphrasie (taken in distilled water). In addition, it seems plausible that three drops was as standard an amount at that time as "take in a glass of water" is today. Ben Jonson's Alchemist uses exactly this amount when prescribing for the gout: "Why, you but send three droppes of your Elixir. . . ."[38] Milton may well have been substituting three drops of water from the Well of Life for the convention of three drops of the elixir. Alchemy was by no means dead in Milton's day; and he, like John Donne and Dr. Thomas Browne, must have been as familiar with the standard alchemical prescriptions as we are today with patent medicines. A Lexicon of Alchemy available in Milton's time has multiple entries under "Elixir"

and under "Water," as might be expected. "Elixir is an incomparable Medicine for conserving life and eradicating diseases." The most relevant entry under "Water" is "Water of the World": "When the philosophers have given the name of Water to this Mercury during the period of the Second Preparation, or the Medicine of the Second Order, they term it: Dense Water, Water of Talc, Water of Life. . . ."[39] Milton seems to have made his own synthesis here, borrowing from the alchemists and dipping into the Well of Life for the perfect elixir for the first man condemned to die. The one chosen to administer the water to Adam is not an alchemist nor a physician, but an angelic doctor. In combination, the three ingredients counteract the poison ingested from the apple, clear Adam's eyes, comfort his memory, heighten his mystical and moral vision, and enable him to see beyond death to "the gate of life" (XII.571).

Paradise Lost, though it deals with the most profound issues of life and death, shows Milton not as the systematic theologian but as the great epic poet. It is the medical prescription taken in three drops of water that creates in Adam a sobria ebrietas startlingly different from the sin-induced intoxication of the false fruit.

CHAPTER II

A MASK AT LUDLOW-CASTLE

MAGIC ASPECTS OF THE HERBAL TRADITION

There can be no doubt that Milton intended A Mask at Ludlow-Castle to participate in the ancient magic traditions: He made Bacchus and Circe the illustrious parents of Comus, and he included dazzling spells (154), magic chains (434), hellish charms (612), baleful drugs and potent herbs (254), a pleasing poison (525), an orient liquor (65).[1] Milton drew not only on the ancient magic tradition but also on the botanic, mixing them without hesitation, as Pliny before him had made unblushing references to Medea and Circe in a botanic context:

> . . . tales everywhere are widely current about Medea of Colchis and other sorceresses, especially Circe of Italy, who has even been enrolled as a divinity. . . . Strong confirmatory evidence exists even today in the fact that the Marsi, a tribe descended from Circe's son, are well-known snake-charmers. Homer indeed, the first ancestor of ancient learning, while expressing in several passages great admiration for Circe, gives the prize for herbs to Egypt, even though at that time the irrigated Egypt of today did not yet exist. . . . At any rate he says that Egyptian herbs in great number were given by the wife of the king to the Helen of his tale, including that celebrated nepenthes, which brought forgetfulness and remission of sorrow, to be administered especially by Helen to all mortals.[2]

Milton's reference to that "Nepenthes which the wife of Thone,/ In Egypt gave to Jove-born Helena" (674-675) is easily traced to the ancient writers.

These traditional materials, including magic, have been

richly explored in studies on Milton's masque.[3] But the native English materials, stemming from the herbal tradition, have only rarely been investigated or used to gloss Milton's text. The masque, though enriched by ancient traditions, was written for native Englishmen, who, although they knew their Pliny and the magic of the Classics, rejoiced in their own traditions. Both "nobility and gentry"[4] who attended the masque at Ludlow were knowledgeable about herbals.

It cannot be ascertained whether Milton attended the performance at Ludlow Castle on September 29, 1634,[5] and, therefore, it cannot be argued that he was aware of its specific locale; but the kind of herbal knowledge underlying his masque would have been current in most non-urban areas. Ludlow in Shropshire, ". . . about seven and twenty miles south from Shrewsbury and about four and twenty north from Hereford, is beautifully situated in one of those tracts of rich green scenery, lovely in hill and valley, which admonish one that there England is beginning to pass into Wales. The town itself is mainly on the top and slopes of an eminence near the junction of two streams, the Teme and the Corve, whose united waters meet the Severn in Worcestershire. All round is a wide circle of hills, distanced in some directions by intervening plains. . . . A castle . . . situated on a rocky height which commands a beautiful and extensive prospect, and thus topping a town of clean and somewhat quaint streets descending the gentler slopes of the hill or winding at its base, with a large and lofty parish-church conspicuous near the castle: . . . such was Ludlow in the year 1634. . . ."[6] Milton transmutes native materials--whether of the area around Ludlow Castle or of Buckinghamshire, it does not matter--into memorable poetry.

Who would have thought that diseases of cattle, that limed-twig lures, that blastings of crops could leap off the pages of the herbals and agricultural manuals and appear in lyric form? And who would have thought that aphrodisiac herbs and potions, that dried roots and river water, could be lifted from the English environment and raised to the level of high seriousness? Perhaps, then, an examination of these native materials may help the modern reader to fill in the gaps that three centuries have left. In the following pages I shall not discuss the wand, magic chair, magic dust, and the like, but only those elements in the masque that have a relationship to the herbal tradition.

I

Two kinds of magic enliven Milton's masque, unnatural and natural; Comus and the elves practice the first type, Sabrina and the Attendant Spirit the second type. Although there were many "Books of Secrets" available in the sixteenth century,[7] probably the most engaging statement concerning this distinction, one which includes the herbal tradition, was made by Giambattista della Porta (ca. 1535-1615) in his book Natural Magick. First published in full and expanded form in 1558, it went through at least twelve editions in Latin, four in Italian, seven in French, two in German, and two in English. Both English translations (1658 and 1669) are rare today, but the 1669 edition is even more scarce than the 1658; the "soiled and damaged examples testify to the fact that it was used and worn out by the practical man and in the laboratory rather than being safely preserved on a library shelf."[8] Della Porta defines magic as "Wisdom, and the perfect knowledge of natural things." Making a

clear distinction between the two kinds, he says:

> There are two sorts of Magick: the one is infamous, and unhappie, because it hath to do with foul spirits, and consists of Inchantments and wicked Curiosity; and this is called Sorcery; an art which all learned and good men detest. . . . The other Magick is natural; which all excellent wise men do admit and embrace, and worship with great applause. . . . The Platonicks, as Plotinus imitating Mercurius, writes in his book of Sacrifice and Magick, makes it to be a Science whereby inferiour things are made subject to superiours, earthly are subdued to heavenly; and by certain pretty allurements, it fetcheth forth the properties of the whole frame of the world. . . . Magick was wont to flourish in AEthiopia and India, where was great store of herbs and stones, and such other things as were fit for these purposes. . . .
>
> . . . Moreover, it is required of him, [the natural magician] that he be an Herbalist, not onely able to discern common Simples, but very skilful and sharp-sighted in the nature of all plants: for the uncertain names of plants, and their neer likeness of one to another, so that they can hardly be discerned, hath put us to much trouble in some of our works and experiments. . . . so the knowledge of plants is so necessary to this profession, that indeed it is all in all.[9]

One of the less dynamic forms of unnatural magic mentioned in the masque, attributed to the elves, is counteracted by the natural magic of Sabrin'a "precious vialed liquors." In his tribute to her, the Attendant Spirit praises her power and mentions that the shepherds garland her efficacious herbal interventions. Deep rooted in Anglo-Saxon soil is the belief that diseases of cattle are caused by the malignant power of urchins and elves. The Lacnunga refers to this:

> Were it AEsir shot, or Elves' shot
> Or hag's shot, now will I help thee. (76 CXXXV)

According to Charles Singer, this particular form of unnatural magic is not borrowed from ancient traditions but is native Teutonic.[10] This is not to deny that the belief in bewitching occurred in the ancient world,[11] but only to emphasize the fact that those in

attendance at the masque would have been familiar with the malign effects of the urchin blasts and the ill-luck signs placed by elves upon domestic animals.

Reginald Scot in the Discoverie of Witchcraft classifies urchins along with elves, hags, fairies,[12] and the blasts are the diseases of cattle caused by these malignant creatures. The word blast, the linguistic variants being blaed or blister, "is encountered frequently in Teutonic folklore."[13] But it was more than folklore for the farmers and herdsmen of Milton's day. They recognized blasting as a troublesome pest, although they were not agreed on the causes or sources. An agricultural writer like John Worlidge attributes blasting of fruits, trees, hops, corn, to a natural cause--high winds. William Perkins, a writer on witchcraft, considers the causes of blasting unnatural: ". . . The wonders done by Inchantment are, 1. The raising of stormes and tempests; windes and weather, by sea and by land: 2. The poysoning of the ayre: 3. Blasting of corne. . . ."[14]

Persistent in the Anglo-Saxon descriptions of animal maladies is the diagnosis of elf-shot cattle and the prescriptions for cattle so harmed.[15] For centuries after them, British farmers fought the "elf-shot." Edward Lhwyd, Keeper of the Ashmolean Museum in the seventeenth century, refers to elf-struck cattle and the amulets he has seen in Scotland, which observations were later recorded in the Transactions of the Royal Society (1713).[16] As late as 1884, a Buchan farmer complained: "I've gotten an ill job this mornin' in the deth o' a fine stirk by elfshot, an' the pity is he wasna fasent to a hair tether (a halter made of hair) fan the wapin

wad a fa'en short o'm."[17]

The cures were many and varied, consisting of charms, amulets, incantations, prayers, stones, herbs. One of the well-known Irish herbal cures contains the juice of Alchemilla vulgaris (Lady's Mantle) placed in a pail with water from a stream; while the Lacnunga suggests Feverfew, Red Nettle, and Waybroad, boiled in butter.[18]

Sabrina's healing potion is herbal:

> . . . and oft at Eeve
> Visits the herds along the twilight meadows,
> Helping all urchin blasts, and ill luck signes
> That the shrewd medling Elfe delights to make,
> Which she with pretious viold liquors heals. (842-846)

There were various methods of obtaining precious liquors from herbs, as della Porta's meticulous description of the preparation of simples indicates:

> For the operations of Simples, do not so much consist in themselves, as in the preparing of them; without which preparation, they work little or nothing at all. There be many wayes to prepare Simples, to make them fitter for certain uses. The most usual wayes are, Steeping, Boiling, Burning, Powning, Resolving into ashes, Distilling, Drying, and such like.[19]

This is not to suggest, of course, that Sabrina followed della Porta's instructions, but only to re-create the herbal climate of the day.

It was not only the credulous who believed in the operation of malignant forces on cattle, but, as is evident from the pronouncements of Reginald Scot, the belief was widespread:

> But if you desire to learne true and lawfull charmes, to cure diseased cattell, even such as seeme to have Extra-ordinarie sicknesse, or to be bewitched, or (as they saie) strangelie taken: looke in B. Googe his third booke, treating cattell, and happilie you shall find some good medicine or cure for them: or if you list to see more ancient stuffe, read Vegetius his foure bookes thereupon: or, if you be unlearned, seeke some

> cunning bullocke leech. If all this will not serve then sett Jobs patience before your eies.[20]

Barnaby Googe serves as a corrective to those who believed in the operation of malignant forces on cattle. Describing such natural diseases as murraine, fever, scabs, the staggers, he devotes the entire third book of his Fovre Bookes of Hvsbandrie to diseases and herbal remedies. Gerard also gives specific herbal remedies for cattle complaints such as cough and murren.[21]

Which one of the herbs Sabrina uses for her potion, Milton does not specify; but it is an efficacious botanical-pharmaceutical remedy, the kind of prescription any Englishman at Ludlow Castle that day would have understood and might have used.

II

The most famous of Milton's herbs is haemony:[22]

> . . . a certain Shepherd Lad
> . . .[has shown] me simples of a thousand names
> Telling their strange and vigorous faculties;
> Amongst the rest a small unsightly root,
> But of divine effect, he cull'd me out;
> The leaf was darkish, and had prickles on it,
> But in another Countrey, as he said,
> Bore a bright golden flowre, but not in this soyl:
> Unknown, and like esteem'd, and the dull swain
> Treads on it daily with his clouted shoon,
> And yet more med'cinal is it then that Moly
> That Hermes once to wise Ulysses gave;
> He call'd it Haemony, and gave it me,
> And bad me keep it as of sov'ran use
> 'Gainst all inchantments, mildew blast, or damp
> Or gastly furies apparition. (618-640)

I cannot here identify haemony, but I suspect that, although haemony is undoubtedly surrounded by ancient traditions and allegories, it is an actual herb that grew in Milton's day.[23] His precise description of its appearance, properties, and uses parallels herbal materials far too closely to have been invented for the purposes of a masque.

Further, there is neither Renaissance precedent nor prototype in classical poetry for the invention of a non-existent herb. A medicinal herb, used in dried root rather than in potion form, it functions as:

1) An antidote "'Gainst all inchantments, mildew blast, or damp / Or gastly furies apparition" (639-640);
2) A natural amulet enabling the Attendant Spirit to recognize the enchanter and to enter the lime-twigs of his spells without detection or harm: "But now I find it true; for by this means / I knew the foul inchanter though disguis'd, / Enter'd the very lime-twigs of his spells, / And yet came off" (643-646);
3) A natural amulet bestowing so much power upon two unarmed young men as to enable them to free their sister from the sorcerer's spell while remaining unscathed themselves: "The Brothers rush in with Swords drawn, wrest his Glass out of his hand, and break it against the ground; his rout make sign of resistance, but are all driven in" (Stage direction at 812).

Moreover, Milton would not have felt the need to invent such a potent herb.[24] At his disposal were the herbals with descriptions of herbs to combat the very conditions described by Milton. His faith in the efficacy of simples is an echo of the herbals. One simpler, William Coles, insists that a knowledge of herbs results in a restoration of Eden:

> To the Reader--
> To make thee truly sensible of that happinesse which Mankind lost by the Fall of Adam, is to render thee an exact Botanick, by the knowledge of so incomparable a Science as the Art of Simpling, to re-instate thee into another Eden, or, A Garden of Paradise. . . .[25]

The herbalists were scrupulous, however, in their refusal to transmit old wives' tales in their scientific works. Gerard, for one, refuses to pass on "many odde wiues fables . . . tending to witchcraft and sorcery, which you may read elsewhere, for I am not willing to trouble your eares with reporting such trifles. . . ."[26] But the herbalists did recommend antidotes to witchcraft and enchantment. Among the herbs prescribed was vervain, known by such names as Herba Sacra, Sagminalis Herba, Holy Herbe, Mercury's Moist Blood, Juno's Tears, Enchanters' Plant, Pigeons' Grass, Simplers' Joy.[27] William Coles, who had great faith in the efficacy of vervain, regarded it as "effectuall . . . against bewitched Drinks, and the like, so that it is not used in, but also against, Witch-craft."[28] From Pliny down to the days of Anne Pratt, vervain was regarded as a potent root. Anne Pratt recalls seeing vervain root tied around the neck of a child as a charm and she further observes that it was also used as a remedy for thirty different maladies.[29]

Another such herb was angelica. Gerard says, "It is reported that the root is auaileable against witchcraft and inchantments, if a man carry the same about them, as Fuchsius saith."[30] Certainly, the use of an herbal amulet was not restricted to ancient magic, for Perkins describes this use in the seventeenth century: ". . . the vsing of Amulets, that is remedies and preseruatives against inchantments, sorceries, and bewitchings, made of hearbes of some such things, and hanged about the necke for that ende."[31]

Parkinson, less inclined to list herbal remedies for enchantments and witchcraft than his fellow herbalists, does mention betony as an herb that frees a man "from the danger of diseases, and from witchcraft also. . . ."[32] Coles does not hesitate to include

Herb Paris and Pimpernell, in dried or in powdered form, as effective antidotes to witchcraft.[33]

Also available to Milton and to the common people of his day were the health manuals.[34] The mildew blast and damp that Milton refers to in connection with haemony were probably associated in the popular mind, as well as in the medical, with such diverse diseases as headache and pestilence. Since bad air was the cause of many illnesses, one feared the mildew blast and damp as one feared the plague. Andrew Boorde, in The Breviary of Healthe, lists as one of the causes of headache the "interporancy of the ayer corrupted"; and the pestilence to "a corrupte and contagyous ayre," to the "stenche of dyrte stretes, or channelles not kept clean," or "stynkyng waters, stynkyng draughtes, contagious ayers, and contagious mistes."[35] Thomas Phaire's Treatise of the Pestilence also describes stinking, venomous, corrupt air as the cause of pestilence, and urges rectification by a retreat to high or hilly ground, since mists and damps cling to the low areas.[36] Gerard, however, lists angelica not only as an anti-enchantment herb but also as an antidote to poison, plague, and pestilence.[37]

Although Samuel Hartlib's book His Legacy of Husbandry, does not treat human disease, it contains a definition of mildew which is applicable to the mildew blast and damp of Milton's masque. Mildew, says Hartlib, is "an unctuous dew" which falls like a "thick fog, or a misty rain."[38] More directly concerned with foul winds, Gulielmus Gratarolus, in A Direction for the Health of Magistrates and Students, urges his readers to avoid air "whiche is open to vaporous blastes and pestilent windes."[39] And in The Diet

of the Diseased James Hart suggests that "of a thicke and cloudy aire, thicke and grosse spirits are most commonly produced."[40] He prescribes the herb sage as a remedy for "all manner of cold rheumaticke defluxions, commonly called by the name of colds."[41]

The "ghastly Furies apparition"[42] has its Anglo-Saxon precedents as well as its Renaissance occurrences:[43]

> The word dreám signifies joy, ecstasy, but the compound wódendreám signifies madness, fury. The connexion of these and other cognate words with Woden, the god of the frenzied, is obvious. . . . It is natural that treatment by means of herb remedies in mental cases would not be of such avail as they might be in the case of bodily ills. Herbs, if used, are therefore of the unusual kind. . . . Mugwort . . . put to flight deóful-seócniss.

For fylle seóc or scínlác, which is probably an apparition or delusio mentis, animal and herbal remedies are listed in the Anglo-Saxon Herbal and in the Leechbook.[45]

In specifying the cures for Furies apparition, Burton in the Anatomy of Melancholy refers to "terrible objects which [melancholy patients] hear and see many times, Devils, Bugbears, and Mormoluces, noisome smells, etc. . . . prodigious shapes . . . and terriculaments."[46] His herbal cures include

> . . . Pennyroyal, Rue, Mint, Angelica, Piony: Rich. Argentine, de praestigiis daemonum cap. 20, adds hypericon or S. John's wort, perforata herba, which by a divine virtue drives away Devils, and is therefore called fuga daemonum: all which rightly used by their suffitus, Daemonum vexationibus obsistunt, afflictas mentes à daemonibus relevant, et venenatis fumis, expel Devils themselves, and all devilish illusions. Anthony Musa, the Emperor Augustus his Physician. cap. 6 de Betonia, approves of Betony to this purpose; the antients used therefore to plant it in Church-yards, because it was held to be an holy herb, and good against fearful visions, did secure such places it grew in, and sanctified these persons that carried it about them. Idem fere Mathiolus in Dioscoridem.[47]

There were also herbal cures for a form of apparition caused not by furies but by elves. In Anglo-Saxon England ". . . elves were

regarded as the source of apparitions, especially at night, and therefore of nightmare. . . . The Anglo-Saxon Herbal finds in betony a shield from 'frightful goblins that go by night and terrible sights and dreams'. . . . Vervain is supposed to have a similar effect."[48] For the Renaissance man troubled by nightmare and melancholic dreams, Gerard recommends peony.[49] And as late as 1895 St. John's wort was used as an amulet in Scotland to ward off visions.[50]

It is interesting to note at this point that the Attendant Spirit gives the complete herbal index of haemony. Although haemony is not functional in the masque against enchantments, mildew blast, damp, or apparition, these qualities are enumerated so that the audience may successfully identify the herb. (Then, as now, popular names for plants can be very confusing; for example, what one person today calls Orange Hawkweed another calls Devil's Paintbrush--but not to be confused with Indian Paintbrush.) Not having available to him a scientific taxonomical system, Milton had to resort to a description of its appearance, characteristics, and virtues. While scientific credibility may not have been necessary--may even have been irrelevant--in Milton's masque, as in Chaucer's Reeve's Tale, "fundamental fantasy is penetrated in a remarkable way by . . . supporting realism."[51]

Turning to the functional qualities of haemony, the Attendant Spirit (whatever his true nature)[52] insists that it enabled him to recognize Comus and to enter his limed-twig snare (643-646). There were other herbs in Milton's day which enabled one to detect a malign fairy without being harmed. Thyme, for example, was "a chief ingredient in a recipe (ca. 1600) for an eye-salve for beholding without

danger the most potent fairy or spirit. . . ."[53] The four-leaf clover, even today considered a good-luck plant, was an herb used in the detection of invisible malignant creatures; it enabled a young girl in Northumberland returning from milking to see fairies in the fields. A similar report in Cornwall describes a milkmaid who saw fairies "swarming about the cow she was milking, which for weeks had been in a fractious state. A four-leaved clover was found in the bunch of grass she had placed in her hat for convenience in carrying her milk-buckets."[54] It is not surprising, then, to have Milton select an herb for enchanter-detection purposes: this is exactly what many in his audience would have done.

In harmony with the agricultural context, Milton has the Attendant Spirit speak about the limed-twigs of Comus's spells. Although limed twigs have an ancient literal and metaphoric history,[55] they were still used for catching birds in Milton's day and after. Worlidge devotes several pages of the Systema Agriculturae to the making of bird lime:

> Besides the Art of taking Fowl with Nets, there is a very ingenious way of taking them with Bird-lime, which seems very ancient; for Pliny, who lived about 1600 years since, not only mentions the use of it, in liming of Twigs to catch Birds withal, but the manner how the Italians prepared the same, of the Berries of Misseltoe. . . . But seeing that that way of making Bird-lime is not in use with us, I shall not trouble you with the whole Process, especially seeing that we have here in England a more easie and effectual way of preparing it with the Bark of that common and so well known Tree the Holly; which Preparation is thus. . . .
>
> . . . When you intend to use your Bird-lime for great Fowl, take of Rods long, small, and streight, being light, and yielding every way; Lime the upper parts of them before the Fire, that it may the better besmear them.
>
> Then go where these Fowl usually haunt, whether it be their Morning or Evening haunt, an hour to two before they come, and plant your Twigs or Rods about a foot distance one from the other, that they cannot pass them without being intangled, and so plant over the place where their haunt is,

> leaving a place in the middle wide enough for your Stale to flutter in, without falling foul of the Twigs, which Stale you do well to provide and place there, the better to attract those of its own kind to your Snares: from which Stale you must have a small string to some convenient place at a distance where you may lie concealed, and by plucking the string, cause it to flutter; which will allure down the Fowl in view.[56]

Both nobleman and peasant would have understood Milton's use of the limed-twig snare and would have been impressed by an herb that could enable one to enter such a snare without being entangled. Milton's awareness of his audience and his insertion of familiar English elements makes his masque singularly appropriate for the occasion.

The final virtue of the herb haemony consists in its ability to fight off evil forces. A plant of war enabling two vulnerable young men to conquer an evil enchanter, haemony is more potent than moly. At this point the herb sounds like a piece of unnatural magic, or like something invented for a masque to rescue the heroine; but, again, the herbals mention such plants, though the herbalists may demur a bit. Parkinson, for example, refers to those who believe in the potency of St. John's wort as "superstitiously imsgining [sic], that it will drive away devills. . . ."[57] Coles cites Paracelsus in connection with St. John's wort, "supposing it to drive away Devils . . . [and to] cause all the Spirits of darknesse to vanish. . . ."[58] Poets and herbalists point to its qualities as a vulnerary, "Balm of the warrior's wound, Hypericon," and "Hypericon was there, the herb of war. . . ."[59]

Because the herbal tradition was so rich in multiple remedies for diseases ranging from headache to enchantment, haemony would not have had to originate in the lore of ancient Thessaly to be

understandable at Ludlow Castle that day in 1634. Enough people believed in the anti-demonic qualities of certain herbs to warrant discussion by the herbalists. In Milton's masque there is nothing deficient about the herb--it has sufficient power to overcome Comus; it is the humans who are deficient--the young men forget to seize Comus's wand.

III

Comus refers to the pharmaceutical activities of one of the most famous simplers of all times, Circe. He has watched his mother cull potent herbs and baleful drugs (251-254). But in Milton's masque, Comus excels even his mother

> . . . at her mighty Art,
> Offring to every weary Traveller,
> His orient Liquor in a Crystal Glass,
> To quench the drouth of Phoebus, which as they taste
> (For most do taste through fond intemperate thirst)
> Soon as the Potion works, their human count'nance
> Th' express resemblance of the gods, is chang'd
> Into som brutish form of Woolf, or Bear,
> Or Ounce, or Tiger, Hog, or bearded Goat,
> All other parts remaining as they were,
> And they, so perfect is their misery,
> Not once perceive their foul disfigurement,
> But boast themselves more comely then before
> And all their friends, and native home forget
> To roule with pleasure in a sensual stie. (63-77)

Further testimony to Comus's herbal skills is adduced by the Attendant Spirit:

> Deep skill'd in all his mothers witcheries,
> And here to every thirsty wanderer,
> By sly enticement gives his baneful cup. . . . (522-524)

Comus, himself, in trying to entice the lady to amorous activities, describes his aphrodisiac potion as

> . . . this cordial Julep here
> That flames, and dances in his crystal bounds
> With spirits of balm, and fragrant Syrops mixt.

> Not that Nepenthes which the wife of Thone,
> In Egypt gave to Jove-born Helena
> Is of such power to stir up joy as this,
> To life so friendly, or so cool to thirst. (671-677)

The ingredients: spirits of balm and fragrant syrups.

The effects: sensuality and transformation.

Aphrodisiacs are almost as ancient as history and are as modern as the sex supermarkets of Western Germany. It is interesting to observe, however, that while Milton establishes Circe as the mother of Comus, he does not specifically mention the root most frequently associated with her, the mandragora. He could assume, of course, that an audience familiar with mandragora would readily accept a potent aphrodisiac cordial. Next to moly, mandragora is probably the best known plant in the ancient world: it was recognized by Theophrastus[60] and Dioscorides,[61] who discussed its medicinal properties as well as its narcotic and aphrodisiac effects; by Josephus[62] and the Arabic Trismegistos[63]; by the Hebrew Scriptures (Gen. 30:14 ff. and Cant. 7:13), Egyptian inscriptions,[64] and in Chinese lore.[65] The later commentaries on Dioscorides, particularly those of Matthiolus and Amatus Lusitanus, give a detailed analysis of the mandragora.[66] Between 1510 and 1850 at least twenty-two treatises were published on the mandragore, known popularly in England as mandrake.[67] Perhaps Milton does not mention mandragora because the herbalists are extremely skeptical about its aphrodisiac and fertility qualities. Gerard does not even subscribe to the Rachel "conception story" of Genesis, and he concludes that all the fables about the mandrake were "false and most vntrue."[68] Parkinson's Theatrum would credit the mandrake only with the ability to cool eye inflammations and with anesthetic and soporific powers.[69]

A recent pharmacodynamic study by David I. Macht ascertains the potency of mandrake:

> . . . pharmacodynamic properties of the hyoscyamine and hyoscine alkaloids . . . explain . . . the various physiological or medicinal properties ascribed to mandragora in ancient, medieval and modern literature. The narcotic and analgesic action of mandragora described by the classical authors is undoubtedly due to the sedative effect of hyoscine or scopolamine, which is the chief constituent of both root and fruit. . . . The maddening effects of mandragora . . . merely depict the delirifacient action of the belladonna alkaloids on higher animals which is well known to every pharmacologist. Acute maniacal manifestations . . . are characteristic of atropine poisoning. . . . Hallucinations of sight and hearing are both produced by overdoses of these drugs.[70]

Finally, in connection with the aphrodisiac claims, Macht succeeded in isolating a chemical substance called a-methoxy-methyl piperidin and "found that piperidin hydrochloride actually produced an aphrodisiac effect in dogs."[71]

Although the herbalists and Milton could not have been aware of Macht's study establishing the clinical reliability of mandragora as an aphrodisiac, they were probably familiar with De Coitu by Constantinus Africanus, as was Chaucer's Merchant. Constantinus vouches for the authenticity of these aphrodisiacs, claiming to have tested them clinically. Largely herbal, his recipes include such plants as asparagus, rag-wort, colewort, crocus, poppy, anise, hellebore, scammony.[72]

Avoiding the most venerable herbs of classical times--moly mandragora, and nepenthes (derived from opium poppy)--Milton is deliberately vague about the contents of the love-philtre. As in most stories with a fairy tale formula, the content of the magic potion is not specified. The spirits of balm and fragrant syrups,[73] however, were well within the knowledge of the audience at Ludlow

Castle. Perhaps they had heard of Sir John Colquhoun of Luss, in Dumbartonshire, who had married Lady Lilian Graham, a daughter of the earl of Montrose, in 1633. "Her younger sister, the Lady Katherine, came to reside with the married pair, and the faithless baronet conceived an unlawful affection for his sister-in-law. At first she remained cold to his advances, so he applied to a necromancer for a love potion . . . which so worked upon the senses of the Lady Katherine that she became infatuated with Sir John and finally eloped with him to London. . . ."[74] Another case which can be cited is that of Lord Balmerino, a Scottish peer, who "died in 1612 from the effects of a love philtre administered to him by a serving-maid in his house. . . ."[75] If they had not heard of these two instances, they undoubtedly could supply evidence of their own. Milton, aware of the effects of love potions on his contemporaries, avoids the strictly ancient and draws on the native contemporary.

The herbalists, though they scoffed at mandragora as an aphrodisiac, did list innumerable herbs that provoked venery. William Coles devotes twenty-six chapters to those herbs that inflame a person's venereal instincts, and he singles out the Tree of Cacao and Chocolate as one that "vehemently incites to Venus," especially if "relented in Milke."[76] Gerard's entries on aphrodisiacs are numerous; for example, he mentions that corne-flag, ". . . the vpper root proueketh bodily lust,"[77] that Rocket-seeds, Garden Cresses, Annise, Cheruill, Spignell, Herbe Ferula, ash, and many more, whether in distilled, roasted, powdered, or boiled form, all work powerfully for Venus. I hasten to add, however, that the herbalists also list those herbs that are effective in abating lust: Coles recommends

Agnus or chaste-tree, Hempe, Water Lilly, Hemlock, Camphire; and Gerard says that "Agnus Castus is a singular medicine and remedy for such as would willingly liue chaste, for it withstandeth all vncleannes, or desire to the flesh, consuming and drying vp the seed of generation, in what soeuer it bee taken, whether in pouder onely, or the decoction drunke, or whether the leaues be carried about the body. . . ."[78]

The philosophers as well as the herbalists believed in the efficiency of love philtres. Agrippa refers to amorous bewitchings and mentions that "to procure love, they use venereall collyries. . . ."[79] Jacques Ferrand, in Erotomania, devotes an entire chapter to love potions and philtres, though he cites mostly the ancients. He does agree that "there may be Medicines, Meats, and Poysons, of a power provoking to Lust: of which kinde you shall meet with diverse Catalogues. . . ."[80] His work also includes a chapter on pharmaceutical remedies for Love-Melancholy, but his conclusion is philosophical rather than medical: the true moly is for him "the perfection of wisdom."[81]

It is interesting to observe that while the herbalists generally have respect for the power of simples both to provoke and to abate lust, Reginald Scot vehemently denies their aphrodisiac qualities: "As touching this kind of witchcraft, the principall part thereof consisteth in certeine confections prepared by lewd people to procure love; which indeed are meere poisons, bereaving some of the benefit of the brains, and so of the sense and understanding of the mind. And from some it taketh awaie life, & that is more common than the other."[82]

The major side-effect of Comus's potion is the transformation of humans into beasts. While it was an ancient commonplace that a brutish man begins to look like a brute (and an ass like Bottom deserves to be "translated" into a creature with an ass's head), the subject of metamorphosis was hotly debated in the Renaissance. The Renaissance had its share of skeptics on herbal transformation. William Perkins, for one, believes transformation to be a delusion and the direct act of the devil:

> Delusion is then performed, when a man is made to thinke he sees that which indeede he sees not. And this is done by operation of the devill diuersly, but especially three waies. First, by corrupting the humor of the eye, which is the next instrument of sight. Secondly, by altering the ayre, which is the meane by which the object or species is carried to the eye. Thirdly, by altering and changing the object, that is, the thing seene, or whereon a man looketh.[83]

Della Porta, attributing transformation to natural magic, to the use of herbs in potion-form, describes the phenomena of metamorphosis:

> For by drinking a certain Potion, the man would seem sometimes to be changed into a Fish; and flinging out his arms, would swim on the Ground: sometimes he would seem to skip up, and then to dive down again. Another would believe himself turned into a Goose: now and then sing, and endeavour to clap his Wings. And this he did with the aforenamed Plants [Stramonium, Solanum Manicum, Bella Donna]: neither did he exclude Henbane from among his Ingredients: extracting the essences by their Menstruum, and mix'd some of their Brain, Hart, Limbs, and other parts with them. I remember when I was a young man, I tried these things on my Chamber-Fellows: and their madness still fixed upon something they had eaten, and their fancy worked according to the quality of their meat. One, who had fed lustily upon Beef, saw nothing but the formes of Bulls in his imagination, and them running at him with their horns: and such-like things. Another man also by drinking a Potion, flung himself upon the earth, and like one ready to be drowned, struck forth his legs and arms, endeavouring as it were to swim for life: but when the strength of the Medicament began to decay, like a Shipwrack'd person, who had escaped out of the Sea, he wrung his Hair and his Clothes to strain the Water

> out of them; and drew his breath, as though he took such pains to escape the danger.[84]

The question of human transformation into beasts was long considered a legitimate topic for discussion; the audience at Ludlow Castle would not have had to go back to Aristotle or Ovid to find a lively discussion of this question. Currently available were treatises on witchcraft, most of which consider the problem and discuss it heatedly. Physicians and philosophers debated it, some affirming transformation, others denying it. The physician Johann Daniel Horst in The Hippocratic Physics raises the question,[85] and the Professor of Medicine, Tobias Tandler, in Five Physical-Medical Dissertations denies love-philtres and the metamorphosis of man into beast.[86] But the philosopher Pietro Pomponazzi of Mantua asserts that there are three ways "in which herbs, minerals and parts of animals may alter other bodies," and, using this same line of reasoning, he sees no objection to transformation. Basing his argument on the analogy of stone coral generating from wood and plants, he concludes that natural transformation of man into beast is metaphysically possible.[87] The physician Johann Wier in De praestigiis daemonum states that "not only . . . the lamiae sometimes were subject to illusions from unguents with which they had anointed themselves or natural soporific drugs which they had taken, but that eating the brain of a bear might make one imagine himself to be a bear."[88] Wier apparently believes in the potency of both vegetable and animal to transform a man, or at least in the hallucinatory effects of certain preparations.

In Milton's masque, the Elder Brother, still too young and too naive to be acquainted with the power of the herbal world, views

lust as strictly an ethical lapse which has the power to "imbrute" (467)[89]; but it is the Attendant Spirit, familiar with pharmacy as well as with ethics, who insists that Comus's potion has the power to incite to lust, the result being foul disfigurement "into some brutish form" (68-77; 524-529). Sabrina, also a sophisticated creature, relies on more than word of mouth or sheer virtue: she uses her own pure fountain water to release the young lady from the "marble venomed seat" (915). In this connection it is difficult to understand Arthos's reference to "gums Sabrina uses as a counter-charm [to] take the place of the salve used by Circe."[90] Milton's text clearly indicates that Comus has smeared the marble seat with "gums of glutinous heat" (915-916) and that Sabrina uses only "Drops that from my fountain pure, / I have kept of pretious cure" (911-912). The spell loses its hold on the lady when Sabrina touches the seat with palms that have been moistened by untainted water. A natural substance, pure water, conquers an unnatural one, gums of glutinous heat.

IV

What must have made the masque so delightful to the audience at Ludlow Castle was the introduction of familiar English elements--the everyday, commonplace heightened by its appearance in a poetic context. Saving the masque from becoming either an amateur philosophical treatise (which would have been a theatrical bore) or a mere display of classical virtuosity (which would have made the "loose hinds" feel very "unlettered") are the native herbal elements. They give the masque a peculiar English flavor in a day when no one denied

the potency of even knot-grass. Part of the charm of the masque surely sprang from its natural magic.

CHAPTER III

THE LAURELS, MYRTLES, AND IVY OF *LYCIDAS*

CEREMONIAL ASPECTS OF THE HERBAL TRADITION

Though plants are most frequently associated with medicine and the dispensary, there is another ancient and persistent use of plants that rivals the pharmacological. It is the ceremonial. As Sir Thomas Browne remarked, the use of plants in "flowry Crowns and Garlands is of not slender Antiquity, and higher than I conceive you apprehend it. For, besides the old Greeks and Romans, the AEgyptians made use hereof. . . ."[1] Plants crowd the pages of history, elbowing their way on to sarcophagi and monuments, displaying themselves in catacombs and forums. Their coronary form can be classified as "Gestatory, Portatory, Suspensory, Depository"; their functions as "convivial, festival, sacrificial, nuptial, honorary, funebrial."[2]

With so venerable a tradition behind him, Milton could hardly have ignored the ceremonial function of the herbal tradition in his poetry. His *Lycidas* opens with a five-line herbal tribute to the "learned friend," Edward King, drowned at sea, August 10, 1637:

> Yet once more, O ye Laurels, and once more
> Ye Myrtles brown, with Ivy never sear,
> I com to pluck your Berries harsh and crude,
> And with forc'd fingers rude,
> Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year. (1-5)

These three plants--laurel, myrtle, and ivy--have frequently been interpreted as plants that symbolize poetic fame. No one would

deny that poetic laureation was widely practiced in the ancient world. J. B. Trapp, in "The Owl's Ivy and the Poet's Bays: An Enquiry into Poetic Garlands," gives ample evidence for the use of ivy and bay in poetic coronation.[3] But, looking past the literal plants, several commentators have pounced only upon this particular symbol, without first looking at the res ipsa, a method foreign to Milton. Brooks and Hardy do essentially this in their commentary: "The laurel is a symbol of poetic fame," they say; and then interpret: "The poet comes to pluck the berries before they are ripe; that is, the poet apologizes for the fact that his own art is immature."[4] Brooks and Hardy, while ignoring both the myrtle and the ivy, see only the symbol lurking behind the laurel; nor do they look at the three actual plants and berries but at what appears to them a symbol for the poet's immaturity.

Wayne Shumaker eliminates ivy and takes both laurel and myrtle as symbolic: "The laurels and myrtles invoked in lines 1-5 have berries which are harsh and crude. The leaves of both laurels and myrtles are to be shattered by Milton's singing before they have an opportunity to reach mature exuberance ('before the mellowing year')."[5] Again, there is the quick leap to symbol, and the aesthetically doubtful equation of plucking with singing. To reinforce his symbolic reading, Shumaker further observes: ". . . overgrown with wild thyme and gadding vines, the adjectives implying, perhaps not quite rationally, a desperate and uncontrolled abandon to grief."[6]

J. B. Trapp's study discusses in detail the conjunction of the three plants. Postulating Vergil's Eclogues

> . . . atque hanc sine tempora circum
> inter victrices hederam tibi serpere laurus[7]

and

> et vos, o lauri, carpam et te, proxima myrte[8]

as the "source of the garland if not of the idea of poetic coronation in general,"[9] Trapp explores the laureation of three major poets of the Middle Ages--Dante, Mussato, and Petrarch. He does not, however, suggest that bay, ivy, and myrtle signify Edward King's poetical achievement; he concludes, rather, that Milton was applying it to himself and giving "botanical expression of his modesty" in the first five lines of Lycidas.[10]

Rosemond Tuve's researches into the cultural history show the correlation between poet and plants: "With a lasting garland men show honor to immortal Poetry, crowning her mortal exemplar. But in this one shattered leaves displace those symbols long thought of as fit for Poetry because it, too, matures not to die but live on. It is Lycidas' garland which, like his poetic promise, is cut while it is still harsh and unready; everything in the image is disrupted, plucked before it can ripen, finished before it can ripen, finished before it can begin--but finished, ended, this crown or none. I do not read in Milton's first lines the note of apology for his own unripe verses familiarly referred to in commentary and criticism. . . ."[11]

Because many questions remain unanswered on the nature and function of the three garland plants in Lycidas, I should like:

1. to discuss the history (both classical and Christian), function, significance, and materials of the crown, wreath or garland;

2. to examine the laurel, the myrtle, and the ivy in the light of both the historico-mythological tradition and the botanical one;

3. and to show that Milton wove these two major strands, historico-mythological and botanical, into the fabric of Lycidas.

I

There is no doubt that in the opening lines of Lycidas Milton is alluding to the making of a crown, garland, or wreath. That he was familiar with garland-making is evident from his many references to garlands.[12] He uses the crown literally and metaphorically,[13] and mentions both an ivy wreath and ivy berries in the wreath.[14] In addition, he uses the combination-term garland wreaths.[15] Since, however, the word crown in today's English is almost exclusively associated with royalty and is limited to something placed on the head; and since the word wreath describes something larger than a crown, I shall use the word garland throughout this study, which word is defined in the Oxford English Dictionary as ". . . a wreath made of flowers, leaves, etc. worn on the head like a crown, or hung about an object for decoration."

The garland, not restricted by the ancient Greeks and Romans to either poetic or military honors, played an important role in family life. The exchange of nuptial vows called for the exchange of wreaths, the birth of a child for a wreath on the door.[16] The thriving garland-weavers of both Greece and Rome prepared many wreaths for use in sports, as Pliny's account amply shows:

> For at first it was customary to make from branches of trees the chaplets used at sacred contests as prizes. Later on the custom arose of varying the colour by mixing

> flowers of different hues, in order to heighten the effect of perfumes and colours in turn. . . . Chaplets, however, even those won in sport, were always regarded as a dignity, for citizens would go down to the Circus in person to compete in the games, besides entering for events their own slaves and horses.[17]

The garland, also used to adorn statues, was so sacred that laws had to be adopted governing its use; violators were severely punished:

> At other times not even chaplets won at the games were worn indiscriminately, and on this matter extremely severe rules were enforced. In the second Punic War L. Fulvius, a banker, who was said to have looked out into the Forum from his veranda wearing in the daytime a chaplet of roses, was on the authority of the senate led away to prison, not being released before the end of the war. P. Munatius took a chaplet of flowers from a statue of Marsyas and placed it on his own head. Ordered by the Triumviri to be put in chains for this offence he appealed to the tribunes of the people, who refused to intervene. . . .[18]

Although Milton would have been familiar with the garlands in the ancient cultures used for weddings, births, sports, he is not referring to these customs in Lycidas. There is still another use--one prominent in both Greece and Rome--that has received no attention in the glosses on Lycidas. This is the garland for the dead. That not only Milton but also the earlier and even later commentators were aware of the significance of the funerary garland is abundantly evident from the scholarship of those periods. In 1560 A. Thylesius devoted an entire work to a description of various types of garlands, its title being De coronarum generibus; and in 1610 C. Paschalius published De coronis, which is both learned and wide-ranging. The funerary garland was singled out for a study by J. M. Gesnerus, De coronis mortuorum, published in Göttingen in 1748.[19] In addition, Lycidas is not the only place where Milton uses the funerary garland. In Mansus Milton hopes for a friend who will give him a proper burial:

> Tandem ubi non tacitae permensus tempora vitae,
> Annorumque satur cineri sua jura relinquam,
> Ille mihi lecto madidis astaret ocellis,
> Astanti sat erit si dicam sim tibi curae;
> Ille meos artus liventi morte solutos
> Curaret parvâ componi molliter urnâ.
> Forsitan & nostros ducat de marmore vultus,
> Nectens aut Paphiâ myrti aut Parnasside lauri
> Fronde comas, at ego securа pace quiescam. (85-93)

In both instances Milton is not celebrating a poetic coronation but a death, as "Herse where Lycid lies" (151) and "parva urna" indicate. For those who argue that laurel or bay was almost exclusively associated with poetic coronation, there is Milton's tribute to the Marchioness of Winchester: "And som Flowers, and som Bays,/ For thy Hears to strew the ways" (57-58). The bays are "Devoted to [her] vertuous name" (60). As late as 1652 Milton again uses laurels, this time in a reference to "Worsters laureat wreath" (9), an honorary military tribute to Cromwell.

Nor is Milton the only Renaissance poet who employs the funerary garland. Michael Drayton in "The Legend of Pierce Gaveston" invokes Pallas Athene, goddess of military might and of poetry, to give him a funerary garland:

> Goddesse of Armes, and Arts, Pallas Divine,
> Let thy bright Fauchion lend Me Cypresse Boughes,
> Be thou assisting to this Poet of mine,
> With Funerall Wreath's ingarlanding His Browes,
> Pittying my Woes, when none would heare Me weepe,
> That for my Sorrowes, layes His owne to sleepe.[20]

Their use of the funerary garland is not surprising, in view of the fact that the garland in the ritual for the burial of the dead is so ancient, universal, and long-lived. Euripides, among other ancients, refers to the garlanding of the dead. In The Women of Troy, Talthybios tells Hecabe how Andromache has pleaded with the Greek Neoptolemos for Astyanax to be given a proper burial; that is, laid on

Hector's shield rather than in a cedar or stone coffin and put in Hecabe's arms "so that she would wrap the corpse with funeral robes and garlands."[21] Essential to this proper burial was the funerary garland.

In the elegiac tradition the funerary wreath is frequently mentioned. The shade of Cynthia, Propertius's mistress, reproaches him for not giving her a proper funeral; it is her old servant, Petale, who has correctly observed her death by bringing garlands to the sepulchre:

> nostraque quod Petale tulit ad monumenta coronas,
> codicis immundi unicula sentit anus.[22]

And sometimes, perhaps to add to the poignancy, the funerary garland was placed awry on the head:

> et stygio sum sparsa lacu, nec recta capillis
> uitta data est.[23]

In addition, even the bark which conveyed the shades across the Styx was wreathed: "ecce coronato pars altera rapta phaselo."[24]

Although it is difficult to uncover the origin of garlanding, it is certain that to neglect to garland the dead would have been a violation of decorum. The significance of the garlanding lay in the comfort it gave to the giver, in the alleviation it offered to the harshness of death, and in the fact that it was the last gift of the living to the dead.[25] In earliest times, it seems that the garland was placed on the head of the dead person by his close relative or by his dearest friend: Pericles himself placed a funerary garland on the head of his dead son.[26] Later, the garland was placed around the neck and even on the door.[27]

There were many and mixed motives among the living for the

garlanding of the dead. Sometimes it arose from a feeling of piety or devotion, as can be seen in Xenophon's Anabasis:

kenotaphion autois epoiesan kai stephanois epethesan.[28]

Sometimes it took the form of an offering to an icon or on an altar. Sometimes it symbolized a victory over life's struggles or a summons to a higher calling. And sometimes it was a cultic part of a mystery religion and was accompanied by a libation.[29]

The garlanding of the dead was not restricted to the Greco-Roman tradition. The funerary garland was also used in the Judaic tradition, as archaeological evidence has shown. In his study Martyrerkranz, Antonius J. Brekelmans calls special attention to a votive-picture in a mosque-column which is immured in a wall at Djamiel-Kebir in Gaza; on it is a Hebrew inscription: "Ananias, the son of Jacob." On both sides is a palm, and the garland consists of laurel leaves and a band of ivy leaves.[30] Further, Edwin R. Goodenough observes that ". . . wreaths were . . . commonly used on synagogues and graves by Jews and Christians, as well as pagans, to intensify the symbolic value for immortality.[31]

In paleo-Christianity the garland, associated with martyrdom and death, was found usually in an eschatological context: "Auf einer jetzt verlorenen Grabplatte an der Via Salaria wurde von Liberalis, einem ehemaligen Konsul, gesagt: 'gratia cui trabeas dederat, dedit ira coronam.'"[32] Milton himself refers to this type of garland in Epitaphium Damonis:

> Ipse caput nitidum cinctus rutilante corona,
> Letáque frondentis gestans umbracula palmae
> Aeternum perages immortales hymenaeos. . . . (215-217)

Because the living were eager to use materials that would

not wither or decay quickly, they chose acanthus, celery, ivy, oak, laurel, myrtle, olive, and yew.[33] Occasionally, hoping to avert the decay that inevitably attacked a funerary garland, they planted evergreen trees at the grave.[34] And as a lasting memorial, the garland appeared on sarcophagi and on tombs, which were constructed of costly metal, marble, or stone. The materials that are important for Milton's Lycidas are, of course, laurel, myrtle, and ivy.

Evidence that funerary garlands were used into Milton's day and long after can be found even in the cemeteries of New England. One of the most startling instances--and not an isolated one--of the use of the laurel garland for the dead occurs a century and a half after Milton's Lycidas on the Susannah Jayne stone in Marblehead, Massachusetts, 1776. On her stone is an elaborately carved skeleton crowned with laurel,[35] a tradition handed to New England Puritans from the mortuary tradition of England.[36]

II

Lauris nobilis L.

Although the laurel has been treated exhaustively in studies ranging from its use in magic, religion, folklore, medicine, and pharmacy,[37] Milton criticism has limited itself to the laurel of poetic coronation. What emerges from a comprehensive study of laurel is the discovery that its use in poetic garlands was by no means its principal function.

The laurel springs from a rich mythology. Early associated with Daphne, who was turned into a laurel tree, and also with Apollo, who was crowned with laurel as a symbol of victory, salvation, and rescue, it persisted as a symbol of victory.[38] Zeus himself wore the laurel of victory, as did Heracles.[39] Apollo also wore the

laurel as a musician, as his famous "laurel-crowned" statue in the Vatican confirms.[40]

Another strain of "laurel" mythology is heard in the Idylls of Theocritus. Here Daphnis, the male counterpart of Daphne, is the hero of the Sicilian shepherds. The child of the union of a Nymph and Hermes, he was born in a laurel grove and named Daphnis, the Greek word for laurel. His death being a sad occasion for the shepherds, they mourn him, while the hills and the oaks join in the lament. In his bucolic poetry Theocritus highlights the sorrows and death of Daphnis.[41]

Beginning with a description of laurel bark, Theophrastus gives a lengthy botanical inventory including the size and shape of the roots, the taste of the fruit, propagation, budding, and nomenclature.[42]

In the Georgics Vergil recommends the winter as the time to gather laurel berries:

> sed tamen et quernas glandes tum stringere tempus et lauri bacas.[43]

And in the Eclogues he mentions the laurels that weep for Gallus, who pined in love's tyranny: "illum etiam lauri, etiam flevere myricae. . . ."[44]

Dioscorides restricts his discussion of the laurel to pharmaceutical uses.[45] But it is Pliny who gives the most comprehensive information and distinguishes between nine different types of laurel:

1. Delphic laurel. Uniform green color; large reddish green berries; used to make wreaths for the winners at Delphi and for triumphant generals.

2. Cyprus laurel. Crinkly, with a short black leaf that curves up along the edges.
3. Tine tree (wild laurel). Bright blue berry.
4. Royal laurel (Augusta laurel). Large tree, large leaf, berries without a rough taste.
5. Bacalia. Commonest of all; largest number of berries.
6. Thasos laurel. Tiny leafy fringe.
7. Gelded laurel. Without fringe; thrives in shade.
8. Ground laurel. Wild shrub.
9. Alexandrine laurel. Useful for wreaths; leaf more pointed than that of the myrtle, and softer, brighter in color, and larger; the seed, which lies between the leaves, is red; grows in abundance on Mount Ida, in the vicinity of Heraclea in Pontus, and occurs only in mountain districts.[46]

One quality which all the laurels share is that they are evergreen.[47] Pliny, as might be expected, combines historical anecdote with minute botanic description. Referring to the death of King Bebryx at the Harbour of Amycus, he observes that the "tomb ever since the day of his death has been shaded by a laurel tree which they call the Mad Laurel. . . ."[48] Although Pliny does not neglect the laurel of triumph or of sanctification, purification, and decoration,[49] he also discusses the funerary wreath, explaining that when a victor in the games died, his parents had the privilege of having the garland "laid on the body during the lying in state at home and when it was being carried out to burial."[50]

The Christian adaptation of the laurel wreath in the Post-Apostolic Age is found in the Passion Sarcophagi, the most

famous of which can be seen in the Lateran Museum. On the left is "Simon of Cyrene carrying the Cross and the 'crowning' of Our Lord with the wreath of victory; the crown of thorns is replaced by one of laurel. In the central niche the focal point is the cross-monogram of Christ; the wreath hangs from the beak of an eagle. . . . The sarcophagus dates from about 350. The motif of the 'Trophy of the Cross' was adopted into the liturgy and also into the preaching. . . . It is still heard during Holy Week in the hymns of Venantius Fortunatus on the Cross. . . ."[51]

Another familiar association, that of laurel with magic and medicine, moved from the ancient world into the medieval world. Such preparations as goat's blood drawn from a goat who has fed only on laurel were prescribed for sufferers from stone;[52] there was a laurel potion that was efficacious for witches who wished to resume normal human form.[53]

The laurel tree occurs frequently in the Renaissance emblem books. Ioachim Camerarius, in his collection of one hundred emblems. devotes several emblems to the laurel. His descriptions are largely limited to the laurel of victory,[54] of protection, guardianship, and safety;[55] but he also uses a laurel tree as a support for a cock which rests in its branches: "Gallus amans lauri vigili solem ore salutat. . . ."[56] Even a cursory glance will show that Milton did not draw upon the magico-medical writers or on the emblematists for the laurel of Lycidas.

The Renaissance herbalists are another matter altogether. Because the herbals included not only botany and horticulture but also pharmacy and medicine, their influence was almost unlimited.[57]

Both John Gerard and John Parkinson are lavish in their description of laurel. Gerard distinguishes between three kinds of laurel--spurge, bay, and wild bay.

> Spurge laurel. A shrub of a cubit high, tough lithe boughs, smooth blackish green shining leaves; flowers--whitish greene; berries black.
>
> The Time
>
> The floures bud . . . a little after the Autumne Aequinoctial: they are full bloun in winter or in the first Spring: the first fruit is ripe in May and June; the plant is alwaies greene. . . .[58]

> Bay or Lawrel Tree. . . . full of boughes, couered with a green barke: the leaues thereof are long, broad, hard, of colour green . . . the flours . . . are of a green colour; the beries are more long than round, and be couered with a blacke rine or piel. . . .[59]

> Wilde Bay Tree. The wilde Laurell is euer greene, and may oftentimes be seene most part of the Winter, and the beginning of the Spring, with the flours and ripe berries growing both at one season.[60]

Parkinson, in Theatrum Botanicum, discusses the laurel and the bay tree, which were often classified together, and makes a distinction between them:

> This Laurell or Spurge Laurell (that it may be knoune from the Bay tree, which is of divers, called the Laurell tree) riseth up usually but with one stemme, yet sometimes with more, very tough and pliant, couered with a whitish thicke tough bark, branching forth into divers parts toward the toppes, whereon are set many long, smooth, thicke, somewhat broad and shining dark greene leaves, somewhat like unto Bay leaves, but longer, smoother, softer, and not with hard veines therein as Bay leaves have; the flowers come forth towards the toppes of the stalkes and branches . . . after which come small round, and somewhat long blacke berries when they are ripe. . . .
>
> The Time
>
> The first flowreth very early in the yeare, even in Ianuary or February, and sometimes before, if the Winter be milde, the berries are ripe about June. . . .[61]

Continuing his discussion of the various types of laurel, Parkinson observes:

> In English the laurel is also called the Wild Bay Tree; while the fruit of this tree ripens in October in warm climates, such as Portugal, it does not flower in England until December, January, and February, if the winter is

neither too early nor too extreme. All are evergreen.[62]

But it is Parkinson's treatment of the laurel in the Paradisi in Sole Paradisus Terrestris that bears directly on Milton's Lycidas:

> Laurus, the Bay Tree. There are to bee reckoned vp five kindes of Bay trees . . . a fourth . . . which is that kinde that is vsually planted in euery mans yard or orchard. . . . The Bay tree riseth vp . . . of a meane bignesse in our Countrey (although much greater in the hoter) and oftentimes shooteth vp with many suckers from the roote, shewing it selfe more like to a tall shrubbe or hedgebush, then a tree, hauing many branches, the young ones whereof are sometimes reddish, but most vsually of a light or fresh greene colour, when the stemme and elder boughes are couered with a dark greene barke: the leaues are somewhat broad, and long pointed as it were at both the ends, hard and sometimes crumpled on the edges, of a darke greene colour aboue, and of a yellowish greene vnderneath, in smell sweet, in taste bitter, and abiding euer greene: the flowers are yellow and mossie, which turn into berries that are a little long as well as round, whose shell or outermost peele is greene at the first, and black when it is ripe. . . .
>
> The Vse of Bayes.
>
> The Bay leaues . . . serue both for pleasure and profit, both for ornament and for vse, both for honest Ciuill vses, and for Physicke, yea both for the sicke and for the sound, both for the liuing and for the dead: And so much might be said of this one tree, that if it were all told, would as well weary the Reader, as the Relater: but to explaine my selfe; It serueth to adorne the house of God as well as of man . . . to crowne or encircle as with a garland, the heads of the liuing, and the sticke and decke forth the bodies of the dead: so that from the cradle to the graue we have still vse of it, we have still neede of it.[63]

In his charming way, Parkinson is here describing Renaissance practices. His England used the laurel for both living and the dead. Milton knew this: he also used it at the grave of his dead Samson:

> . . . there will I build him
> A Monument, and plant it round with shade
> Of Laurel ever green. . . . (1733-1735)

Milton, living at a time when laurel was still used "to sticke and decke forth the boies of the dead," found it singularly fitting to use laurel for the dead Lycidas. Nor was Milton the last so to honor a man in death: on November 7, 1970, Haile Selassi, Emperor

of Ethiopia, placed a laurel wreath on the tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Rome.[64]

III

Myrtus communis L.

The myrtle tree grew profusely all over the ancient world,[65] and a rich mythology accompanied it. Perhaps because of its exotic loveliness (shimmering evergreen leaves, abundant white, aromatic blossoms) it was early associated with the goddess of love, spring, and fertility, Aphrodite in Greece and Venus in Rome. It was also associated with Erato, the muse of erotic poetry, and with Hymen, the god of marriage. These goddesses and gods were all adorned with myrtle;[66] consequently, myrtle became important for wedding garlands.[67]

That there was no antithesis between Love and Death is apparent in a Renaissance emblem by Alciati. Titled De Morte & Amore, in it Death and Love are pictured as friends.[68] It is not surprising, then, to discover that in the ancient world the goddess of love acquired the features of the goddess of death. The myrtle was assimilated by this "goddess of death" tradition, where it became a much-used, much-loved grave plant.[69] The Euripidean Electra, for one, complains bitterly about the disrespect shown to Agamemnon's grave and weeps for its desolation:

> And Agamemnon's tomb is set at naught:
> Drink-offerings never yet nor myrtle-spray
> Had it, a grave all bare of ornament.[70]

Later she is comforted by the Old Man who has paid reverence to Agamemnon's tomb:

> There kneeling, for its desolation wept,

Poured a drink-offering from the skin I bare
Thy guests, and crowned the tomb with myrtle-sprays.[71]

Another use of the myrtle, and this one tinged with pathos, is found in the Phaedra-Hippolytus myth. Pausanias in his travels reported that near Phaedra's tomb a myrtle tree continued to grow, whose leaves still contained the holes which she had pricked in them when she had been in a desperate and melancholy passion for Hippolytus.[72]

Used also in the cultic religions[73] and in the great Panathenaea, the myrtle occupied a place of high respect in the ancient world.[74]

Theophrastus's scientific account of the myrtle is extensive and includes botanic and agricultural information.[75] Vergil refers to the blood-red juice of the myrtle ("cruentaque myrta") and to the shores that rejoiced in myrtle groves ("litora myrtetis laetissima").[76] Dioscorides, devoting his discussion mainly to the medical preparations made from myrtle berries and to the oil from the leaves, adds that pulverized dry leaves function as an effective anti-perspirant.[77]

Mentioning the many uses for the juice of the myrtle, Pliny describes the myrtle tree as an evergreen and as an exotic. His classifications are vague and in one case erroneous.[78] He lists several varieties of the cultivated myrtle:

Taranto myrtle. Very small leaf.

Roman myrtle (Union myrtle). Broad leaf.

"Six-row" myrtle. Thick foliage; leaves in rows of six; bushy.

Egyptian myrtle. Most powerful scent.[79]

He devotes more space to the function of the myrtle than to its

botany. Isolating a number of uses, he cites the sprigs of myrtle of purifications;[80] the sacred myrtles at the shrine of Quirinus;[81] the myrtle of protection carried by foot travellers;[82] the myrtle wreath of ovation first worn by Publius Postumius Tubertus and subsequently by victorious generals celebrating an ovation;[83] and the festive myrtle worn at circuses.[84] As a piece of history, he points to its funerary function: "The actual tree is recorded to have been seen for the first time on the hither side of Europe, beginning from the Ceraunian Mountains, on the grave of Elpenor at Circello. . . ."[85]

The graves of the Early Christians were often adorned by evergreen trees[86] (though the myrtle is not specifically mentioned), and Early Christian sarcophagi frequently combined the Shepherd and Tree motifs.[87] Moreover, there is often a further blending on the sarcophagi, that of the tree-pastoral-paradise motifs,[88] a blending so congenial to Milton that he used it in Lycidas.

One of the best known of the Renaissance Emblematists is Valeriano Bolzani. The myrtle of Venus for him signifies "Genius et Volvptas," and further, "Neque uerò dissimulandem, Myrtum pudendi muliebris habere significatum. . . ." He also discusses the "Ovatio" myrtle.[89] Milton ignores both of these traditions in Lycidas.

The Renaissance herbalists go into great detail in their treatment of the myrtle tree. Gerard distinguishes between six different types:

1. The first and greatest Myrtus is a small tree, growing to the height of a man, having many faire and pliant branches, couered with a browne bark, and set full of leaues much like vnto the Laurell or Bay leafe, but

thinner and smaller, somewhat resembling the leaues of Peruincle, which being bruised do yeeld forth a most fragrant smell, not much inferiour vnto the smell of Cloues, as all the rest of the kinds do: among these leaues come forth small white floures, in shape like the flours of the Cherry tree, but much smaller, and of a pleasant sauour, which do turne into small berries, greene at the first, and afterwards blacke.

2. Myrtus Boetica latifolia. Leaves like bay leaves; light green color; flowers and fruit not much different from first.

3. Myrtus Exotica. Leaves "thrusting within another, crossing one another confusedly."

4. Myrtus fructu albo. White coloured fruit.

5. Myrtus minor (Noble myrtle). Little shrub or hedge bush; leaves small and narrow; fresh green color; flowers white.

6. Myrtus Boetica syluestris. Not high, nor so shrubby as former; leaves somewhat blackish; fruit is round, growing on long stalks out of the bosoms of the leaves, fresh green, then whitish, then black; grows wild in Portugal.

The Time

Where they joy to grow of themselues they floure when the Roses doe: the fruit is ripe in Autumne: in England they neuer beare any fruit.[90]

Parkinson's Theatrum lists nine different types of myrtle trees:

1. Myrtus latifolia maxima.

2. Myrtus latifolia exotica.

3. Myrtus latifolia vulgaris. (This onely in our country, of all other sorts of broad leafed Myrtles) groweth to be foure or five foote high with us, and in the warme Countries to be a little tree full of branches and leaves, like a small bush.

4. Myrtus augustifolia exotica.

5. Myrtus Boetica sylvestris.

6. Myrtus domestica minutissimis folys fructu albo.

7. Myrtus minor acuto folio.

8. Myrtus minor rotundiore folio.

9. Myrtus flore pleno.[91]

It is Parkinson's Paradisi that contains the most "English" information:

> In the hot Countryes, there have been many sorts of Mirtles found out, naturally growing there, which will not fructifie in this of ours, nor yet abide without extraordinary care . . . to preserue them from the sharpnesse of our winters. I shall only bring you to view three sorts in this my Garden, the one with a greater, the other two with lesser leaues. . . .
>
> 1. Myrtus latifolia. The greater leafed Mirtle. The broader leafed Mirtle riseth vp to the height of foure or fiue foote at the most with vs, full of branches and leaves growing like a small bush, the stemme and elder branches whereof are couered with a dark coloured bark, but the young with a green, and some with a red, especially vpon the first shooting forth, whereon are set many fresh greene leaues, very sweet in smell, and very pleasant to behold, so neer resembling the leaues of the Pomegranate tree that groweth with vs, that they soone deceiue many that are not expert therein, being somewhat broade and long, and pointed at the ends, abiding alwaies green: at the ioynts of the branches where the leaues stand, come forth the flowers vpon small foote stalkes, euery one by it self consisting of fiue small white leaues, with white threds in the middle, smelling also very sweet: after the flowers are past, there doe arise in the hot Countries, where they are naturall, round blacke berries, when they are ripe . . . but neuer in this Countrey. . . .
> 2. Myrtus minor. The smaller leafed Mirtle. The smaller leafed Mirtle is a low shrub or bush, like vnto the former, but scarce rising so high, with branches spreading about the stemme, much thicker set with leaues then the former, smaller also, and pointed at the ends, of a little deeper greene colour, abiding greene also winter and summer, and very sweete likewise: the flowers are white like vnto the former, and as sweete . . . the fruit is blacke in his naturall places. . . .
> 3. Myrtus minor. Boxe Mirtle. . . . it will shew, by the roundnesse at the ends of the leaues very like vnto the small Boxe leaues, to be another differing kind, although in nothing else. Wee nourse them with great care, for the beautiful aspect, sweete sent and raritie, as delights and ornaments for a garden of pleasure. . . .
>
> The Place.
>
> These, and many other sorts of Mirtles grow in Spaine, Portugall, Italie, and other hot Countries in great aboundance, where they make their hedges of them. . . .
>
> The Time.
>
> The Mirtles doe flower very late with vs, not vntill August at the soonest, which is the cause of their not fructifying.

The Names.

> . . . the seuerall kindes haue had seuerall denominations, in Plinies time, and others, as Romana, Coniugala, Terentina, Egyptia, alba, nigra, etc.[92]

Parkinson, because he takes such delight in the exotic myrtle, raises it for beauty and pleasure; he singles out no other uses. The valuable information received from both Gerard and Parkinson is that bark of the myrtle is brown, a piece of information significant for the Lycidas. The herbalists emphasize the fact that myrtle does not fructify in England (perhaps the exception would be those myrtles grown in tubs and kept in the orangery in cold weather), a fact which would make the berries of Lycidas's funerary garland even more harsh and crude than ordinarily supposed.

IV

Hedera helix L.

Ultimately related to the Dionysus-Bacchus myth, the ivy appears in the earliest representations of Bacchus. The many and conflicting stories of the orgin of Bacchus include the Pausanian tradition, in which Bacchus was banished as a baby and was exposed to the dangers of a sea voyage, and another tradition in which he transformed mariners into dolphins. The most familiar association, however, is with the Bacchanalia, with the grape and the ivy signifying that he is the god of vintage, wine, and consequently of orgies.[93] The Miltonic employment of this particular Bacchic tradition is found, appropriately enough, in Comus ("With Ivy berries wreath'd," l. 55), in L'Allegro ("To Ivy-crowned Bacchus bore," l. 16), and in Elegia Sexta ("Atque hederam lauro praeposuisse suae," l. 16). The ivy of this tradition could only have violated decorum in Lycidas.

There are other ivy traditions and other affiliations. Largely because of its decorative qualities, the ivy leaf was painted on vases as early as the Mycenean epoch and persisted in ancient art as an ornamental item on vases, drinking cups, columns, statues, sarcophagi.[94] In addition, archaeologists have discovered an ivy-decorated mask in an Etruscan grave[95] and a metal ivy wreath with leaves and fruit in still another grave.[96]

In the elegiac tradition, ivy for the grave is specifically requested: the shade of Cynthia pleads with her survivor Propertius to plant ivy on her tomb:

> pone hederam tumulo, mihi quae praegnant corymbo
> mollis contortis alliget ossa comis.[97]

Theophrastus's discussion of ivy is merely a scientific classification together with a complete description of its habitat and qualities.[98] The ivy of Vergil's Georgics is considered in terms of its color, which is sometimes dark, sometimes pale: "interdum aut hederae pandunt vestigia nigrae"[99] and "pallentisque hederas."[100] Dioscorides, describing the many variations and uses, includes its astringent quality with its effects on the nervous system; again, he is pharmaceutical.[101]

Pointing out twenty kinds of ivy, Pliny describes leaves, fruit, and growing habits; in addition, Pliny calls attention to its versatility as a medicine.[102] Historical accounts attest to its fame as an illustrious "wreath" plant, having been honored by the great Alexander, who wore it when he returned from India with his victorious army. (The "garland" ivy is the one with the largest clusters of berries.) In spite of this, Pliny seems dismayed that ivy is "even now used at solemn festivals among the people of

Thrace," especially in view of the fact that it is "injurious to all trees and plants and destructive to tombs and walls."[103]

But the ivy was more than a plant spreading its tendrils on tombs. And it was more than decorative when it appeared on sarcophagi. The Greco-Roman world included ivy with its eschatological funerary symbols. So widespread was this use of the ivy in an eschatological context that, as Franz Cumont observes, it became part of the symbolic vocabulary of even the artisans.[104] A glance at the sarcophagi confirms his opinion and supports the hypothesis that ivy was more than ornamental:

> Toutes les essences à feuillage persistant, qui restent verdoyantes quand la nature se meurt, comme le pin, le cyprès, le laurier sont pour ce motif devenus des plantes funéraires . . . A Vence . . ., un cyprès se dresse de chaque côté du croissant. Pareillement le lierre, dont le feuillage n'est point caduc, et qui appartient à Bacchus, dieu d'une religion de salut, semblait doué d'un pouvoir de renouveau, qui faisait triompher du trépas. . . .[105]

Obviously, the ivy of immortality is the ivy of Lycidas.

Nor did the Jews ignore immortality; in fact, the Jewish symbols of the Greco-Roman period abound in affirmations of the after-life. Goodenough's statement that "Pagan motifs in Jewish synagogues and the graves have already led us to suspect that Jews used them to express faith in heaven, in the love of God, in coming victory,"[106] is supported by his studies of the paintings of the Dura Europas synagogue. What at first blush had struck art historians as being "decorative" borrowings from the pagan world emerges as a full set of symbols to express confidence in the existence of the life after death. In this iconographic setting appear Bacchus, dolphins, and ivy. Goodenough concludes: "The animal figures,

then, primarily present the values of the marine thiasos, the convention strangely but almost everywhere used for representing the Dionysiac riot at this period, one that became especially favored for sarcophagi both pagan and Christian. . . . The whole seems to me, here and elsewhere, to refer to hope of life after death--to refer that is, to heaven."[107] The ivy also appears in a wall painting at Dura Europas. Here the note of triumph sounds loud and clear: The Ark of the Covenant, associated with victory in the Hebrew tradition, is "wrapped in garlands of triumphant ivy."[108]

Ubiquitous though ivy came to be from its uninterrupted appearance and constant use throughout the centuries, it appears largely in medicinal form in the Middle Ages; for example, Nicolaus Leonicenus (c. 1491) conducted research on the ivy which led him to charge Pliny with error.[109]

The Renaissance herbalists describe the various types of ivy, although Parkinson in the Paradisi mentions only the Virginia type for its rarity. Gerard, citing Theophrastus as a source, describes the "Clymbing or berried Ivie (Hedera corymbosa)" as a plant with woody stalks, smooth shining leaves, small mossy flowers, and bundles of black berries. As for the time of bearing, "Ivie flourisheth in Autumne: the berries are ripe after the Winter Solstice."[110]

Parkinson, like the great Greek and Latin predecessors whom he cites (Dioscorides, Theophrastus, Pliny), describes many varieties of ivy and includes everything from the "Ordinary Climing Ivie" to the "Trefoile Ivie of Virginia." The "Ordinary Climing Ivie" is a plant which

> groweth up with a thick wooddy trunke or body, sometimes as big as ones arme, shooting forth on all sides many wooddy branches, and groweth sometimes alone by it selfe into a pretty bush or tree. . . . the young leaves that spring forth from the branches . . . are of a darke shining greene colour above . . . abiding fresh and greene Winter and Summer: from the joynts of the stalkes and toppes of the branches, grow forth upon short stalkes small mossie yellow flowers, standing in an umbell or close round tuft; after which come small round berries, greene untill they grow ripe, and then turning blacke. . . . Our Ivie flowreth not untill Iuly, and the berries are not ripe usually untill about Christmas, that they have felt the winter frosts. . . .[111]

V

The adverbial phrase "Yet once more" in the opening lines of Lycidas is pivotal. Intoned like three opening notes of a funeral dirge to summon the weeping poet to bewail the death of a young friend, these words pose a problem of interpretation. If the conventional reading is accepted--that these words apply both to King's poetic achievement and to Milton's immaturity as a poet with an allusion to his early immature effort, Comus[112]--the following matters will have to be considered:

1. If laurel alone is seen as a botanic metaphor for Milton's poetic ineptitude (as Brooks and Hardy would have it), the two additional plants (myrtle and ivy) will have to be accounted for. All three can, of course, be placed in the Petrarchan context of poetic laureation, as Trapp has shown. The assumption will then have to be made that Milton knew of this Petrarchan use and that he chose to place himself in the Petrarchan line.

2. If Milton uses the botanic metaphor to suggest poetic laureation, the opening lines serving only as an introduction, the strength of the epicedial context is considerably weakened.

3. If Lycidas is recognized not as a solo effort but as a contribution to a volume of eulogistic verse, the question will have to be asked, Was Milton less ripe than his fellow contributors? The further question will have to be asked, Would it have been likely for Milton to call attention to himself and to his own Comus in a volume designed as a funerary tribute?

4. If Comus is the previous immature effort alluded to, he was either admitting Comus to be "harsh and crude" or he was assuming modesty for a successful masque. It must be remembered, moreover, that in the anonymous edition of 1637, Lawes describes Comus as "lovely, and so much desired." As for the appearance on the title page of this anonymous edition of lines from Virgil's Second Eclogue, "Eheu quid volui misero mihi! floribus austrum / Perditus," the motto is surrounded by too many ambiguities to be of value in this discussion. It has not been ascertained whether Lawes or Milton selected it, nor have its meaning and relevance been established.

5. If the botanic metaphor has a dual function, it will have to imply opposite meanings simultaneously. At one and the same time Milton is weaving a poetic garland to praise Edward King's poetry and to denounce his own poetic efforts.

6. If the metaphor applies only to King's poetic achievement, the funereal diction used by Milton--"Bitter constraint, and sad occasion dear . . . Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime"--would have struck a lugubrious note at a poetic coronation.[113] Milton comes to bury Lycidas, as he had buried Infant and Marchioness, not to praise his poetry. Milton cannot leave his friend "unwept . . .

Without the meed of som melodious tear." Moreover, if Milton knew about Petrarch's coronation with ivy, bay and myrtle,[114] he would also have known that Edward King's poetry paled in the light of Petrarch's. As David Masson observes, King left only "a few scraps of Latin verse, scattered through those volumes of encomiastic poetry which the University had published during his connexion with it."[115] Nor do the poems which appeared along with Lycidas in the collection Obsequies to the memorie of Mr. Edward King, Anno Dom. 1638 give any hints that Edward King was a candidate for poetic laureation, alive or dead. In fact, one of the contributors, William More, objected even to the panegyric on King's scholarship:

> My grief is great but sober, thought upon
> Long since, and reason now, not passion.
> Nor do I like their piety who, to sound
> His depth of learning, where they feel no ground,
> Strain till they lose their own.[116]

Undoubtedly, Milton knew the tradition of poetic laureation and shared with Ben Jonson the view that only the "best of Poets, dost . . . Laurell weare!"[117] He would have found it just a little indecorous to crown such minor efforts. When William Webbe deemed "divinest Spenser" worthy to "wear the garland and step before the best of all English poets that I have seen or heard,"[118] he was espressing a commonly held opinion. Sir John Suckling explored poetic coronation in "A Sessions of the Poets" and made clear, through satire, that only the best poet deserves poetic laureation:

> The laurel that had been so long reserved,
> Was now to be given to him best deserved.[119]

And Suckling's Sonnet III, with no covert reference to poetic coronation, mentions the funerary garland in the context of Elysium:

> Some bays, perchance, or myrtle bough,
> For difference crowns the brow

Of those kind souls that were
The noble martyrs here. . . .[120]

Moreover, poetic coronation was a civic affair, the solemnity of which was enhanced by the taking of an oath, and, in some places, accompanied by the giving of a ring.[121] To award Edward King a poetic crown was not within Milton's power nor within King's right. To give King proper obsequies and a decent burial was another matter. Emphasis in the poem, therefore, does not fall on King's poetic capacity, though there are references to "rural ditties" and to Orpheus. The causal relationship established is this: that since King had built the "lofty rhyme" he deserved to be "sung." Edward King addressed his "lofty rhyme" to royalty: he celebrated in Latin verses such occasions as the birth of princesses, the King's recovery from smallpox and his safe return from Scotland.

The poetic garland which functioned only as an honor could hardly have borne the massive weight of this poem; the funerary garland, however, could sustain the weight of the tradition. As a suitable tribute for the dead, it had functioned for centuries, bringing comfort to the giver and alleviation for the harshness of death. More than this, it had often symbolized a victory over life's struggles; and its profound eschatological use (the great hope of heaven, the victory of the "laurelled" Christ over death, and the higher calling) is brought into play in the closing lines of Lycidas.

If, therefore, Milton is calling on the laurels, myrtles, and ivy to function in their ancient and traditional capacity as plants used for funerary garlands, the poet is saying in his apostrophe to the three plants, "Alas, we must bury a young man, and you plants

will have to be used for still another sad funeral." "Yet once more," attached to the verb *come*, refers, then, not to *Comus* but far more appropriately to two previous deaths, both young, sad, and untimely, for which Milton has had to weave a metaphoric funerary garland: for the Fair Infant Dying of a Cough and for the Marchioness of Winchester. The bays (laurels) for the Marchioness function eschatologically, leading straight to "bright saint" now sitting high in glory (61), as laurels, myrtles, and ivy lead to Lycidas "mounted high . . . In the blest Kingdoms meek of joy and love" (172-177).

If, in addition, one accepts the hint by Wilkinson that Vergil's *Eclogue* 5 is the "ideal prototype for epicedia in the Christian era . . . As Milton's *Lycidas*,"[122] then the problems that poetic coronation raises can be dispensed with and the epicedial unity, which has the added advantage of aesthetic coherence, is maintained.

Milton's choice of laurel, myrtle, and ivy contains two strands of the herbal tradition: the historico-mythological and the botanic. The laurel of bucolic poetry is never more fit than in Milton's "Dorick lay," with its roots in the sorrow of the Theocritan idylls; for both Milton and the Theocritan shepherds, grief for the death of a friend is a dominant motif. But the laurel of victory, salvation, and rescue is also applicable. In addition, the herbalist Parkinson's description of the laurel as an evergreen plant "to sticke and deck forth the bodies of the dead" shows the continuing appropriateness of the laurel to Milton's day, with Milton's metaphor springing from its actual use.

The myrtle carries with it a haunting recollection of

Agamemnon's grave and of innumerable sarcophagi, both Christian and pagan. The brown color of the myrtle in Lycidas, so frequently interpreted as a Horatian allusion,[123] comes not so much from Horace as from Milton's observations of the brown bark of the myrtle tree and the herbalists' references to its brown color. The English myrtle, according to Gerard, is covered with a brown bark (laurel bark is green), and, according to Parkinson, with a dark colored bark. What had seemed a confusing blend of "brown" with "never sere" is no longer baffling: English myrtle has brown bark and is evergreen.

The ivy and dolphins of the Bacchus myth, assimilated through the Greco-Roman, Jewish, and Christian traditions, may also throw light on the dolphins of Lycidas. Milton's puzzling dolphins, surrounded now by glossarial references to Arion, to Palaemon, to Apollo,[124] may well function eschatologically (as they did for centuries), wafting the "haples youth" to the "blest Kingdoms." Milton's ivy and dolphins achieve fuller meaning when placed in the fertile tradition by which they are nourished. Milton's choice of the ivy is again botanically and historically sound. The "Ordinary Climing Ivie," growing everywhere in England, with the smooth, shining leaves and supple, clinging tendrils, is particularly useful in a funerary garland: it binds and intertwines the laurel and the myrtle in the garland, and it brings with it the hope and promise of a life after death.

Further elucidation of the funerary aspects of the poem can be achieved through a brief examination of Renaissance burial practices. For those critics who struggle with the problem of

whether Lycidas is about Edward King or about Milton,[125] the answer is that it is about both because, as anyone contemporaneous with Milton would have quickly asserted, each man's death knell is every man's death knell. If the presence of Milton's "destined urn" gives the poem an introverted feeling with a hidden fear of Milton's own premature death,[126] John Weever, the English commentator on both ancient and contemporary burials, observes that all tombs and monuments "put vs in minde of our mortalitie, and consequently bring vs to vnfained repentance."[127] Weever's comments may also help to reveal burial procedures for one whose body is lost at sea:

> A Cenotaph is an emptie Funerall Monument or Tombe, erected for the honour of the dead, wherein neither the corps, nor reliques of any defunct, are deposited, in imitation of which our Hearses here in England are set vp in Churches, during the continuance of a yeare, or for the space of certaine moneths. . . . The second kinde of Cenotaphs were made Religionis causa, to the memory of such whose carcases, or dispersed reliques, were in no wise to be found, for example, of such as perished by shipwracke. . . . To these inania busta, or vacua Sepulchra, the friends of the defunct would yearely repaire. . . .[128]

Weever gives a long list of examples of empty tombs in the ancient world, and an elaborate and detailed description of monuments in various dioceses in England such as Canterbury, London, Norwich.

When Milton says

> I com to pluck your Berries harsh and crude,
> And with forc'd fingers rude,
> Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year

he is choosing the most poignant of metaphors. Twice before he has had to use the plant metaphor for untimely death. For the Infant he chooses "O fairest flower no sooner blown but blasted" (1); for the Marchioness he chooses the "tender slip" (35) and for her child a "fair blossom" (41).[129] For Edward King he chooses unripe laurel,

myrtle, and ivy. The occasion is truly a sad one: a young Cambridge scholar of erudition and promise has been cut off before he can reach his prime. His young friend Milton has been asked to mourn his death by contributing to a memorial volume. One feels instinctively the adequacy of the unripe funerary garland plants chosen by a young man come to mourn another young man, as one feels equally the inappropriateness of full-blown chrysanthemums at a child's funeral. In the funeral setting, Milton's selection of mortuary plants that are no more ripe for plucking than King is for dying is very affecting. What the plucking of the berries of laurel, myrtle, and ivy is to November in Milton's England, so the death of Edward King is to life: untimely and unripe. Milton's "forc'd fingers rude" lack the deftness that comes with practice. It is the old who are accustomed to weaving funerary garlands for the old; and, although the young are occasionally called upon to weave a funerary garland for one of their peers, there is always something inexperienced, unnatural, and clumsy about the young burying the young. The young poet, giver and weaver, is no more ready to construct a funerary garland than King is to receive one.

What Milton knew about the berries of funerary plants he had learned from a long tradition. Theophrastus, Vergil, and Pliny had told him that the best laurels for wreaths are those with large reddish-green berries or those with red berries, and that the best time to gather them is winter. Gerard and Parkinson had told him that the laurel berries are black in England and that the fruit cannot be gathered until winter or spring. And how could Milton have failed to notice the seasons for laurel berries, especially since

Parkinson had stated that the laurel tree grew in every man's yard or orchard? Of course laurel berries are harsh and crude in November in England. Ripeness is all for both laurel and "laureate"; its absence, in the premature plucking, is to be regretted.

Theophrastus, Vergil, and Pliny had told Milton about the exquisite foliage of the myrtle and about its exotic fragrance. Gerard and Parkinson had told him that myrtle berries are black. If Milton had seen a garden like Parkinson's, which had three kinds of myrtle growing in it, or if he had read Parkinson's Paradisi, he would have known that the harsh English climate prevented the berries from ripening. The myrtle berries which Milton used for Lycidas's garland would have been very crude, if they had been formed at all.

As for the ivy, from Theophrastus, Vergil, and Pliny, he would have learned of its tenacity, of its pliability, and of the color of its fruit. From Gerard he would have known that the berries are ripe in the winter solstice and from Parkinson that they are ripe about Christmas. In the case of all three of the plants which were chosen for this funerary garland, it is Milton's knowledge of the ceremonial aspects of the herbal tradition that makes his activity (plucking the berries and disturbing their "season due") and the metaphor so apt.

When Milton goes on to say "Shatter your leaves," he is reinforcing figural unity by using familiar agricultural terminology. "Shatter" does not mean "do damage ruinously or to damage or destroy by fracture of the parts." It means, rather, "to cause (seed, leaves, etc.) to fall or be shed."[130] The term shatter is a part of the

standard vocabulary of husbandry: Googe uses it in his translation of Heresbach, "Least the whot weather shatter the seedes."[131] Milton had enough elementary botanic-agricultural experience (or had read enough) to know what happens to leaves that are too young and "unformed" to be plucked. Remaining true to the herbal vocabulary of his day, he selects the word shatter to describe the process of plucking immature leaves.[132] Miss Tuve, although she considers the crown a poetic one, argues convincingly that "everything in the image is disrupted, plucked before it can ripen."[133] As early plucking causes leaves, seeds, blossoms to shatter before maturity, so King's early death shatters the promise of life before maturity. What arises, therefore, from these lines is the image of a premature death and burial, of a premature garland-weaver, and of a set of three immature funerary plants. All these belong at the funeral of one too young to die.

The fingers may be rude, the berries unripe, the leaves unready; but Milton, the poet, has so skillfully used the herbal tradition that what lingers in the memory of the reader is the image of an unripe funerary garland and an untimely death. But the metaphor is not all sadness; the strains of the dirge are replaced by the resonances of the solemn and victorious song: "Yet once more" is counterpointed by "Weep no more." Milton's ceremonial use of the herbal tradition in the funerary garland for Lycidas has prepared the way for the

> . . . sweet Societies
> That sing, and singing in their glory move,
> And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes. (179-181)

CHAPTER IV

MILTON'S PARADISE AND ENGLISH GARDENS

HORTICULTURAL ASPECTS OF THE HERBAL TRADITION

If all the books and articles on all the Paradises ever written about were gathered together, I suppose that Milton's Garden of Eden could not contain them.[1] Even the commentary on Milton's Garden alone would be more than one Paradise could hold.[2] That Milton's Garden was supposed to excel all other gardens is obvious from Milton's text: his Paradise is better than Enna's "faire field," Daphne's "sweet Grove," the Nyseian Ile, and Mount Amara (IV. 267-285); than the gardens of Adonis, Alcinous, and Solomon (IX. 439-443). Adam and Eve's Bower of Bliss is to be preferred to that of Pan, Silvanus, and Faunus (IV. 707-708) and the fruit of their Garden to that of India East or West, Pontus's middle shore, the Punic Coast, and Alcinous's garden (V. 339-341). If, as Giamatti observes, "Milton's ostensible task was to make the earthly paradise in Book IV perfect and delightful, and out of allusions to and reminiscences of almost every Biblical, classical, modern, and 'real' garden he could find, he composed his own complete, integrated vision,"[3] then it seems strange that the abundant commentary only rarely, if at all, deals with the "real" garden.[4] By the "real" garden I mean the English gardens of Milton's day, with which he would have been familiar either from observation or from reading about them in the garden manuals and herbals available to him in England.

At first glance, Milton's Garden appears to be one massive Paradisal cliché, but a second look uncovers "native" English materials in the furnishings, in the gardening tools, in the semi-technical horticultural terminology, in the rural practices associated with husbandry. The question, therefore, that I should like to consider is this: If Milton's Garden did not owe everything to its Paradisal antecedents, what parts of that Garden have their roots in English soil and in English horticulture?

One need not travel so far in Milton's world as Broadbent suggests[5]--to the Pison or the Ganges, to the Persian Gulf of "Golden Sand," or to Morocco or the Bermudas--to find contemporary analogues, sources, and influences for Milton's Garden. England itself contained Paradisal gardens. The added subtlety is this: that the Englishman's garden was partly modelled on the Idea of the Genesis Paradise, and Milton's Genesis Paradise was partly drawn from the English gardens. Although the description in Genesis is admittedly vague, the dream of a Paradise garden like Eden runs strong in English garden literature and is still regarded as an ideal today.[6] John Parkinson's Paradisi in Sole Paradisus Terrestris, both in title and purpose, is an excellent illustration of the Paradisal impulse in gardening: "A Garden of all sorts of pleasant flowers which our English ayre will permitt to be noursed up: A Kitchen garden of all manner of herbes, posies, & fruites, for meate or sause used with us, and An Orchard of all sorte of fruit bearing Trees and shrubbes fit for our Land together With the right orderinge planting & preseruing of them and their uses & vertues." On his title page Parkinson pictures not an English rural couple

but Adam and Eve at work in the Garden; Adam is gathering fruit from a tree while Eve is propping up a drooping flower. Though the book was designed as a practical gardening manual, not an illustrated commentary on the opening chapters of Genesis, Parkinson cannot begin his book without acknowledging the Source of all successful gardening:

> . . . And that Adam might exercise this knowledge, God planted a Garden for him to liue in, (wherein euen in his innocency he was to labour and spend his time) which hee stored with the best and choysest Herbes and Fruits the earth could produce, that he might have not onely for necessities whereon to feede, but for pleasure also. . . . But my purpose is onely to shew you, that Paradise was a place (whether you will call it a Garden, or Orchard, or both, no doubt of some large extent) wherein Adam was first placed to abide; that God was the Planter therof, hauing furnished it with trees and herbes, as well pleasant to the sight as good for meate, and that hee being to dresse and keep this place, must of necessity know all the things that grew therein, and to what uses they serued, or else his labour about them, and knowledge in them, had been in vaine. . . . Let men therefore . . . remember their seruice to God, and not (like our Grandmother Eve) set their affections so strongly on the pleasure in them, as to deserue the losse of them in this Paradise, yea and of Heauen also.[7]

John Gerard describes the English gardens (his own herbal garden was famous) as though each little plot is a Herperian Paradise:

> . . . what greater delight is there than to behold the earth apparelled with plants, as with a robe of embroidered worke, set with Orient pearles and garnished with great diuersitie of rare and costly jewels? If this varietie and perfection of colours may affect the eie, it is such in herbs and floures, that no Apelles, no Zeuxis euer could by any art expresse the like. . . setting forth to vs the inuisible wisdome and admirable workmanship of Almighty God.[8]

Milton, like Parkinson and Gerard, refers to God as the "sovran Planter" (IV. 691; IV. 209-210), and all three draw from Genesis 2:8 as the authoritative statement on the subject. It must also be noted that, while Milton's description of Paradise has

much hyperbole in it, often stressing that which rises above the imaginable and that which is unattainable on this stained earth, it is precisely this same hyperbolic diction that Parkinson and Gerard use in describing the actual English gardens of their day. Gerard revels in words like "apparelled with plants," "robe of embroidered worke," "Orient pearles," and "garnished with rare and costly jewels." And it is Milton who sounds like an echo with "broiderd the the ground," (IV. 702) "stone / Of costliest Emblem" (IV. 702-703), "wrought / Mosaic" (IV. 699-700), and "Orient Pearle" (V. 2).

Of course the exotic gardens of the East are thick with fragrances exuded by trees, shrubs, and flowers. Solomon's garden of the Canticles boasts mountains of myrrh and hills of frankincense (4:6). No less fragrant are the Christian Latin Paradises.[9] Milton's Garden shares in this love of fragrances: the trees drop myrrh (V. 23) and "rich Trees wept odorous Gumms and Balme (IV. 248); his Eve is "Veild in a Cloud of Fragrance" (IX. 425). Though the concern for fragrance has its Eastern and Christian antecedents, it is also a part of the English garden scene. Eleanour Rohde observes: ". . . the gardens of our Elizabethan ancestors were indeed scented gardens. It is perhaps not too much to say that in no other period of our history were the scents of flowers so keenly appreciated."[10] Parkinson's Paradisi is like an alabaster box of fragrance: he describes the Damaske Rose as ". . . of the most excellent sweet pleasant sent, far surpassing all other Roses or Flowers. . . ."[11] And Gerard says, ". . . if odours or if taste may worke satisfaction, they are both so soueraigne in plants, and so comfortable that no confection of the Apothecaries can equal their excellent vertue."[12]

So scientific a man as Francis Bacon cannot extol scents enough in his essay "Of Gardens": "God Almighty first planted a garden and indeed, it is the purest of human pleasures. . . . And because the breath of flowers is far sweeter in the air (where it comes and goes, like the warbling of music) than in the hand, therefore nothing is more fit for that delight, than to know what be the flowers and plants that do best perfume the air."[13] He follows this with a catalogue of fragrances. What may strike today's reader of Milton as "Eastern exotic" would probably have struck his contemporary readers as "English normal." For the Englishman did not think it presumptuous to choose as the title of his gardening manual The Garden of Eden. or An accurate Description of all Flowers and Fruits now growing in England. . . .[14]

The desire to have a garden still persists in England to our day, but in Milton's day it was almost universal. The Englishman, whether rich or poor, whether a rural Gervase Markham or a sophisticated William Temple, whether owner of a plat or a park, considered his own little piece of Paradise as his most personal possession.[15] Milton, too (although he devoted no prose treatise to gardening and probably did little work with a spade), delighted in gardens and was familiar with gardening techniques. In A Second Defence he alludes to the subject of gardening, to parterres, to grafting, to "a most delectable walk."[16] And in Animadversions he describes in detail horticultural practices:

> A certaine man of large possessions, had a faire Garden. . . . now, when the time was come that he should cut his hedges, prune his trees, looke to his tender slips, and pluck up the weeds that hinder'd their growth, he gets him up by breake of day, and makes account to doe what was needfull in his garden. . . . Yet for all this there comes another strange

> Gardener that never knew the soyle, never handl'd Dibble or Spade to set the least pot-herbe that grew there, much lesse had endur'd an houres sweat or chilnesse, and yet challenges as his right the binding or unbinding of every flower, the clipping of every bush, the weeding and worming of every bed. . . .[17]

According to Aubrey, "After dinner he used to walk three or four hours at a time. He always had a garden where he lived."[18] David Masson's description of the Horton of Milton's early "reading" period sounds like a chapter out of a gardening manual:

> It is a rich, teeming, verdurous flat, charming by its appearance of plenty, and by the goodly show of wood along the fields and pastures, in the nooks where the houses nestle, and everywhere in all directions to the sky-bound verge of the landscape. . . . There are rivulets brimming through the meadows among rushes and water-plants; and, by the very sides of the ways, in lieu of ditches, there are slow runnels. . . . One could lie under elm-trees on a lawn, or saunter in meadows by the side of a stream, or watch a mill-wheel from a rustic bridge, or walk along quiet roads well hedged, or deviate into paths leading by farm-yards and orchards, and through pastures for horses, cows and sheep. . . . Now was the time for the youth to take in those "images of rural nature," in so far as such were still wanting, which poets are supposed pre-eminently to require. . . . Now . . . he listens to the rural hum, and marks the branches as they wave and the birds as they fly; now, in the garden, he notes the annual series of the plants and the daily blooming of the roses. . . .[19]

His house at Aldersgate Street was situated in a garden;[20] his house in Westminster had a garden which opened into St. James's Park;[21] and his final house in the Artillery Walk leading to Bunhill Fields in the parish of St. Giles, Cripplegate, had a "considerable garden in the rear,"[22] where Milton was often seen by the villagers. Milton's description of the "happy rural seat" (IV. 247) of Paradise with its "Hill and Dale and Plaine" (IV. 243) springs from his own rural experience. There can be no doubt that England is in Paradise. Broadbent finds in the "happy rural seat" so much of England that he considers it "almost laughably the England of Penshurst, Cooper's

Hill and Appleton House."[23] While it would be naive to hunt for the exact counterpart of Milton's Paradise in Horton or Chalfont, St. Giles, or anywhere in England, it would be just as naive to ignore the "native" English elements in his Paradise.

Milton's Paradise also has something of the more lavish English gardens in it. Certain aspects of William Temple's Moor Park resemble Paradise and certain aspects of Milton's Paradise resemble Moor Park. The very knowledgeable Sir William, who had spent the greater part of his life abroad on diplomatic missions and who had in the course of his travels seen impressive state gardens, found no place on earth to equal the beauty of Moor Park:

> Because I take the garden I have named to have been in all kinds the most beautiful and perfect, at least in the figure and disposition, that I have ever seen, I will describe it for a model to those that meet with such a situation, and are above the regards of common expense. It lies on the side of a hill . . . but not very steep. . . . the border [of the walk] set with standard laurels, and at large distances, which have the beauty of orange trees, out of flower and fruit. . . . The cloister facing the south is covered with vines, and would have been proper for an orange-house, and the other for myrtles, or other more common greens. . . . the lower garden . . . is all fruit trees ranged about the several quarters of a wilderness which is very shady; the walks here are all green, the grotto embellished with figures of shell-rock-work, fountains, and water works. . . . [There is] a garden on the other side of the house, which is all of that sort, very wild, shady, and adorned with rough rock-work and fountains.
>
> This was Moor Park when I was acquainted with it, and the sweetest place, I think, that I have seen in my life, either before or since, at home or abroad. . . .[24]

To point out the "English" in Milton's Paradise is not to deny the presence of the traditional "inszenierende Staffage" in Milton's Garden, of course. As Curtius observes in <u>European Literature and the Middle Ages</u>, an idyllic garden has standard furnishings:

> The most elaborate variant is afforded by the Gardens of Alcinous (Od., VII, 112). Here there are fruits of the most various kinds: pomegranates, apples, figs, pears, olives, grapes. The trees bear all through the year, for it is always spring and the west wind always blows--the island of the Phaecians [sic] is indeed a land of faery. Two springs water the garden. Another fabulous place of heart's desire is the grotto of Calypso (Od., V, 63). It is surrounded by a forest of alders, aspens, and cypresses. Four springs water the meadows, in which violets and parsley grow. The entrance to the grotto is overhung by a luxuriant grapevine. . . . From Homer's landscapes later generations took certain motifs which became permanent elements in a long chain of tradition: the place of heart's desire, beautiful with perpetual spring . . . the lovely miniature landscape which combines tree, spring, and grass; the wood with various species of trees; the carpet of flowers. . . .[25]

That Milton's Paradise owes much to Homer and to Ovid, and to a host of other writers such as Stephanus and Conti,[26] is apparent. His Paradise "assimilates and refines upon the whole European tradition of paradises, gardens, pleasances, fortunate isles, and lands of the blessed as subjects for conventional description."[27] But the presence of the distinctly English ingredients cannot be ignored. The construction of his Paradise is not so different from that of contemporary English gardens. It is perhaps Milton's willingness to incorporate in his "delicious Paradise" (IV. 132) some of the features of the actual gardens of his day that makes him able to bridge the gap between the mythical and the real, between the fictional and the historical, even between Art and Nature. Just as his Adam and Eve are not fictional characters but are "real" people requiring medication for ocular disturbances, just so his Adam and Eve must have a recognizably "real" garden.

Since Adam and Eve are both particular and universal, the universal nature of their Garden cannot be brushed aside. As Lawrence Babb points out in The Moral Cosmos of Paradise Lost,

"Milton represents Paradise with vivid but general imagery. . . . The poet has assembled generic images of sight, sound, and odor which collectively call up a vision of natural luxuriance and profusion, beautiful beyond anything which we can ever hope to see but which could have been when the world was young."[28] Those generic images, which evoke the beauties of an unspoiled world, are so vivid because they are not apophatic. Milton's universal garden, not the negation of all particular gardens, is the affirmation of the "good" in all of them. If the image of a completely universal garden were not permeated by particular gardens, it would be inconceivable and unimaginable. Milton's memory of particular gardens, including English "Paradises" of his day, contributes to the vitality and the cataphatic quality of his Paradise. Support for this view can be established by a comparison of the following eight horticultural features of Milton's Garden with contemporary English garden materials.

1. Location. High; enclosed; with a view of the "neather Empire neighbouring round." (IV. 133-145)

Milton's Mount, which C. S. Lewis calls the "upward progression," the "vertical serialism"[29] of Milton's Paradise, has not only mythology in it but contemporary geography. E. M. Clark observes: ". . . it is securely planted upon the summit of a 'rural mount,' corresponding to any Abyssinian amba, which geographers describe as a conical and almost inaccessible sandstone rock or mount rising anywhere from one hundred to three thousand feet above the surrounding plain."[30] But the Mount was also an essential feature of an English garden. A Mount provided a view. William Temple considers a view so vital to a garden that it "makes amends for the

expense, which is very great."[31] Bacon, too, wants a Mount in the middle "with three ascents and alleys enough for four to walk abreast . . . and the whole mount to be thirty feet high. . . ."[32] And William Lawson's A New Orchard and Garden gives explicit instructions for the construction of four corner mounts.[33] But John Evelyn's description of the view at Cliveden surpasses them all: "I went to Clifden that stupendious natural Rock, Wood, & Prospect of the Duke of Buckinghams . . . the place alltogether answers the most poetical description that can be made of a solitude, precipice, prospects & whatever can contribute to a thing so very like their imaginations . . . on the platforme is a circular View to the uttmost verge of the Horison, which with the serpenting of the Thames is admirably surprising. . . ."[34] Late in the epic it is the Mount of Paradise that Adam and Michael ascend, "from whose top / The Hemisphere of Earth in cleerest Ken / Stretcht out to amplest reach of prospect lay" (XI. 378-380).

The notion of enclosing a garden did not originate in the Renaissance. Springing from the East (particularly from the Garden of the Canticles) and represented in many pictures and expositions of medieval gardens,[35] the enclosing of a garden was an aesthetic but also a practical necessity. Both Milton's Paradise and the English gardens required protection. An Englishman like Thomas Hill would not have had to go to Abyssinia to understand the need for a barrier. In fact, his small garden called for a double enclosure: ". . . enclose the same rounde about . . . for that Gardens being not wel fenced and closed . . . is many ways endamaged, as well by beastes, as by theues, breaking into it."[36] The garden at Wilton, one of the

most elaborate gardens of that time, was enclosed in a new wall "a Thousand foote long and about Foure hundred in breadth. . . ."[37]

As might be expected, Milton chooses natural barriers for his Paradise: a thicket (IV. 136) of undergrowth of shrubs and bushes (IV. 175-176); high trees (IV. 139); a stand of fruit trees inside the barrier for a double enclosure (IV. 147). John Evelyn, Milton's much-travelled contemporary, takes intense delight in a proper barrier: "Is there under Heaven a more glorious and refreshing object of the kind, than an impregnable Hedge of one hundred and sixty foot in length, seven foot high, and five in diameter, which I can shew in my poor Gardens at any time of the year, glitt'ring with its arm'd and vernish'ed leaves? the taller Standards at the rudest assaults of the Weather, Beasts, or Hedge-breakers, Et illum nemo impunè lacessit."[38] Thomas Hill also urges a hedge: "But the most profitable hedge of al . . . and leaste of coste, is that which is made with Bryers, & thornes, mixed or set together." After citing Democritus, Columella, and Palladius as illustrious supporters of the thorny barrier, Hill concludes: ". . . an uniuersall waye, and the surest maner, to enclose all Gardens."[39]

Ralph Austen chooses tall trees for sheltering fruit trees, as Milton does for Paradise. Praising walnut trees specifically for their "exceeding great height, and bigness," Austen insists that the use of trees "that naturally grow great and high" will be very profitable for the protection of fruit trees.[40]

2. Pure Air. Air so pure that it is a source of "Vernal delight and joy, able to drive / All sadness but despair" (IV. 153-156).

Of course a proper Paradise must have pure air. The seventeenth century, perhaps as much as the twentieth, understood what smoke and sulphur, what stink and darkness meant. Milton refers to the city as a place "Where Houses thick and Sewers annoy the Aire" (IX. 446); and John Evelyn describes Londoners as "pursu'd and haunted by that infernal smoake." "Sir," he says in the epistolary introduction to his Fumifugium:

> I prepare in this short Discourse, an expedient how this pernicious Nuisance may be reformed; and offer at another also, by which the Aer may not only be freed . . . but render not only Your Majesties Palace, but the whole City likewise, one of the sweetest, and most delicious Habitations in the World; and this, with little or no expence; but by improving those Plantations which Your Majesty so laudably affects, in the moyst, depressed and Marshy Grounds about the Town, to the Culture and production of such things, as upon every gentle emission through the Aer, should so perfume the adjacent places with their breath; as if, by a certain charm, or innocent Magick, they were transferred to that part of Arabia, which is therefore styl'd the Happy, because it is amongst the Gums and precious spices. Those who take the notice of the Sent of the Orange-flowers from the Rivage of Genoa . . . the Blossomes of the Rosemary . . . or the manifest and odoriferous wafts which flow from Fontenay and Vaugirard. . . . And, I am able to enumerate a Catalogue of native Plants . . . whose redolent and agreeable emissions would even ravish our senses, as well as perfectly improve and meliorate the Aer about London. . . .[41]

While Evelyn claims to be reporting scientific facts and not to be hyperbolizing over some remote Paradise, it is remarkable that Milton's diction in this passage coincides at various points with Evelyn's:

> . . . now gentle gales
> Fanning thir odoriferous wings dispense
> Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole
> Those balmie spoiles. As when to them who saile
> Beyond the Cape of Hope, and now are past
> Mozambic, off at Sea North-East windes blow
> Sabean Odours from the spicie shoare
> Of Arabie the blest, with such delay
> Well pleas'd they slack thir course, and many a League
> Cheard with the grateful smell old Ocean smiles.
> (IV. 156-165)

It is precisely in the context of pure air that Milton alludes to "Arabie the blest," "odoriferous wings," "Native perfumes," and "balmie spoiles." Whether Milton's diction is due to the influence of Diodorus Siculus or of Evelyn is difficult to determine, though the date of Evelyn's work makes it a doubtful influence. If verbal similarity is the test, then it is Evelyn (or perhaps some source, for Evelyn was a great borrower) who influenced Milton. But, more importantly, it is Evelyn describing an attainable state in England.[42]

Air so potent as to be able to dispel sadness is more than a piece of standardized Paradise equipment for Milton and his contemporaries. Basing their arguments on physiology, Renaissance physicians and gardeners were convinced that fruit trees are healthful, physically and psychologically. Ralph Austen is perhaps the most articulate of the writers on the salutary effects of fruit trees:

> But chiefly the Pleasure this sense meets with is from the sweet smelling blossomes of all the fruit-trees, which from the time of their breaking forth, till their fall, breath out a most precious and pleasant odor; perfuming the ayre throughout all the Orchard. . . .
>
> And besides the pleasure of this perfumed ayre, it is also very profitable, and healthfull to the body. Here againe, Profit and pleasure meet and imbrace. An Odores nutriunt, is a question amongst Philosophers: some hold sweet perfumes nourishing, doubtlesse they give a great refreshing to the spirits, and whatsoever delights, and cheers the spirits is without controversie very advantagious to the health of the body; for the spirits are the chiefe workers in the body, from which proceed all, or most of the effects wrought in the body, good or bad, according to the temper of the spirits.
>
> Sweet perfumes work immediatly upon the spirits for their refreshing . . . sweet and healthfull Ayres are speciall preservatives to health, and therefore much to be prised.[43]

It is interesting to note that Parkinson, basing his observations on identical data, emphasizes the converse: that fruit trees cannot

grow in foul air "for many, both fruits, herbes, and flowers . . . participate with the ayre. . . ."[44]

Eve's awareness of the role that fruit trees play in creating pure air makes her lament

> . . . how shall we breath in other Aire
> Less pure, accustomed to immortal Fruits?" (XI. 284-285)

This is no idle, irrational babbling on her part; nor is it elliptical speech. If she could have talked with Bentley, she would have given him a better answer to his question "What do fruits have to do with breathing?" than Pearce and Empson did. All three--Bentley,Pearce, and Empson--have not the slightest awareness of the relationship between fruit trees and breathing pure air. While Bentley would emend, and Pearce would supply "to eat" for what he considers an ellipsis, Empson views these lines as "something like a pun in the way she is enabled at once to sum up her argument and trail away in the weakness of her appeal; it is a delicate piece of brushwork such as seems blurred until you step back."[45] No piece of brushwork this; Milton has simply endowed Eve with a piece of common knowledge of the seventeenth century: "Now, a sweet perfumed, fresh, wholsome Ayre (which is chiefly found in Gardens of fruit-trees) is greatly available to [the Preservative] purpose. . . ."[46]

3. Trees. "All Trees of noblest kind for sight, smell, taste" (IV. 217); "fruit burnisht with Golden Rinde" (IV. 249); "fruit of all kindes, in coate, / Rough, or smooth rin'd, or bearded husk, or shell" (V. 341-342); "earthly fruits" (V. 464); "immortal Fruits" (XI. 285).

Milton's choosing of trees pleasant to the sight is more than a piece of aestheticism and more than an echo of Purchas'

Variant of the Biblical phrase "pleasant to the sight and good for food."[47] Milton and his contemporaries believed in the health-giving properties of things pleasant to the sight. Ralph Austen, citing Bacon as his authority, sums up current arguments for pleasant sights:

> Likewise, the sight is delighted with pleasant and delicate Colours of the Leaves, Blossomes, and Fruits, That shew themselves in great variety, Curious Colours, especially the Colour greene is accounted helpfull to the sight.
>
> Fons, speculum, Gramen, Oculis sunt alleviamen:
>
> Greene grasse, cleare glasse, and fountaines pure
> Refresh Eyesight, long to indure.
>
> Here againe Profit and Pleasure meet.
>
> And as foule and odious objects presented to the sight, cause a dislike in the spirits, that they retire and shun such objects, so contrario verum, the contrary holds in delightfull and pleasant objects of the sight, the spirits thereby are delighted. He saies, Objects of the sight, as comming into a faire Garden . . . doe delight and exhilarate the spirits much.[48]

It is difficult to identify the native English fruit trees in Milton's Paradise, difficult to identify any fruit at all. Since no vegetable life was subject to death in the prelapsarian world, all "earthly" fruits in Paradise were "immortal"; the false fruit was "mortal" only in the sense that it "Brought Death into the World" (I. 3). The four specific fruits mentioned by Milton are grape, berry, apple, and nectarine, though the nectarine may be no specific fruit but a reference to all Paradise fruits which are filled with the traditional nectar. Milton does not use the fruit catalogue of the Gardens of Alcinous, where the most popular fruits grew: pomegranates, apples, figs, pears, olives, grapes. And the best English gardens, able to compete with the finest of Paradise gardens, contained at least some of the following:

> For fruits, the best we have in England, or, I believe, can ever hope for, are, of peaches, the White and Red Maudlin, the Minion, the Chevreuse, the Ramboullet, the Musk, the Admirable. . . . The only good nectarins are the Murry and

> the French. . . .
> Of the grapes, the best are Chasselas, which is the better sort of our white Muscadine . . . about Sheen, it is called the Pearl grape. . . .
> Of figs, there are among us the White, the Blue, and the Tawny. . . .
> Of apricocks, the best are the common old sort, and the largest Masculin. . . .
> The number of good pears, especially summer, is very great, but the best are the Blanquet, Robin, Rousselet, Rosati, Sans, Pepin, Jargonel. . . .
> Of the plums, the best are St. Julian, St. Catharine, White and Blue Pedrigon, Queen Mother, Sheen plum, and Cheston. . . .
> I need say nothing of apples, being so well known among us; but the best of our climate, and I believe of all others, is the Golden Pippin. . . .[49]

In addition Milton describes some fruit as having a golden rind and the fruit of the Tree of Life as "vegetable Gold" (IV. 220). Needless to say, "vegetable Gold" has provoked much commentary; it is indeed a "strange phrase . . . attributing life and growth to a mineral substance."[50] On the other hand, "vegetable Gold" might not have seemed so strange to Milton's contemporaries. There is an account of the banqueting house at Whitehall (built in 1581 to entertain French ambassadors) where "the roof was wrought with ivy and holly, and from it hung wicker rods garnished with flowers, bay, branches of sweet-smelling herbs and 'all manner of strange fruits,' as pomegranates, oranges, pompions, cucumbers, grapes. In true Elizabethan fashion the fruits were spangled with gold."[51] The Englishman, though he might have sensed the Hesperian element in Milton's description, seemed to find the heterogeneous yoking of mineral and vegetable a pleasant sight, for he decorated actual fruit with gold.

4. Flowers. Milton chooses flowers "worthy of Paradise" (IV. 241) and expresses a firm dislike for "Beds and curious

Knots" (IV. 242). Naturally, the flowers grow profusely in Paradise (IV. 243). And although Eve thinks that the flowers of Eden will never grow in another climate (XI. 273-274), most of the flowers of Paradise could be found growing not only in Homer's Greece but also in Milton's England: iris, gessamin, violet, crocus, hyacinth (IV. 698-701), and thornless roses (IV. 256) of "Carnation, Purple, Azure, or spect with Gold" (IX. 429).

Milton's choice of flowers does not include the spectacular, but is limited to the ordinary sun-loving and shade-loving plants (IV. 244-246). The herbals are filled with more flowers than Adam and Eve could have taken care of, and Parkinson's Paradisi includes a description of "the Rose without thornes single and double."[52] For the doubting gardener, Parkinson repeats this description: ". . . without any pricke or thorne at all vpon them. . . ."[53] The colors of Milton's roses--and many additional colors--can also be found in the herbals, even the gold-specked rose of Paradise, which Parkinson describes somewhat more prosaically than Milton does as having "yellow threads in the middle."[54]

Milton's aversion to knots, mazes, and labyrinths in Paradise may be related to the Art-Nature dichotomy. Bacon, too, dislikes "knots, or figures, with divers-coloured earths. . . . You may see as good sights many times in tarts."[55] Milton fills his Paradise with Nature's bounties. Here is Nature in prelapsarian "raw." Perhaps Milton associated mazes and labyrinths with the fantastically intricate, arty gardens of both the ancients and of his contemporaries. Pliny's villa, though comfortable, had more of Art than Nature in it:

> The design and beauty of the buildings are greatly surpassed by the riding-ground. The centre is quite open so that the whole extent of the course can be seen as one enters. It is planted round with ivy-clad plane trees, green with their own leaves above, and below with the ivy which climbs over trunk and branch and links tree to tree as it spreads across them. Box shrubs grow between the plane trees, and outside there is a ring of laurel bushes which add their shade to that of the planes. Here the straight part of the course ends, curves round in a semicircle, and changes its appearance, becoming darker and more densely shaded by the cypress trees planted round to shelter it, whereas the inner circuits--for there are several--are in open sunshine. . . . At the end of the winding alleys of the rounded end of the course you return to the straight path, or rather paths, for there are several separated by intervening box hedges. Between the grass lawns here and there are box shrubs clipped into innumerable shapes, some being letters which spell the gardener's name or his master's; small obelisks of box alternate with fruit trees, and then suddenly in the midst of this ornamental scene is what looks like a piece of rural country planted there. . . . farther off are . . . more box figures and names.
>
> At the upper end of the course is a curved dining-seat of white marble, shaded by a vine trained over four slender pillars of Carystian marble. Water gushes out through pipes from under the seat as if pressed out by the weight of people sitting there, is caught in a stone cistern and then held in a finely-worked marble basin which is regulated by a hidden device so as to remain full without overflowing. The preliminaries and main dishes for dinner are placed on the edge of the basin, while the lighter ones float about in vessels shaped like birds or little boats.[56]

Then there was the Pratoline Garden of the Grand Duke of Florence, which John Evelyn describes in such great detail in his Diary and which Milton had seen:[57]

> The House is a Square of 4 Pavilions, with a faire platform about it, balustr'd with stone, 'tis situate in a large meadow like an amphitheater, ascending, having at the bottom a huge rock, with Water running in a small Chanell like a Cascade, on the other side the Gardens, the whole place seemes Consecrated to pleasure, & retirement in Summer: The Inside of the Palace may well compare with any in Italy for furniture of Tapissry, beds &c: The Gardens delicious & full of fountaines: In the Grove sits Pan feeding his flock, the Water making a melodius sound through his pipe, & an Hercules whose Club yeilds a Showre of Water, which falling into a huge Concha has a Naked Woman riding on the backs of Dolphins: In another Grotto is Vulcan & his family, the walls richly composd of Coralls, Shells, Coper & Marble figures; with the huntings of Severall beasts, moving by the

> force of Water: Here having ben well wash'd for our Curiosity, we went down to large Walk, at the sides whereof gushes out of imperceptible pipes, couched under neath, slender pissings of water, that interchangeably fall into each others Chanells, making a lofty & perfect arch, so as a man on horseback may ride under it and not be wet with one drop, nay so high, as one may walk with a speare in ones hand under each spout, this Canopi or arch of Water, was mi thought one of the surprizings⟨t⟩ magnificences I had ever seene, & exceedingly fresh during the heate of summer, at the End of this very long Walk stands a Woman in white marble in posture of a Laundresse wringing Water out of a piece of linnen very naturaly, into a vast Lavor, the work & invention of the famous Michael Angelo Buonaroti: Hence we ascended Monte Parnasso, where the Muses plaid to us on Hydraulic Organs; neere this a great Aviarie: The Sourse of all these Waters are from the Rock in the Garden, on which the statue of a Gyant representing the Appennines at the foote of which stands this Villa: Last of all we came to the Labyrinth in which a huge Colosse of Jupiter, that throws out a streame over the Garden; This Moles is 50 foote in height, having in his body a pretty Square chamber, his Eyes and mouth serving for the Windos & dore.[58]

It is understandable that Milton did not want a Colossal Jupiter blowing water all over his Garden. Besides, Milton knew that whether it was to be a Pratoline labyrinth or an English cottage knot, each required careful planning and much work, even to the point of following detailed instructions. The illustrations from gardening manuals almost overwhelm the twentieth-century gardener: one can imagine the amount of work required to make the "Cink foyle" or the "Flowre deluce" of The Covntrie Hovsewifes Garden.[59] But the lilies of the field "toil not neither do they spin" (Matt. 6:28); and Adam and Eve were busy enough lopping, pruning, propping, without having to keep a knot in shape. Milton's acute sense of verisimilitude comes into play here: he makes his Garden a manageable one for the inhabitants, even though Eve in typical housewifely fashion complains about having only two hands (IX. 207-212).

Milton's preference for the Natural may spring from his affinity to the Pastoral form but may also be rooted in his own rural experiences. It is true that by the time he came to Chalfont, St. Giles, he was blind, but his memory would have held pictures of the Buckinghamshire meadows, wooded slopes, upland commons, stream-sides, forests, all rich in flora. Gerard's visit to Buckinghamshire had uncovered such unusual flowers as the small canterburie bell,[60] elecampane,[61] the garden angelica;[62] and the later studies of George C. Druce, recorded in The Flora of Buckinghamshire, describe the beautiful, uncultivated flowers of field and stream--columbine, larkspur, yellow water lily, opium poppy, wake robin, and hundreds of others.[63] No poet's eye could have seen these without recording and remembering. Surely one whose "exercise was chiefly walking"[64] would have seen a little of his own Buckinghamshire in the "Flours of all hue" (IV. 256) or Paradise.

5. Furnishings. A raised table of "grassie terf" surrounded by "mossie seats" (V. 391-392).

Though at first glance a grassy turf table and mossy seats may seem like primitive dining equipment, these were not foreign to Milton's England. Carey and Fowler suggest that a grassy turf table and mossy seats were used "because the shaping of wood had not yet begun,"[65] but long after technology had made tables and seats of wood, marble, and other materials possible, William Lawson, a Yorkshire gardener, showed a fondness for turf seats planted with camomile, violet, or daisies. His manual, which describes these seats, was designed especially for gardens in "the North parts of England,"[66] a region where turf and mossy constructions would take

a beating by strong winds and rains. Moreover, whether the medieval gardens actually contained raised turf seats or whether these seats were only the projection of the medieval artists' imagination is not certain, but it is a rare picture of a medieval garden that does not have a mossy seat somewhere.

6. Walks and Alleys.

"yonder Allies green, / Our walks at noon" (IV. 626-627).

"circuit of these walks" (IV. 586).

"echoing Walks between" (IX. 1107).

"[Satan] many a walk travers'd" (IX. 434).

"leave . . . these happie Walks" (XI. 269-270).

Essential to the enjoyment of an English garden was a series of walks: "The fairer and larger your allies and walks be, the more grace your garden shall have. . . ."[67] The smallest cottage garden called for walks. William Lawson's garden plans have specifications for two sets of walks: "H. Walks set with great wood thick. I. Walks set with great wood round about your orchard."[68] Even an English pond garden, designed more for profit than pleasure, makes room for a great many walks.[69] Milton shares his countrymen's delight in walks, assigning many English-type alleys to Paradise. So important are these that Adam makes provision in his work schedule for keeping the walks clear of branches. It is interesting that Milton chooses the civilized "English" way to go about in Paradise. The Englishman, like Adam, finds the walks practical as well as beautiful:

> The commodities of these Alleis and walkes, serue to good purposes, the one is, that the owner may diligently view the prosperitie of his herbes and flowers, the other for the delight and comfort of his wearied mind, which he may

> by himself, or in fellowship of his friendes conceyue, in the delectable sightes, and fragrant smells of the flowers, by walking up and downe, and about the Garden in them, which for the pleasant sightes and refreshing of the dull spirites, with the sharpning of memorie. . . .[70]

Milton's primitive sire is not Fenimore Cooper's hero gliding swiftly through the "spicy forest," leaving no perceptible foot-print upon the flowers. Even Satan takes the paths. And when it comes time for Adam and Eve to leave Paradise, Adam, like any good Englishman, mourns the loss of the "happie Walks."

7. Bower (Arbor).

"thir blissful Bower; it was a place / Chos'n by the sovran Planter" (IV. 690-691).

"thir shadie Lodge" (IV. 720).

"as in the dore he sat / Of his coole Bowre" (V. 299-300).

". . . So to the Silvan Lodge / They came, that like Pomona's Arbour smil'd" (V. 377-378).

A bower, or an arbor, is a shelter in a garden, a shelter from heat or storm. Milton uses the word bower to denote both a completely closed arbor and one partially or fully open at both ends. He refers to "Walks, and Bowers" (VIII. 305), "paths and Bowers" (IX. 244), "Dales and Bowrs" (X. 860); and like any competent horticultural architect he provides a door for the living quarters of the occupants. And although prelapsarian Mesopotamia may not have been as hot as the Middle East is today, Milton stresses the fact that the bower is shady and cool. What is surprising is that his English contemporaries were so much addicted to shady arbors in so cool a climate as England's. "All gardens," says Eleanour Rohde, "seem to have boasted of at least one walk under a 'vaulting or arch

herber,' these herbers being constructed either of trellis work covered with vines, or framed of 'pleached' trees--wychelm, hornbeam, whitethorn or limes. In large gardens these herbers or covered galleries were a prominent feature and were so constructed that different parts of the garden and also outlying buildings could be reached without going into the open."[71] Thomas Hill's little garden had a well on one side and an arbor on the other;[72] and Bacon, who loathed the knot, loved the "covert alley." Bacon even reckons with heat:

> . . . but because the alley will be long, and, in great heat of the year, or day, you ought not to buy the shade in the garden by going in the sun through the green, therefore you are, of either side the green to plant a covert alley, upon carpenters' work, about twelve feet in height, by which you may go in shade into the garden . . . the arches to be upon pillars of carpenters' work, of some ten feet high, and six feet broad, and the spaces between of the same dimensions with the breadth of the arch. Over the arches let there be an entire hedge of some four feet high, framed also upon carpenters' work; and upon the upper hedge, over every arch, a little turret, with a belly enough to receive a cage of birds: and over every space between the arches some other little figure, with broad plates of round coloured glass gilt, for the sun to play upon: but this hedge I intend to be raised upon a bank, not steep, but gently slope, of some six feet, set all with flowers.[73]

Milton's shady arbor is more natural than Bacon's; Milton's has "artless" touches and needs no little turrets or open spaces filled with little figures or glass gilt sun-catchers. Lovely in itself, Milton's shady arbor requires no emblematizing to make it spiritual, as does William Prynne's:

> Gardens are fraught with Arbors, Trees, whose shade Cooles and repels Heate, stormes which would invade, And scorch us sore: Christ hath a shade most sweete Against all scalding Heates, all stormes we meete, Yea from his Fathers burning Wrath and Rage, Which none but he can quench, coole, or asswage: O then in all such scorching Flames still fly To Christs sweete shade, for ease and remedy.[74]

What Milton makes clear to his readers is this: the shady

arbor contains rather simple flowers to be found anywhere in England:[75]

> . . . each beauteous flour,
> Iris all hues, Roses, and Gessamin
> . . . the Violet,
> Crocus, and Hyacinth with rich inlay
> Broiderd the ground, more colour'd then with stone
> Of costliest Emblem. . . . (IV. 697-703)

It is used to entertain angelic visitors as well as for love-making; it has no hint of the luxuriousness of classical love bowers or of Spenser's; and because the shady bower was planted by God Himself, it, like the rest of His creation, was "very good" (Gen. 1:31). When I look at Milton's arbor, I do not see, as Broadbent does, that "in the background is Ezekiel's vision of Adam's kingly splendor . . . sardius, topaz, and the diamond . . . as well as the amorously emblematic jewellry of the Song of Solomon. . . ."[76] Nor do I see the "old enchanted garden themes" as Giamatti does.[77] I see in the background Ralph Austen's fruit trees "bespangled, and gorgeously apparelled with greene Leaves";[78] John Parkinson's Damaske Roses "surpassing all other Roses or Flowers";[79] and John Gerard's plants "setting forth to vs the inuisible wisdome and admirable workmanship of Almighty God."[80]

8. Gardening.

> "after no more toil / Of thir sweet Gardning labour then suffic'd / To recommend coole Zephyr, and made ease / More easie" (IV. 327-330).
>
> "But with such Gardning Tools as Art yet rude, / Guiltless of fire had formd, or Angels brought" (IX. 391-392).

In a real garden, real people need to do real work, regardless of whether their place is called Paradise or England, though in Paradise the work would put no sweat on the brow.[81] Following his

Biblical source (Gen. 2:15), Milton makes his Adam and Eve engage in "sweet Gardning labour."[82] As for actual gardening practices in Milton's England, so sophisticated a gentleman as John Evelyn not only commends but extols gardening, and he himself branched out into cookery.[83] Even royalty engaged in gardening: Charles II was renowned for his planning and gardening of the east front of Hampton Court.[84] The popular writers, in an attempt to raise gardening above the level of "the loose unleter'd Hinds," introduced their garden manuals with a discourse on the dignity of husbandry. M. Conradus Heresbachius, for one, alludes to early illustrious predecessors who worked in gardens: he cites Alcinous and Laertes as men continually occupied with husbandry and concludes with the supreme example, "Christ himselfe glorieth to be sonne of a Husbandman."[85] As a sidelight on the dignity of gardening, it is interesting to note that the "mistaken gardener" of the Resurrection scenes painted by Renaissance artists is none other than the Lord Himself with a gardening tool similar to a modern spade.[86]

Milton's Adam, no less a gardener than Alcinous or Laertes or Charles II, gives Eve a brief lecture on the benefits of husbandry:

> . . . other Creatures all day long
> Rove idle unimploid, and less need rest;
> Man hath his daily work of body or mind
> Appointed, which declares his Dignitie,
> And the regard of Heav'n on all his waies;
> While other Animals unactive range,
> And of thir doings God takes no account.
> To morrow ere fresh Morning streak the East
> With first approach of light, we must be ris'n,
> And at our pleasant labour, to reform
> Yon flourie Arbors, yonder Allies green,
> Our walks at noon, with branches overgrown,
> That mock our scant manuring, and require
> More hands then ours to lop thir wanton growth:
> Those Blossoms also, and those dropping Gumms,

That lie bestrowne unsightly and unsmooth,
Ask riddance, if we mean to tread with ease. (IV. 616-632)

A subject extremely familiar to both men and women of Milton's day, there were books ranging from Fiue Hundreth Points of Good Husbandry[87] to The English Hovse-wife, in which book the woman is described as having "chast thought, stout courage, patient, untyred, watchfull, diligent, witty . . . skilfull in the worthy knowledges which doe belong to her vocation. . . ."[88]

The men of Milton's England had the highest regard for gardening: "The very works of, and in an Orchard and Garden, are better than the ease and rest of and from other labours. For whereas every other pleasure commonly fills some one of our senses, and that onely with delight, this makes all our sences swimme in pleasure, and that with infinite varietie, ioyned with no lesse commoditie."[89]

Since Milton, too, regards gardening as good in itself, an occupation worthy of the occupants of Paradise, he reinforces the actuality of their gardening efforts by having them lop (IV. 629; IX. 210); prune (IV. 438); prop (IX. 210); bind (IX. 210); and do scant manuring (IV. 628).[90] It was not Milton's intention to create a garden that served only as a metaphor for spiritual activity, as for example, Clement of Alexandria did so aptly in The Exhortation to the Greeks. But Clement was writing theology, not epic, and he describes God's husbandman as one "who gives favorable omens, and rouses the people to a work that is good, reminding us of the true livelihood. . . ."[91] Nor, on the other hand, was it Milton's intention to create a dream-like fantasy, a non-existent Paradise complete with soda-water fountain and big rock candy mountain, made blissful

by its perpetual idleness. The lopping, pruning, propping, binding, and manuring of Adam and Eve in Paradise do not detract from the luster of Paradise, but these mundane activities make them and their Garden credible. So specific is Milton, so literal, that he uses the semi-technical terminology of agriculture to describe the condition of the fruit-trees of Paradise:

> . . . where any row
> Of Fruit-trees overwoodie reachd too farr
> Thir pamperd boughes, and needed hands to check
> Fruitless imbraces. . . . (V. 212-215)

Most commentators in glossing overwoodie and pamperd treat the terms etymologically, and hence fail to get the pomological point.[92] The explanation of these terms lies in The Solitary or Carthusian Gard'ner:

> I suppose then a Tree to have Five Sorts of Branches. . . : Wood-Branches, Fruit-Branches, Crumpled-Branches, Branches of False Wood, and Luxuriant-Branches.
>
> 1. The Wood-Branches are those that form the Shape and Roundness of the Tree, and must be Prun'd with Judgment according to the Strength of the Tree, from Four to Twelve Inches long.
> 2. The Fruit-Branches are smaller than the Wood-Branches. . . .
> 3. The Crumpled-Branches are very small Branches, confus'd and intangled together, and that can neither yeild wood nor Fruit. . . .
> 4. The Branches of False Wood are those that grow on the Good Branches. . . .
> 5. The Luxuriant-Branches are those that spring out from the large Wood-Branches. . . .[93]

Since, according to the pomology of the time, wood-branches are the backbone of the tree, providing shape and strength to the tree, they require careful pruning. Unpruned wood-branches--too long, too full, too thick--are "overwoodie" branches. Moreover, since the luxuriant-branches spring directly from the wood-branches, excessive luxuriancy would damage the tree's productivity, robbing the smaller fruit-branches of air, light, and growth. A "pampered" branch

("overfed") is a luxuriant-branch unpruned. Since fruit grows on neither wood-branches nor on luxuriant-branches, pruning is essential in order to accommodate the smaller fruit-branches. Milton's charming pun on fruitless would have been understood by any gardener, who knew what failing to pinch back or to prune meant: "Pinching or snapping with the nails of thumb and forefinger prevents their being damaged by luxuriancy." Heavier branches require a Pruning-Knife.[94]

The "scant manuring" (IV. 628) that Adam speaks of is directly connected with arboriculture; branches that are overgrown require more than scant manuring. Although the term manure (noun) occurs in the husbandry manuals as a synonym for dung or a similar fertilizer,[95] manure also occurs as a verb meaning to cultivate. In addition, there is a specialized meaning, to train or to rear a plant (OED). Clearly it is this latter meaning that clarifies Adam's activities. Adam complains that their training and rearing is all too scant and that the bushes or trees require lopping to curb "thir wanton growth" (IV. 629). Otherwise the walks will be impassable.[96]

Although Adam considers gardening a "delightful task" (IV. 437), he knows that it is a vigorous enough activity to require proper tools. The ancient writers on agriculture, whom Milton considered important enough to assign as reading to his young pupils,[97] did not scorn to describe manuring and propagating.[98] Nor did Ovid scorn to put a pruning-hook in Pomona's hands.[99] The gardening writers of Milton's day, some of whom claimed to stand in the tradition of the ancient gardeners,[100] designed their manuals to help the novice gardener as well as the more experienced one. Gervase Markham's

The English Husbandman gives instructions on soil analysis; a description of the plow and other gardening tools; and illustrations of planting, grafting, and pruning.[101] Even a physician felt called to write The Art of Pruning Fruit-Trees containing a calendar of activities for each month and a description of "The Lop of February," the "Lop of June," and the like.[102] With so much gardening material available to all English gardeners,[103] Milton could hardly have made a garden of fruit trees that did not require pruning and lopping. He does not specify the exact tools available in Paradise, except to say that they were fashioned without fire or that angels had brought them. If an English reader of Paradise Lost had at this point pictured a manual rich in gardening tool illustrations, he might have wondered which type of tool Adam and Eve used.[104] Milton, by means of so simple a device as the use of garden tools, makes his first parents dynamically human. Participating thoroughly in the human experience, Eve, with a homely parting touch after the Fall, expresses regret for the loss of her gardening activity. Like any gardener going on holiday, she asks, "What are the buds going to do without me?" (XI. 277-279). Transforming rural activities into an activity fit for Paradise, Milton at the same time tinges Paradise with a bit of rural England.

Milton's Paradise is not "a mere fiction of what never was." His two creatures, "wedded to this goodly universe" by their beneficent Creator, enjoyed, through gardening, "a simple produce of the common day."[105] His use of the herbals and gardening manuals, and of actual gardens, shows the Miltonic "blend" which never isolates one one tradition but draws on all of them, including English "native,"

to feed the epic poem. The poem is richer for it.

CHAPTER V

LAUREL, MYRTLE, AND ACANTHUS IN PARADISE

AESTHETIC ASPECTS OF THE HERBAL TRADITION

A Paradise without trees would be no Paradise at all. In Milton's Garden cedars crown the hills (V.260), pines and firs shade the Garden (IV.139), elms marry vines (V.215-219), and exotic trees bear abundant fruit (IV.147). For the "blissful Bower" the "sovran Planter" chose

> All things to mans delightful use; the roofe
> Of thickest covert was inweven shade
> Laurel and Mirtle, and what higher grew
> Of firm and fragrant leaf; on either side
> Acanthus, and each odorous bushie shrub
> Fenc'd up the verdant wall. . . . (IV.692-697)

The two trees, laurel and myrtle, and the bushy acanthus have a history that channels the reader's mind back to Virgil's Second Eclogue (II.54) and to numerous other sources--pagan, Hebrew, and Christian.[1] An ancient man might have chosen these plants for their symbolism; and Carey and Fowler suggest that Milton's choice was also based on the symbolic value of these plants: "Here the trees seem rather to symbolise the complementary roles of Apollo and Venus, male and female, mens and anima, reason and virtue. The force of the passage lies in the suggestion of a comprehensive polarity."[2] That symbolism was attached to these plants need not be denied. On the other hand, a Pliny and an Evelyn, had they crossed the barrier of the centuries and talked to each other about gardens, would also

have chosen laurel, myrtle, and acanthus for their horticultural and aesthetic features. The question, then, to address to Milton's use of these three plants for the Bower is this: What are the physical qualities that make Milton's choice of laurel, myrtle, and acanthus appropriate?

I

Laurel

Milton may have had in mind one of the nine types of laurel described by Pliny the Elder[3] and have recalled Pliny the Younger's description of his beautiful garden with its "ring of laurel bushes which add their shade to that of the planes."[4] And he may have drawn from Gerard's and Parkinson's descriptions of the English laurel, with its shiny leaves, thick boughs, and abundant flowers.[5] So common was the laurel in England that Parkinson remarks in the Paradisi that the fourth type of laurel grew "in euery mans yard or orchard."[6] At any rate, the cultivated type was uppermost in Milton's mind rather than the Daphne Laureola (spurge laurel), thick and small, which grew wild in the area surrounding Chalfont.[7] The scrubby spurge laurel is disqualified for the Bower; it is too small to provide shade, it being only "a cubit high, oftentimes also of two. . . ."; and it is too wild, it being found "on mountaines in vntilled rough shadowy and wooddy places. . . . It grows abundantly also in woods in most parts of England."[8] A favorite with English gardeners, the type of laurel used for the Bower was chosen for its shade[9] and for its ornamental qualities. Evelyn cannot contain his enthusiasm for the laurel: "But to Crown all, I will conclude with the Laurel . . . resembling the most beautiful headed Orange in shape

and verdure . . . so as I dare pronounce the Laurel to be one of the most proper, and ornamental Trees. . . ."[10] Although English winters were hard on laurels (no problem in Paradise, of course), Evelyn did have them in the garden at Says-Court, for after one great frost he regretted that the laurel was "dead to all appearance."[11] Evelyn had also seen the laurel in Europe's most renowned gardens: "I walked to Villa Burghesi . . . within it tis an Elysium of delight. . . . This Garden abounded with all sorts of the most delicious fruit, and Exotique simples. . . . The Grotto is very rare, and represents among other devices artificial raines, & sundry shapes of Vessels, Flowers &c: which is effected by ⟨changing⟩ the heads of the Fountaines: The Groves are of Cypresse and Lawrell, Pine, Myrtil, Olive, &c. . . ."[12] Not only the Borghese but also the Pope's Palace at Monte Cavallo was singled out for its magnificent trees: ". . . I now saw the Garden more exactly, and found it to be one of the most magnificent & Pleasant in Rome: I am told the Gardner is annualy alow'd 2000 scudi for the keeping it: Here I observ'd the glorious hedges of myrtle above a mans height; others of Laurell, Oranges, and of Ivy, & Juniper. . . ."[13] Milton, too, was exposed to the Roman gardens, for it was at Cardinal Barberini's palace that he heard Leonora Baroni sing.[14]

William Temple, another admirer of the laurel, had set the border at Moor Park "with standard laurels, and at large distances, which have the beauty of orange trees, out of flower and fruit. . . ."[15] If, in addition, as Parkinson points out, the laurel was deemed suitable for use in the house of God,[16] what could be more appropriate than to have God use it for the Bower? The choice of laurel for the

Bower was an inevitable one in the seventeenth century. Milton could have done no better.

II

Myrtle

Unlike the laurel, the myrtle tree is not confined to the roof of the Bower but appears in various places in Paradise. Milton mentions myrtle five times in Paradise Lost; and I shall discuss them in the order of their appearance.

The first:

> . . . Mean while murmuring waters fall
> Down the slope hills, disperst, or in a Lake,
> That to the fringed Bank with Myrtle crownd,
> Her chrystall mirror holds, unite thir streams.
> (IV.260-263)

Milton here, as in all of Paradise Lost, sees "various regions of this enormous setting with peculiar vividness, and he recreates his vision of beauty and grandeur in the imagination of his reader, sometimes introducing detail. . . ."[17] Milton's familiarity with myrtles probably does not stem from his own garden at Chalfont St. Giles or from the garden at Christ's College, Cambridge. A letter to me, dated 14 January 1971, from Mr. K. L. Jeffery, Curator of the Milton Cottage, conveys the following information:

> There is not a Myrtle Tree/Bush in this garden, and not likely to be one in Christs College, Cambridge. If there was a Myrtle tree when Milton came to live here, he would only be able to distinguish it by its aromatic properties, as he was blind at the time.
> The Myrtle would only survive in sheltered or protected areas in the Southern parts of England, and it is difficult to say if Milton actually saw one in this country.

Whether or not Milton saw myrtles growing in England, say at

Moor Park, Says-Court, or in palatial gardens where they did actually grow, the peculiar vividness of the myrtles on the bank probably springs from his Italian trip. In Epitaphium Damonis he admits to having lain on the banks of the Arno plucking violets and myrtles:

> O ego quantus eram, gelidi cum stratus ad Arni
> Murmura, populeumque nemus, qua mollior herba,
> Carpere nunc violas, nunc summas carpere myrtos,
> Et potui Lycidae certantem audire Menalcam. (129-132)

Paradise Lost having its share of Italian allusions, it is not surprising that Milton's memory of pleasant days in Florence would have been evoked in his choice of the trees of Paradise. His first visit to Florence, extending perhaps from late July to September, 1638, was followed by his return to Florence in March, 1639.[18] It is probably the Arno of the summer visit that is the most congenial for myrtle plucking; the Arno of March would have been "rushing swift and yellow with the loosened waters from the mountains."[19] This idyllic scene--the poet among the myrtles--is recaptured in the "fringed Bank with Myrtle crownd." Milton may have been following Virgil, whose myrtles rejoiced on the shore, "litora myrtetis laetissima."[20] But both poets were undoubtedly referring to something tangible and aesthetically real, though the symbolic may have been lurking in the background.[21]

The second:

> . . . the roofe
> Of thickest covert was inwoven shade
> Laurel and Mirtle . . . . (IV.692-694)

The two characteristics singled out here, "thickest covert" and "inwoven shade," are botanical and aesthetic features essential to the Bower.

Myrtle was one of the great favorites of gardeners in Milton's time. A French writer, Louis Liger D'Auxerre, describes the myrtle as "each Flower . . . white, odoriferous," and as producing "so many Flowers that 'tis decked with 'em almost all the year round."[22] A tree of such sustained fragrance and continuing beauty is rightfully a part of a Paradisal bower. Whatever kind of myrtle Milton had in mind, whether one of Pliny's four types,[23] one of Gerard's six types,[24] or one of Parkinson's nine types,[25] it is quite obvious that the leaves are thickset and the branches intertwined. That the myrtle was, from antiquity, considered a suitable plant for a Paradisal canopy is evident from The Legends of the Jews. These Edenic legends describe a corner of Paradise as "a place full of rivers, surrounded by eight hundred kinds of roses and myrtles. Each one has a canopy according to his merits. . . ."[26]

Milton's fragrant myrtle, like the Virgilian, Hebrew, and native English, is not the Spenserian "gloomy greue of mirtle trees . . . / Whose shadie boughes sharpe steele did neuer lop."[27] Milton's Paradise requires shade, but it is the shade of comfort and protection, not of gloom. Sir Thomas Browne recognizes these same features of the myrtle, "thickest covert" and "inwoven shade":

> In the Feast of Tabernacles or Booths, the Law was this, Thou shalt take unto thee Boughs of goodly Trees, Branches of the Palm, and the Boughs of thick Trees, and Willows of the Brook. Now though the Text descendeth not unto particulars of the goodly Trees, and thick Trees; yet Maimonides will tell us that for a goodly Tree they made use of the Citron Tree, which is fair and goodly to the eye, and well prospering in that Country: And that for the thick Trees they used the Myrtle, which was no rare or infrequent Plant among them. And though it groweth but low in our Gardens, was not a little Tree in these parts; in which Plant also the Leaves grew thick, and almost covered the Stalk. And Curtius Symphorianus in his description

of the Exotick Myrtle, makes it, Folio densissimo senis in ordinem versibus.[28]

And Evelyn's travels brought him into contact with bower-type myrtles: "The Popes Palace at Monte Cavallo with "glorious hedges of myrtle about a mans height";[29] the Borghese with "Walkes & shades of Myrtils";[30] the Appian Way "beset with Myrtils . . . and most delicious shrubbs";[31] and Liverne's "Greate Dukes new Parke, full of huge Corke-trees, the under wood all Myrtils."[32]

Milton is more specific about the plants of Paradise than is Hugo Grotius, who describes Paradise in more general terms:

> Hic densa tenuis languidos Zephyri senos
> Arbusta referunt, silvaque arguto tremens
> Ludit susurro: semper hic placido nitet
> Solare vultu lumen: arridet favor
> Constantis aurae.[33]

Milton's myrtles, accurately described and appropriately used, supply exactly what the Bower needs: thick leaves, shade, and fragrance.

The third:

> . . . Thou therefore now advise
> Or hear what to my mind first thoughts present,
> Let us divide our labours, thou where choice
> Leads thee, or where most needs, whether to wind
> The Woodbine round this Arbour, or direct
> The clasping Ivie where to climb, while I
> In yonder Spring of Roses intermixt
> With Myrtle, find what to redress till Noon. . . .
> (IX.212-219)

Adam is to work at assisting the woodbine and the ivy in their climbs; Eve is to redress the roses growing among the myrtles. Carey and Fowler attribute to woodbine and ivy emblematic qualities of true love, identifying the arbour with the nuptial Bower.[34] There are two objections to their identifications: 1) the nuptial Bower described in Book IV does not contain either ivy or woodbine; 2) although the Bower is an arbour, there are, as in the typical

Renaissance garden, several arbours in Paradise:

> And at our pleasant labour, to reform
> Yon flourie Arbors. . . . (IV.625-626)

To conclude, then, that the reason Adam is relegated to the Bower is to uphold true love, while "Eve, on the other hand, is determined to leave the bower for a pair of plants associated by Ovid with a goddess' defence of her virtue,"[35] is to exclude the horticultural and aesthetic impact of this passage. Milton's sense of verisimilitude is again at work: a woman does not have the height required for ivy that climbs around tall elms and woodbine that grows as high as arbours. For Adam this is just the right work. Eve's height and hands are exactly suited to the lower, lighter work of redressing roses and myrtles, since these myrtles grow only as high as the roof of the Bower.

To be sure, roses and myrtles occupied a venerable place in mythology, where the rose was associated with Aphrodite, Adonis, and Eros; with love, spring, and death. In Greece roses and myrtles frequently went hand in hand as the shrubs of spring and of love.[36] But, aesthetically speaking, the ancient gardeners were averse to barren open spaces in their gardens. Frequently combining trees and flowers, they intermingled them to enhance the view and to provide a variety of seasonal delights. A particularly beautiful garden in the fifth century had trees under which grew narcissi and roses;[37] and another Paradise (located at either Corinth or Athens) had myrtles, beneath which grew hyacinths and a variety of flowers.[38]

Although the classic Roman agriculturists (Varro, Columella) do not make a specific reference to the interplanting of myrtles and roses, there is a reference to this intermingling by a sixth or

seventh century Byzantine writer, Cassianos Bassos. The continuing popularity of his work, Geoponica, Sive De Re Rustica, is evidenced by the fact that it was edited by Peter Needham in 1704 (Cantabrigiae). Bassos's statement on the intermixing of myrtles and roses appears in Needham's edition in the chapter "De plantatione myrti. Florentini": Si vero juxta ipsam plantentus rosae, ambae florentes fient, & generosissimum fructum ferent."[39] This is not to claim that Milton's intermixing is a direct borrowing from Cassianos Bassos but only to show the sustained appeal of this intermixing.

Milton's intermingling of a "spring of roses" with myrtles reflects, first of all, the Renaissance horticultural practice of protecting young plants. If a "spring" as defined by the Oxford English Dictionary is "a copse, grove, or wood consisting of young trees," Milton seems inaccurate in his use of the term spring when he applies it to roses. In fact, the only non-tree spring in the Oxford English Dictionary list of citations is Milton's use here in connection with roses. The term spring, however, was used extensively to describe any young growth; already in 1596 in Googe's "Englished and Increased" edition of Heresbachius's Fovre Bookes of Hvsbandrie the term is specifically applied to roses: "The olde Rosyars must have the Earth loosed about them in Februarie, and the dead twigges cut of, and where they ware thinne, they must be repayred with the young springes."[40]

Milton knew enough about gardens to provide for protection from the sun for the delicate rose springs of Paradise, and he followed Parkinson's advice that young plants should "be shadowed for a time."[41] One of the reasons that he chose myrtle is that,

as Herebachius states in his entry on myrtles, they are fit to "shadowe hearbs."[42]

Myrtles and roses were probably interplanted because of their similar blooming habits. On the conjunctive blooming of myrtles and roses, the eminent physician, botanist, and Professor of Medicine at Leyden, Rembert Dodoens, observes: "Vbi suae spontis est ac nasci gaudet, vnà cum Rosis floret. . . ."[43] Gerard, who based much of his herbal on Dodoens's Stirpium, echoes: ". . . they [myrtles] floure when the Roses doe. . . ."[44] Following them, the Dutch herbalist P. van Aengelen confirms: "In heete landen bloeyt hy [Mirten-boom] met de Roosen / maer in koude landen bloeyt hy laet."[45]

In addition, Milton's mingling of roses and myrtles reflects his view of the art-nature antithesis, an antithesis that persists in the gardening literature of the twentieth century. Harold Nicolson, who, with his wife, restored the gardens of Sissinghurst, has remarked in Great Gardens of the Western World:

> The essence of garden design . . . is the alternation of the element of expectation with the element of surprise.... From time to time . . . an unexpected feature . . . [should] be introduced. I should myself rank Hidcote as the best example of this fusion of expectation with surprise, as the best example that I know of the mingling of the formal and the wild. . . . The principle remains--a wild garden should not become too disordered and a formal garden should not become too stiff.[46]

While some modern gardeners may abhor combining two exotics such as roses and myrtles, viewing them as competitors for both fragrance and beauty, Milton enriches the fabric of his Paradise with the natural grouping, so popular with English gardeners today. Sissinghurst Castle, built in the reign of Henry VIII, for example, although it

has its share of formal trees and topiary work, has the element of expectation combined with the element of surprise: the visitor suddenly comes upon a blossom-laden apple tree wreathed in blooming rooses--[47] as unexpected and delightful a combination as Milton's myrtles and roses. Another scene of beauty, like Milton's Paradise, can be found at the white garden by the Priest's House at Sissinghurst: "This, to many . . . is the most beautiful of all the gardens . . . anywhere in England. It has its greatest magic in June, when cloudy with white roses growing through almond trees, and with its air laden with the incense of white Regale lilies, their flowers, it seems, afloat on a mist of gypsophila and silver-leaved plants. It is a garden that is cool and fresh and deliciously scented. A garden to dream in, and of."[48]

Milton's native English taste is apparent in this combination of roses and myrtles, for it is the taste for the "cultivated wild" that is still prominent in English gardens. Edward Hyams observes in The English Garden, "Wotton seems to have been the first garden-lover since Roman times to insist that a garden should not be regular; or that if it was, then its regularity should be 'wild.' This was and is the English spirit."[49] While in today's English gardens the rhododendron is more frequently found than the myrtle, The Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew already at the time of the herbalist William Turner (c. 1510-1568) included a myrtetum, since "English gardeners have always had a mania for myrtles."[50] Hyams might have been describing Milton's garden arrangement in Paradise, when he remarks: "The shrubs, incidentally, include roses, always a problem to gardeners who still plant them under the illusion that they

must have a place to themselves; here they are treated like any other flowering shrubs, and are the better for it."[51] As for the myrtle of Milton's day, The Compleat Florist suggests that it "looks very graceful among other plants."[52]

Whether the seventeenth century believed that in close proximity the rose and the myrtle have a chemically beneficent effect on each other is difficult to determine, as they believed that "If you set garlike by your Roses, they will bee the sweeter. . . ."[53] According to the eminent botanist Dr. Anton Lang, Director of the Plant Research Laboratory of Michigan State University,

> mutual influences between plants based on excretion of chemical compounds are well-known. The late Austrian botanist H. Molisch has coined for this phenomenon the term "allelopathy". But specifically. . . on the possible interrelations between roses on the one hand, myrtles or garlic on the other, I have not been able to find any reference, nor do I feel that there are good grounds for assuming the kind of interactions you mention. It is true that both myrtle and garlic are high in volatile substances which are responsible for their characteristic odors. Allelopathic influences are usually the inhibition or suppression of some plants by others; they give the latter plants an advantage in the "struggle for life". I am not aware that one plant would enhance the growth of another (except perhaps by providing some shade against excessive sun if "protected" plant is sensitive to too much light, or providing protection against winds, especially in the cold season). It seems to me even less likely that a plant can enhance the fragrance of another; at least from what I know about the substances which are responsible for fragrance, as well as other substances which may be released by plants, and of the uptake of substances by plants, I see no basis - neither in chemistry nor in plant physiology - for such effects, whether these be based on some direct reaction between the substances released, or on absorption of "impure juices" from the soil.[54]

It may be further remarked that the practice of companionate planting is not confined to the seventeenth century but has reappeared in today's organic gardening craze. Beatrice Trum Hunter in the New

York Times suggests that "If you put garlic around the base of your favorite rosebushes, you may find that the roses develop hearty resistance against blackspot, mildew and aphids."[55] However slight the knowledge of plant physiology and chemistry of Milton and his contemporaries, one thing is sure--they relished exotic combinations of plants, for perhaps both horticultural and aesthetic reasons.

Milton uses the mythologically commingled myrtle and rose and makes them horticulturally functional in Paradise. The evergreen, perpetually flowering myrtle protects the delicate, profuse young rose springs, while both exude the most delicious fragrances. What more felicitous arrangement could he have found?

Perhaps Satan's reaction to the beauties of Paradise, to its magnificent profusion, is something like the French gardener who came to see certain Cornish gardens. "The Frenchman's host had noticed that as, day after day, his guest came back from a visit to some garden he sat down to write notes on it; but on the day he returned from Caerhays he wrote nothing. He was asked why, and he gave this despairing answer: 'Because it is impossible. They will no longer believe me.'"[56]

The fourth:

> Beyond his hope, Eve separate he spies,
> Veild in a Cloud of Fragrance, where she stood,
> Half spi'd, so thick the Roses bushing round
> About her glowd, oft stooping to support
> Each Flour of slender stalk, whose head though gay
> Carnation, Purple, Azure, or spect with Gold,
> Hung drooping unsustaind, them she upstaies
> Gently with Mirtle band. . . . (IX.424-431)

Eve's actual work consists in redressing the roses which are so thick with blossoms and blooms that the young stalks cannot support them. Redress is a horticultural term meaning "to raise to an erect

position." These roses, although already profuse, are too young to possess the natural faculty present in most mature plants--that of redressing themselves.[57] The process of redressing engaged in by Eve is carefully described by Milton: each flower that hangs drooping on a slender stalk is tied with a myrtle band. Milton's Garden is more than a Heinrich Heine Paradise of "roses and myrtles, beauty and happiness, and green peas for everyone." His myrtle is functional. This tree, with the twigs and branches so supple and pliant as to be suitable for garlands, is perfectly adapted to the use as a binder. Besides, the myrtles are there for the reaching; no need for Eve to cut and carry. The materials frequently mentioned in the gardening manuals for binding and propping are split twigs[58] and "small twigges of Willowe, Elme . . . Rushes, or Strawe."[59]

Although there were many varieties of myrtle known in Milton's day, Milton did not make Pliny's mistake of identifying myrtle with oxymyrsine,[60] a mistake that persisted into the Renaissance, and one that John Parkinson warns his readers to avoid.[61] Since the oxymyrsine is a rush especially favored for "binding things together"[62] and even for matmaking,[63] Milton could easily, had his botanical memory slipped, have put the oxymyrsine among the roses for redressing the drooping flowers, except, of course, that the oxymyrsine (Pliny's false myrtle) could grow only in water, and roses cannot endure swampy ground.[64]

Milton's description of Eve as "Veild in a Cloud of Fragrance" may seem hyperbolic even for roses and myrtles, until one reads Evelyn's "realistic" account of "Rosemary, the Flowers whereof are credibly reported to give their sent above thirty Leagues off at

Sea. . . ."[65] The roses themselves are marked by no unusual colors--carnation, purple, or speckled with gold--with the exception perhaps of azure. Azure here probably refers to the purplish rather than the sky-blue hues. Roses were so common in the Renaissance as to be described in all the herbals and gardening manuals: by Gerard who lists sixteen different kinds, including single, wild, and cultivated double;[66] by Heresbachius, who favors ". . . some little pale ones called Carnation or Prouincars, these doe wonderfully growe where they once are planted, and have a most excellent sauour. . . ."[67]

The fifth:

> To whom the wilie Adder, blithe and glad.
> Empress, the way is readie, and not long,
> Beyond a row of Myrtles. . . (IX.625-627)

Perhaps the only thing to be remarked here is that Satan, like any knowledgeable Renaissance gardener, knows a myrtle grove when he sees one.

III

Acanthus

The third plant of the Bower is acanthus:

> . . . on either side
> Acanthus, and each odorous bushie shrub
> Fenc'd up the verdant wall. . . . (IV.696-697)

As in all pre-Linnean botany, lack of precise terminology hampers botanical identification. One of the plants that persistently defies elucidation is acanthus, which already in the time of Dioscorides created problems of nomenclature. James Yates observes in an article "On the Use of the Terms Acanthus, Acanthion, Etc., in the Ancient Classics": "Great confusion exists among the writers of antiquity

in the use of the allied terms, Akanthos, Akantha, Akanthion, Lat. Acanthus, Acanthium; and this confusion is multiplied ten-fold by the critics and commentators, who have endeavoured to illustrate these terms by identifying them in the several instances where they occur, with plants known to the modern botanist."[68]

Milton's use of the acanthus is functional: it is a fragrant buttress and space-filler underneath the inwoven shade of laurel and myrtle trees. One cannot make the quick assumption, however, that Milton means Acanthus mollis, for the Renaissance herbalists unanimously take "Virgils Acanthus to be that which we now commonly call Pyracantha. . . ."[69]

Both Gerard and Parkinson identify Acanthus mollis as "Garden Beares-breech" or "Branke Ursine." They describe it as having broad leaves, smooth, blackish, gashed on both edges, set with many cuts and nicks, with a large, flowering stalk, white flowers, two catkins, broad seed. Both raised it in their gardens as a curiosity; both regard it as the plant used by engravers on pillars; and both remark that it is native in Italy, Spain, and France.[70]

Pyracantha is identified by them as the "Evergreen thorne tree." They held it in high esteem for its evergreen quality, for its pliability, for its beauty:

> This euer greene shrubbe is so fine an ornament to a Garden or Orchard, either to be noursed vp into a small tree by it selfe, by pruining and taking away the suckers and vnder branches, or by suffering it to grow with suckers, thicke and plashing the branches into a hedge, for that it is plyable to be ordered either way. . . . the flowers come forth as well at the ends of the branches, as at diuers places at the ioynts of the leaues, standing thicke together, of a pale whitish colour, a little dasht ouer with a shew of blush, consisting of five leaves a peece, with some small threads in the middle, which turne into berries

> very like vnto Hawthorne berries, but much redder and dryer, almost like polished corall, wherein are contained foure or fiue small yellowish white three square seede, somewhat shining.[71]

Although the writers of garden manuals were not so "scientific" as the herbalists, they were interested in the aesthetics of plants. Leonard Meager recommends the following:

> Amongst those sorts of Plants mentioned in this Book, these are fit to Plant about Arbors, which being often and seasonably clipped after they are spread and tied in every bare or naked place, as occasion serves, will thicken and be handsome, and your Arbor will indure and uphold it self with little repair. . . . if you would have it always green then
>
> Cypris, very good
> Piracantas
> Filaree, none better
> . . . Lawrels, etc.
>
> As for hedges in Gardens, they are and may be made of several sorts of shrubs, as every one fancies. . . . :
>
> Hawthorn or white-bush is best.
> . . . Laurus tinus
> Piracantha
> etc.[72]

The question remains: What did Milton visualize--<u>acanthus mollis</u> or <u>pyracantha</u>--when he saw in his imagination the "odorous bushie shrub" that "Fenc'd up the verdant wall"? It is tempting to use Bishop Pearce's statement when he struggled with the identification of the crown of thorns (with acanthus and brank-ursine), "As this is a point in which we have no sufficient evidence, I leave it almost in the same state of uncertainty in which I found it."[73] But perhaps there is more evidence than one realizes. If one follows the Renaissance herbalists, he recognizes that <u>acanthus mollis</u> has the following assets:

1. It has immense, beautiful leaves--leaves so beautiful as to serve for centuries as a decorative motif.
2. It has large, showy flowers.

3. It is recommended by Pliny, a sophisticated gardener, for banks of borders and flat tops of raised portions of gardens.

And *acanthus mollis* has the following defects:

1. It is not generally regarded as Virgil's acanthus.
2. It does not branch and is not bushy: its flowers spring from a single stalk.
3. It is a curiosity, a thistle. (For Milton's Paradise this might have been irrelevant since all the plants of Paradise were thornless.)
4. Speaking aesthetically, its leaves are gigantic compared with the leaves of laurel and myrtle, one might almost say "monstrous" in this companionate setting.
5. Its leaves have the texture of lettuce or cabbage, quite unlike the leaves of laurel and myrtle.
6. It is herbaceous, yet would stand in the company of evergreens with woody stalks. It is not a true shrub.
7. It is perennial; and although the "dying back" of perennials may not be applicable to Paradise, Milton does refer to the unsightliness of plants that drop their blossoms (IV.630-632). This dropping of flowers and leaves would have proved a disadvantage inside the Bower. On the other hand, there were perennials on the floor of the Bower (IV.698-702).

If one follows the Renaissance herbalists, he recognizes that *pyracantha* has the following assets:

1. It is Virgil's acanthus.

2. It is bushy and pliable and recommended as an arbor plant.
3. It is multiple-flowered, fragrant, and not a curiosity.
4. It, along with laurel and myrtle, has small, glossy leaves and showy berries.
5. It is evergreen and woody, a true shrub.
6. It is recommended as a "fence" plant; and, although one may ask, What has a fence to do with Paradise?, Milton does mention the fact that animals must not enter the Bower (IV.703-704). Milton also describes this Bower as more "sequestered" (IV.706) than any other bower; for sequestration pyracantha is admirably suited.

And pyracantha has the following defect:

1. It has long, sharp thorns. (For Milton's Paradise, however, this might have been irrelevant since all the plants of Paradise were thornless.)

If one applies "aesthetic logic," ignoring the complexities of Renaissance nomenclature, he will probably conclude that, since Virgil's acanthus is considered pyracantha by the herbalists, and since pyracantha has all the traits essential to the Bower, therefore it is pyracantha that Milton had in mind. Admittedly, some uncertainty still clouds the picture.[74]

IV

Milton's Eden is not the product of the study alone, nor is his Garden the construct of the scholar who has seen only in his mind the vague beauty of a diaphanous cloud of fragrances. Milton's is a down-to-earth Paradise, an adaptation of the gardens of his day. For Milton, Beauty is as Beauty does; and, although Milton may not

have been so pragmatic as Theophrastus, who was buried in a flower bed so that his corpse could fertilize new flowers, Milton does not simply let his laurel, myrtle, and acanthus be. In Paradise they also do. Their function issues from the garden tradition and resides in the plants themselves. The effects that these three plants have on the reader is not spectacular. Rather, their selection is so tasteful and so suits the needs of the reigning couple, that when the reader comes upon laurel, myrtle, and acanthus in the Garden, he half expects it and therefore is "surprised by joy."

SUMMARY

Although Adam and Eve lost the unspoiled beauty of Paradise and herbs became infected and noxious, they did not lose all the beneficent qualities of herbs. Nor did the seventeenth century lose its grasp on the world of herbs. Operating with the belief that a knowledge of herbs would put a man in touch with Paradise, the herbalists bent every effort to supply the reading public with information on every plant known to them. From the first herbal printed in England by Richard Banckes in 1525, they filled their herbals with the names and descriptions of thousands of herbs for the use and delight of man. Lyte's herbal describes 1050 species, Gerard's, 2850, and Parkinson's almost 3850. It would be surprising indeed if so major a source of botanic information were not a source to Milton and to his contemporaries. The herbals could hardly be excluded from the texture and fabric of a major poet's work. The Milton of the disturbed viscera and cloudy eyes experimented with herbal concoctions; the Milton of "wisdome at one entrance quite shut out" mourned that he could no longer see "vernal bloom, or Summers Rose."

Milton's use of the herbals is never dazzling--but the herbals are not dazzling either. They are practical, handy books, saturated with good advice and down-to-earth accounts, and decorated with an occasional purple passage. Milton uses the herbals in a variety of ways. His medical uses are quite apparent in Book XI

of Paradise Lost. Undoubtedly, his description of the Apple of Disobedience, his characterization of Adam, and his conception of the nature of epic prompted him to introduce drugs made from herbs. His choice of rue to cure the harmful effects of Adam's eating of the apple is especially appropriate because of its association with Homer's moly. In addition to the botany and mythology clustered around rue and moly, the Renaissance herbals testify to rue's efficacy. Combined with euphrasie and three drops of water from the Well of Life, rue serves as an antidote to the physical, psychological, and spiritual poisons ingested by Adam when he ate the forbidden fruit.

But, although plants are most frequently associated with pharmacy, they also have their magic uses, magic frequently being an adjunct to medicine. In Comus Milton uses the wholesome natural magic of plants. Drawing on the herbals, Milton gives Sabrina "pretious vield liquors" to combat urchin blasts and ill-luck signs of meddling elves. He introduces his most famous herb, haemony, gives it a complete herbal index (even though it does not function in the masque against enchantments, mildew blast, damp, or apparition), and shows it functioning as a vulnerary and as a perception-heightening drug. He attributes to Comus unnatural magic, associated with aphrodisiacs and metamorphosis, and counteracts this with herbs and pure water. The masque emerges as a charming presentation of both verbal and herbal magic.

Nor are the ceremonial aspects of the herbal tradition ignored by Milton. In Lycidas he draws on three ancient funerary plants--myrtle, laurel, and ivy. Combining the historico-mythological tradition with the botanical one, he transplants them into an

honorary form to celebrate a death. Milton's use of this memorable botanic metaphor is understandable only in the light of the herbal tradition.

One of the most delightful uses of the herbals is in horticulture, with Gerard and Parkinson making frequent references to their own gardening experiments. Milton supplements the herbals with gardening manuals and with real gardens, creating a Paradisal horticultural architecture with a distinctive English touch. His Garden, not a mere fiction, is the more real for participating in the English gardening tradition.

When it comes to the use of three specific plants in Paradise--laurel, myrtle, and acanthus--Milton is again influenced by the herbals and by contemporary horticultural aesthetics. In particular, his companionate planting of roses and myrtles shows an awareness of plant arrangement to achieve the English blend of expectation and surprise. Milton and the herbalists could not have been aware of the scientific implications of allelopathy, but they built their horticultural aesthetics on the best herbal knowledge of the day and on what pleased eye and nose.

Although Milton transferred the amaranth to heaven where the River of Bliss rolls over Elysian flowers, he never forgot that his feet still touched the English soil and that beneath them grew the herbs--useful in medicine, magic, ceremony, horticulture, aesthetics. And in poetry.

NOTES

CHAPTER I

[1]To mention just a few: The Poems of John Milton, with notes by Thomas Keightley (London, 1859); Edward S. Le Comte, "New Light on the 'Haemony' Passage in Comus," PQ, XXI(1942), 283-298; Thomas P. Harrison, Jr., "The 'Haemony' Passage in Comus Again," PQ, XX (1943), 251-254; John M. Steadman, "Milton's Haemony: Etymology and Allegory," PMLA, LXXVII (1962), 200-207.

[2]Marjorie Hope Nicolson, Milton: Poems and Selected Prose (New York, 1962), p. 437, identifies these as "herbs used for eyes"; R. C. Browne, English Poems by John Milton (Oxford, 1902), II, 291, states: "Both plants are affirmed by the old herbalists to have the virtue of purging the eyes"; William Vaughn Moody, The Complete Poetical Works of John Milton (Boston, 1924), p. 410, adds: "were both believed to have the power of strengthening and spiritualizing the vision."

[3]"Euphrasy and Rue: Books XI and XII, Paradise Lost," Ball State University Forum, VIII (Summer, 1967), 3-10.

[4]"Letter to Philaras," David Masson, The Life of John Milton (New York, 1946), IV, 640.

[5]All quotations are from The Works of John Milton, ed. Frank A. Patterson et al. (New York, 1931-1938).

[6]A Preface to Paradise Lost (London, 1942), p. 67.

[7]Tractate of Education, Works, IV, 286.

[8]Tractate, IV, 277.

[9]This Great Argument (Princeton, 1941), p. 196.

[10]See Frank Kermode, The Living Milton (London, 1960), who calls Paradise Lost "an elaborate exercise in counterlogic" (p. 94); see also B. Rajan, "Simple, Sensuous, and Passionate," in Milton: Modern Essays in Criticism, ed. Arthur E. Barker (New York, 1965), pp. 3-20.

[11]See Sara Ruth Watson, "'Moly' in Drayton and Milton," N&Q, CLXXV (1939), 244.

[12]Greek Myths and Christian Mystery (London, 1963), pp. 186-187; for Dioscorides see De materia medica III.46 (Wellmann, II, 59). I am indebted to Father Rahner's masterly work for many of the subsequent references.

[13]Rahner, p. 187; for Galen see A. Merx, "Proben der syrischen Übersetzung von Galenus' Schrift über die einfachen Heilmittel" in Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft, XXXIX (1885), 282.

[14]Ed. Robert T. Gunther (Oxford, 1934), p. 289.

[15]Edward Phillips, "The Life of Mr. John Milton" (1694) in The Early Lives of Milton, ed. Helen Darbishire (London, 1932), p. 60.

[16]Naturalis historia XXV.viii.26-27; trans. from the Loeb Classical Library (London, 1956), VII, 155.

[17]Pliny, XX.li.131; Loeb, VI, 77.

[18]Pliny, XX.li.131-143; Loeb, VI, 77-85.

[19]The Odyssey of Homer, ed. W. B. Stanford (New York, 1947), X.305ff.

[20]Rahner, pp. 190-192; Ovid, Metamorphoses II.720, 818; at Aachen he is called "Mercurius Sussurio"; Prudentius, Contra Symmachum I. 89-94 (Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum, LXI, 222); see also Virgil, Aeneid IV.258.

[21]Rahner, pp. 190-191.

[22]Rahner, p. 196.

[23]Le Comte, "The 'Haemony' Passage," pp. 292-293.

[24]Harrison, "The 'Haemony' Passage Again."

[25]John Gerard, The Herball or Generall Historie of Plantes (London, 1597), pp. 1072-1075; the 1633 edition does not add to the substance of the text. For moly see p. 1347.

[26]Henry Lyte, A New Herball or Historie of Plants (London, 1586), pp. 294-298 passim.

[27]London, 1640, pp. 134, 870.

[28]Rahner, p. 149; for Heraclitus see Problemata Homerica, Benn Eds., LXXIII (Leipzig, 1910), p. 97.

[29]See Le Comte, p. 286, where the evidence is presented for Milton's familiarity with Eustathius, the Homeric scholiast.

[30]Rahner, p. 202.

[31]See Rahner, p. 266, where an illustration from a fourth-century Christian sarcophagus appears (Rome, Museo delle Terme).

[32]See Rahner on Boethius, pp. 213-216; Boethius, Metrum IV.3 (CSEL, LXVII, 87f) and Metrum IV.6 (CSEL, LXVII, 104).

[33]Rahner, p. 188.

[34]Rahner, pp. 219-220; see also C. G. Jung, Psychologie und Alchemie (Zurich, 1954), p. 93, where Hermes appears as a shepherd "aus dem 'Tractatus qui dicitur Thomae Aquinatis de Alchimia': Codex Vossianus Chemicus 29, Fol. 86."

[35]H. F. Fletcher, The Intellectual Development of John Milton (Urbana, 1956), p. 85.

[36]Schoolmaster, ed. John E. B. Mayor (New York, 1967), p. 76.

[37]Paradise Lost (New York, 1935), p. 370.

[38]The Alchemist, in [Works of] Ben Jonson, ed. C. H. Herford and Percy Simpson (Oxford, 1954), V, 343.

[39]Martinus Rulandus, A Lexicon of Alchemy (Frankfurt, 1612), pp. 134, 459.

CHAPTER II

[1]For a summary of the instruments of magic used in Milton's masque and their relationship to the ancient tradition, see John Arthos, On a Mask Presented at Ludlow-Castle (Ann Arbor, 1954), pp. 70-78, passim.

[2]N.h., XXV.11-12.

[3]See A. S. P. Woodhouse, "The Argument of Comus," UTQ, XI (1941), 46-71; and John S. Diekhoff, ed., A Maske at Ludlow (Cleveland, 1968).

[4]Masson, I, 610.

[5]Masson, I, 623.

[6]Masson, I, 605-606.

[7]See, for example, Thomas Johnson, Dainty Conceits (1630), which gives methods for growing coreless fruit as well as for becoming a card-shark; see also the popular collection called The Secrets of Albertus Magnus (1637).

[8]Derek J. Price, ed., Giambattista della Porta, Natural Magick (New York, 1957), Editor's Preface, p. vii.

[9]Natural Magick, pp. 2-3.

[10]From Magic to Science (New York, 1958), pp. 153-158; see also Wilfrid Bonser, The Medical Background of Anglo-Saxon England (London, 1963), p. 158.

[11]Della Porta refers to this belief in Theocritus, Virgil, et al, pp. 229-230.

[12]London, 1584; I quote from the edition by Hugh Ross Williamson (London, 1964), p. 139.

[13]Singer, p. 152.

[14]John Worlidge, Systema Agriculturae, 3rd edn. (London, 1681), p. 209; William Perkins, A Discourse of Witchcraft (Cambridge, 1609), p. 629.

[15]Leechbook, I, lxxxviii, 2; II, lxv, 1, as cited by Bonser, p. 160.

[16]Bonser, p. 161.

[17]Thomas Davidson, "Elf-shot Cattle," Antiquity, XXX (1956), 149.

[18]Davidson, pp. 152-153.

[19]Natural Magick, p. 24.

[20]The Discoverie of Witchcraft, p. 240.

[21]Googe (London, 1596); in Gerard's Herball (1636) see motherwort, p. 705, and bastard black hellebore, p. 977.

[22]For a summary of the discussion on this subject, see John G. Demaray, Milton and the Masque Tradition (Cambridge, Mass., 1968), p. 169.

[23]For a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of the various theories, see R. M. Adams, Ikon: John Milton and the Modern Critics (Ithaca, 1955), pp. 1-34. See also Sacvan Bercovitch, "Milton's 'Haemony': Knowledge and Belief," HLQ, XXXIII (August, 1970), 351-359.

[24]Since the root was transferrable from shepherd to Spirit to boys, Milton obviously did not believe that ". . . the drugs owe their potency to the Demon, not to any inherent properties of their own," Nicolas Remy, Demonolatry, Bk. I, chap. ii, p. 3, as cited by Arthos, p. 70.

[25]Adam in Eden or Natures Paradise (London, 1657), Introduction.

[26]Herball, p. 719.

[27]Gerard, pp. 718-719; Parkinson, Theatrum, pp. 675-676.

[28]Adam in Eden, chap. 18.

[29]Flowering Plants of Great Britain (London, 1837 ?), IV, 210.

[30]Herball, p. 1001.

[31]A Discourse of Witchcraft, p. 633; see also Robert Burton, Anatomy of Melancholy, ed. A. R. Shilleto (London, 1912), II, 290.

[32]Theatrum, p. 616.

[33]Adam in Eden, chaps. 331, 341.

[34]For a discussion of health manuals and medical treatises, see Paul H. Kocher, Science and Religion in Elizabethan England (New York, 1969), pp. 266-283; see also Louis B. Wright, Middle-Class Culture in Elizabethan England (Ithaca, 1958), pp. 580-588.

[35]London, 1557, Fol. xxvj, xlvi. The Authorized Version mentions blasting in II Chr. 6:28 and I Kings 8:37; and Lancelot Andrewes prays for deliverance from it, The Private Devotions of Lancelot Andrewes, tr. F. E. Brightman (New York, 1961), p. 243.

[36]London (1565 ?), u.p.

[37]Herball, p. 1001.

[38]London, 1655, pp. 12-14.

[39]Tr. N. Newton (London, 1574), u.p.

[40]London, 1633, p. 14.

[41]Hart, p. 56.

[42]This is a malady associated with mental illness rather than with folklore or magic.

[43]This is not to be confused with the "shapes, shadows, tongues," which spring from the young lady's fear (204-208).

[44]Bonser, pp. 257-263, passim.

[45]Bonser, p. 262.

[46]Anatomy, III, 490.

[47]Anatomy, III, 490-491.

[48]Bonser, p. 165.

[49]Herball, p. 984.

[50]W. Macknezie, "Glimpses of St. Columba in Highland Folklore," Glasgow Herald, 5 October 1895, as cited by Bonser, p. 167.

[51]Derek S. Brewer, "The Reeve's Tale and the King's Hall, Cambridge," The Chaucer Review, V (Spring, 1971), 316.

[52]For a discussion of his nature, see Arthos, pp. 36-39.

[53]Lowry C. Wimberly, Folklore in the English and Scottish Ballads (New York, 1959), p. 351.

[54]Lewis Spence, The Magic Arts in Celtic Britain (London, 1945), p. 69.

[55]See Pierre Courcelle, "La colle et le clou de l'âme dans la tradition néo-platonicienne et chrétienne," Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire, (XXXVI (1958), 72-95; see also A. B. Staricius, Heldenschatz (1679); J. Chr. Heppe, Der Vogelfang (Nürnberg, 1797); W. H. von Hochberg, Unterricht was mit den Vogel auch ausser d. Fang . . . man sich . . . machen könne (Coburg, 1707).

[56]Pp. 243-244.

[57]Theatrum, p. 573.

[58]Adam in Eden, p. 610; see also W. C., A Boke of the Properties of Herbes (London, 1552) on Herba Johannis.

[59]Cited by Benjamin H. Barton and Thomas Castle, British Flora Medica, rev. John R. Jackson (London, 1877), p. 367; see also Sir James Edward Smith, The English Flora (London, 1828), III, 325.

[60]Enquiry into Plants, tr. Sir Arthur Hort (London, 1916), IX, viii, 8, and IX, ix, 1.

[61]De materia medica, IV, 75 (Wellmann, II, pp. 233-237).

[62]Bellum Iudaicum, VII, 6, 3 (Niese, VI, 450f).

[63]Ibn al Baithar, ed. Sontheimer, II, 14, 606f.

[64]Ludwig Keimer, Die Gartenpflanzen im alten Ägypten (Hamburg and Berlin), 1924.

[65]C. J. S. Thompson, Poison Mysteries in History, Romance and Crime (Philadelphia and London), p. 67, n.d.

[66]Matthiolus, Commentarii in Dioscoridem (Basiliae, 1674), p. 757; Lusitanus, In Dioscoridis Mat. Med. libros quinque enarrationes Amati Lusitani (Strasburg, 1554), p. 431.

[67]Thompson, p. 64.

[68]Herball, pp. 351-353.

[69]Pp. 343-345.

[70]"Mandrakes in the Bible, Literature, and Pharmacology," American Druggist (December, 1933), p. 74.

[71]Ibid., p. 76.

[72]Editions of his work continued to appear; for example, one was published in Basil, 1536. For the first English translation of this work, see Paul Delany, "Constantinus Africanus' De Coitu: A Translation," The Chaucer Review, IV (1970), 55-65. Constantinus treats in detail those aphrodisiacs which "we ourselves have tried and which our authors have used" (Delany, p. 63).

[73]For a description of the various kinds of syrups, see Nicholas Culpeper, The Complete Herbal (London, 1653), repr. 1850: "A Syrup is a medicine of a liquid body, compounded of Decoction, Infusion, or Juice, with Sugar or Honey, and brought by the heat of

the fire, into the thickness of Honey. . . . All simple Syrups have the virtues of the simples they are made of . . . ," pp. 294-295.

[74]Spence, p. 71

[75]Ibid.

[76]Adam in Eden, chap. 277.

[77]Herball, p. 106.

[78]Herball, p. 1388.

[79]Occult Philosophy, tr. J. Freake (London, 1651), p. 102. See also Hart's The Diet of the Diseased, where a chapter is devoted to love-potions and another to love by bewitching.

[80]Tr. Edmund Chilmead (Oxford, 1640), p. 306.

[81]Ferrand, p. 363.

[82]The Discoverie of Witchcraft, p. 116.

[83]A Discourse of Witchcraft, p. 635.

[84]Natural Magick, pp. 219-220; for an illustration of the transformation of men into horses, see Gioseffe Petrucci, Predomo Apologetico (Amsterdam, 1677).

[85]Lynn Thorndike, History of Magic and Experimental Medicine (New York, 1929-1958), VII, 361-363.

[86]Thorndike, VII, 340-341.

[87]Thorndike, V, 107-108.

[88]Thorndike, VI, 515-516.

[89]Recognising this ignorance in young men, Milton wished them to obtain "a real tincture of natural knowledge," and included "helpful experiences of hunters, fowlers, fishermen, shepherds, gardeners, apothecaries" in their education, Of Education, Works, IV, 284.

[90]On a Masque, p. 73, n.51.

CHAPTER III

[1]"Of Garlands and Coronary or Garland-Plants," The Works of Sir Thomas Browne, ed. Geoffrey Keynes (London, 1928), III,49.

[2]Browne, pp. 49-50. For a discussion rich with archaeological documentation, see J. M. C. Toynbee, Death and Burial in the Roman World (London, 1971).

[3]Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, XXI (1958), 227-255.

[4]Cleanth Brooks and John Edward Hardy, "Essays in Analysis: Lycidas," in Milton's Lycidas, ed. C. A. Patrides (New York, 1961), p. 137.

[5]"Flowerets and Sounding Seas: A Study in the Affective Structure of Lycidas," in Patrides, p. 127.

[6]Shumaker, p. 128.

[7]VIII. 12-13; ed. T. E. Page (London, 1937).

[8]II.54.

[9]Trapp, p. 237.

[10]Trapp, p. 255.

[11]"Theme, Pattern, and Imagery in Lycidas," in Patrides, p. 180.

[12]To mention just a few: "of choicest flowers, a garland" (PL, IX.840); "in his garland" (MW, 21); "songs, garlands, flowers" (PL, XI.594).

[13]"Of a kingly crown had on" (PL, II.673); "mutual love, the crown of all our bliss" (PL, IV.728).

[14]"Ivy-crowned Bacchus" (LA, 16); "with ivy berries wreathed" (C, 55).

[15]"Sweet garland wreaths" (C, 850).

[16]August F. von Pauly and Georg Wissowa, Pauly's Real-Encyclopädie der Classischen Altertumswissenschaft (Stuttgart, 1893-1956), XI.2.1594, 1603; hereafter designated as PW.

[17]N.h., XXI.4, 7.

[18]Pliny, XXI.7-9.

[19]PW, XI.2.1605-1607. See also J. Burnichon, "Fleurs et couronnes aux funérailles," in Etud. relig., philos., histor. et littérat (1889); Laum, Der Totenkranz (Köln, 1910).

[20]The Works of Michael Drayton, ed. J. W. Hebel (Oxford, 1961), II, 431.

[21]The Women of Troy, ll. 1143-1144; Schol. Eurip. Phoen. 1632; Aristophanes, Lys. 602. See PW, XI.2.1595-1598.

[22]IV.vii.43-44; ed. W. A. Camps (Cambridge, 1965).

[23]Propertius, IV.iii.15-16.

[24]Propertius, IV.vii.59.

[25]PW, XI.2.1595.

[26]Plutarch, Pericles, 36, 25; PW, XI.2.1596.

[27]Horace, Satire II.3.256; PW, XI.2.1597.

[28]VI.4, 9; PW, XI.2.1597.

[29]PW, XI.2.1602.

[30]Rome, 1965, pp. 10-11; for the iconography see J. B. Frey, a.a.O., II, Rome, 1954, Abb. 967, S. 155.

[31]Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period (New York, 1964), IX.53.

[32]Brekelmans, p. 116, n.35; for the iconography see ILCV, no. 56, 7 (I, S. 15).

[33]See PW XI.2.1592-1594 for a list of materials, occasions, and dedications.

[34]PW, XI.2.1596.

[35]Allan I. Ludwig, Graven Images (Middletown, Conn., 1966), plate 6, p. 78.

[36]Ludwig, p. 77; see also Frederick Burgess, English Churchyard Memorials (London, 1963), p. 188.

[37]PW, XIII.2.1432-1442 passim; see also M. B. Ogle, "Laurel in Ancient Religion and Folklore," AJP, XXXI, 287ff; Tschirch, Handbuch d. Pharmakognosie, I, 694.

[38]Josef Murr, Die Pflanzenwelt in der Griechischen Mythologie (Innsbruck, 1890; Groningen, 1969), p. 93; see Plutarch, qu. graec. 12; Pausanias, VIII.48, 2.

[39]Murr, p. 97.

[40]Murr, p. 94.

[41]Murr, p. 96; Theocritus, Idyll VII.72ff.

[42]Enquiry into Plants; trans. from the Loeb Classical Library (London, 1916), "Index of Plants," II.444-445.

[43]I.305-306; for further information see Elfriede Abbe, The Plants of Virgil's Georgics (Ithaca, 1965), p. 95.

[44]X.13.

[45]Goodyer's Dioscorides, I.40, 78, 106.

[46]Pliny, XV.127-138.

[47]Pliny, XVI.80.

[48]Pliny, XVI.239.

[49]Pliny, XV.127-128.

[50]Pliny, XXI.7. For a complete description of the laurel of antiquity see PW, XIII.2.1431-1442.

[51]F. van der Meer and Christine Mohrmann, Atlas of the Early Christian World (London and Edinburgh, 1958), p. 143. For further studies on the "Trophy of the Cross" cliché, see H. von Campenhausen, "Die Passionssarkophage," Marb. Jahrb. f. Kinstwiss., 5 (1929), 29f; F. Gerke, "Die Zeitbestimmung der Passionssarkophage," Archaeologiai Ertesitö, 52 (1939), 195ff; F. W. Deichmann and T. Klauser, Frühchristliche Sarcophage (Basel, 1966), cf. Tafel 16.

[52]Thorndike, I, 588.

[53]Thorndike, I, 229.

[54]Emblem XCIX, Symbolorum (1593).

[55]Emblem XXXV.

[56]Emblem XVII, a curious use, which may have its source in Pliny, XV.136-137.

[57]See Hazel A. Stevenson, Herbal Lore as Reflected in the Works of the Major Elizabethan Poets and Dramatists (Diss., Chapel Hill,N.C., 1930); Louis B. Wright, Middle-Class Culture, pp. 549-602.

[58]Herball (1636), p. 1405.

[59]Gerard, p. 1407.

[60]Gerard, p. 1410.

[61]Theatrum, p. 205.

[62]Theatrum, pp. 206-207.

[63]London, 1629, pp. 598-599.

[64]James Henry's comments provide further confirmation of this practice: "Throughout continental Europe at the present day, the making of wreaths and garlands for tombs gives employment to a vast number of persons, these wreaths and garlands being periodically renewed during a long series of years by the affection of relatives or friends, or even of strangers. The fresh wreath still hangs on the ancient monument of Abelard and Heloise in the cemetery of Père la Chaise at Paris," Aeneidea (Dublin, 1878), II, 376-377.

[65]PW, XVI.1.1171.

[66]Murr, pp. 85-86.

[67]PW, XVI.1.1180-1182.

[68]Andreae Alciati, Emblematvm Libellvs (Paris, 1535), p. 69.

[69]Murr, p. 86.

[70]Euripides, Electra, ll. 323-325; trans. from the Loeb Classical Library (New York, 1924).

[71]Electra, ll. 510-512.

[72]Pausanias, I.22.2; II.32.3; as cited in Murr, p. 89. See also various references to Pausanias in PW, XVI.1.1181.

[73]PW, XVI.1.1179.

[74]Murr, p. 86.

[75]See "Index of Plants," II.465-466.

[76]Georgics, I.306; II.112; see also Eclogue VII. For further information see Abbe, p. 145.

[77]Goodyer's Dioscorides, I.155.

[78]Pliny, XV.122. For a further discussion of the misidentification of myrtle with oxymyrsine, see Chap. V.

[79]Pliny, XV.122.

[80]Pliny, XV.119-120.

[81]Pliny, XV.120.

[82]Pliny, XV.124.

[83]Pliny, XV.125-126.

[84]Pliny, XV.126.

[85]Pliny, XV.119.

[86]Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum (Stuttgart, 1945), II.29: "H. U. v. Schoenebeck . . . sieht in den Bäumen u. Hirtenszenen gewisser Sarkophage von der Ark des. Sark. von La Gayolle Hinweise auf den Grabgarten; in diesem Sinn spricht er von der Gruppe der Paradeisossarkophage. . . ."

[87]Reallexiken, II.29-30.

[88]Reallexiken, II.30; for the iconography, see Grabplatte Later. Mus. Epigr., Wand 14, 4; DACL 13, 2, 2378 Fig. 9942.

[89]Hieroglyphica (Basileae, 1556).

[90]Gerard, pp. 1411-1413.

[91]Theatrum, pp. 1452-1455.

[92]*Paradisi*, pp. 427-428.

[93]Murr, pp. 141-145.

[94]*PW*, V.2.2839-2846.

[95]*PW*, V.2.2845.

[96]*PW*, V.2.2846.

[97]Propertius, IV.vii.79-80; see Camps, p. 123n. Whether one reads *pone* with Sandbach or prefers to read *pelle*, the sense is clear: ivy is considered an appropriate grave plant.

[98]Theophrastus, III.xviii.6-10.

[99]*Georgics*, II.258.

[100]*Georgics*, IV.124; see also Abbe, p. 147.

[101]Goodyer's *Dioscorides*, II.210.

[102]Pliny, XXIV.75-80.

[103]Pliny, XVI.144-152.

[104]*Recherches sur le symbolisme funéraire des Romains* (Paris, 1966), p. 11.

[105]Cumont, pp. 219-220.

[106]Goodenough, IX, 7.

[107]Goodenough, IX, 54.

[108]Goodenough, X, 205.

[109]Thorndike, IV, 595.

[110]*Herball*, pp. 857-858.

[111]*Theatrum*, pp. 678-681.

[112]David Daiches, "Milton," in Patrides, p. 103; Brooks and Hardy, p. 136.

[113]D. S. Berkeley, N&Q, CCVI (1961), 178, gives a more profound interpretation to "Yet once more," reading these words as an allusion to Hebrews 12:26-27.

[114]Trapp, p. 253.

[115]Masson, I, 647-648.

[116]Masson, I, 653.

[117]Epigram IV.

[118]Discourse of English Poetry, cited by Edmund Kemper Broadus, The Laureateship (Freeport, 1966), p. 34.

[119]A Sessions, ll. 3-4.

[120]Sonnet III, ll. 29-32.

[121]Broadus, p. 49.

[122]L. P. Wilkinson, The Georgics of Virgil (Cambridge, 1969), p. 27.

[123]See John Carey and Alastair Fowler, The Poems of John Milton (London, 1968), p. 240, who refer to Horace, Odes, I.xxv.18.

[124]Carey and Fowler, p. 252.

[125]See especially E. M. W. Tillyard, Milton (London, 1930), pp. 80-85.

[126]Tillyard, loc. cit.

[127]Ancient Fvnerall Monvments (London, 1631), p. 41.

[128]Weever, pp. 32-34.

[129]Carey and Fowler observe that this probably echoes "the pseudo-Shakespearean Passionate Pilgrim x 1-4: 'Sweet rose, fair flower, untimely pluck'd, soon vaded. . . ,'" p. 15.

[130]A New English Dictionary (Oxford, 1888).

[131]Conrad Heresbach, The Whole Art and Trade of Husbandry, tr. Barnaby Googe, I (1586), 32.

[132]The Trin Ms. reading, "crop your young," uses a similar agricultural term, "crop."

[133]Tuve, p. 180.

CHAPTER IV

[1]For a comprehensive bibliography of Paradise commentary see A. Bartlett Giamatti, The Earthly Paradise and the Renaissance Epic (Princeton, 1966).

[2]To mention just a few: J. B. Broadbent, Some Graver Subject (London, 1960), pp. 173-185; D. C. Allen, The Harmonious Vision (Baltimore, 1954), Chap. 5; Grant McColley, Paradise Lost, an Account of Its Growth and Major Origins (Chicago, 1940).

[3]Giamatti, p. 300.

[4]Dennis H. Burden, The Logical Epic (London, 1967), also makes the point that Milton's Garden owes "much to classical precedent and contemporary taste," p. 41.

[5]Some Graver Subject, pp. 174-175.

[6]See Edward Hyams, The English Garden (London, 1964), pp. 205-240.

[7]London, 1629, p. 3.

[8]Herball (1636), p. 4. The term embroidered was frequently used in a semi-technical sense; e.g., Louis Liger D'Auxerre, The Compleat Florist uses it so: "Some are call'd Embroider'd Parterres; others are call'd Parterres partly embroider'd, partly decoupee or cut with flat Borders; others Parterres of Gazon, or with Grass-plots only . . . ." (London, 1706), p. 135.

[9]For a discussion of Christian Latin Paradises see Giamatti, pp. 67-93.

[10]Garden-Craft in the Bible and Other Essays (London, 1927), pp. 123-124.

[11]Paradisi, p. 413.

[12]Herball, p. 4.

[13]In Bacon's Essays, ed. Richard Whately (Boston, 1871), pp. 443-444.

[14]This is the title of the 2nd edn. of Sir Hugh Plat's Floraes Paradise, edited by his kinsman Charles Bellingham (London, 1653).

[15]Douglas Bush, English Literature in the Earlier Seventeenth Century (Oxford, 1962), p. 35.

[16]Works, VIII, 33.

[17]Works, III, 158-159.

[18]Darbishire, Early Lives, p. 6.

[19]Masson, I, 555-556, 562.

[20]William Riley Parker, Milton (Oxford, 1968), I, 192.

[21]Parker, I, 400.

[22]Parker, I, 608.

[23]Some Graver Subject, p. 184.

[24]William Temple, "Gardens of Epicurus," in Five Miscellaneous Essays by Sir William Temple, ed. Samuel Holt Monk (Ann Arbor, 1963), pp. 28-29.

[25]London, 1953, pp. 185-186.

[26]Carey and Fowler, p. 615.

[27]Carey and Fowler, p. 615.

[28]East Lansing, 1970, p. 139.

[29]A Preface to Paradise Lost, p. 48.

[30]"Milton's Abyssinian Paradise," UTSE, 29 (1950), 144-145; Clark cites Allan Gilbert, A Geographical Dictionary of Milton (New Haven, 1919), p. 18.

[31]"Gardens of Epicurus," p. 27.

[32]"Of Gardens," p. 446.

[33]London, 1617, p. 12.

[34]The Diary of John Evelyn, ed. E. S. De Beer (Oxford, 1955), IV, 176-177.

[35]See Stanley Stewart, The Enclosed Garden (Madison, Milwaukee, London, 1966).

[36]The Profitable Art of Gardening (London, 1586), p. 7. Enclosures are also described in Hill's The Gardeners Labyrinth (London, 1577), pp. 13-16.

[37]Rohde, p. 135.

[38]Sylva (2nd edn., London, 1670), p. 128.

[39]The Profitable Art of Gardening, pp. 9-10.

[40]A Treatise of Fruit-Trees (Oxford, 1657), pp. 116-117.

[41]London, 1661.

[42]Carey and Fowler attribute Milton's diction to the influence of Diodorus, p. 618; see also G. W. Whiting, Milton's Literary Milieu (New York, 1964), pp. 66-67.

[43]A Treatise of Fruit-Trees, pp. 37-38.

[44]Paradisi, p. 2.

[45]William Empson, Some Versions of Pastoral (London, 1950), p. 162.

[46]Austen, p. 38.

[47]Clark, p. 146.

[48]A Treatise of Fruit-Trees, pp. 36-37.

[49]Temple, pp. 24-26.

[50]For a lengthy note on the alchemical references, see Carey and Fowler, p. 623.

[51]Rohde, p. 131.

[52]Paradisi, p. 416; for the emblematic aspect of the flowers of Paradise, see Carey and Fowler, p. 627.

[53]Paradisi, p. 421.

[54]Paradisi, p. 421.

[55]"Of Gardens," p. 445.

[56]Pliny, Ep., V.vi.32-37; The Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, Mass., 1969), pp. 349-351. For a detailed description of ancient gardens see PW, "Gartenbau."

[57]Parker, p. 170.

[58]II.418-419; Evelyn describes more than 60 Royal or Private gardens and gives short notices of 40 minor ones.

[59]William Lawson (London, 1617), pp. 4-8.

[60]Pp. 449-450. Iver Heath was rich in flora and frequently visited by herbalists and later botanists.

[61]P. 793.

[62]P. 1000.

[63]Arbroath, 1926.

[64]Aubrey, Darbishire, p. 6.

[65]P. 699.

[66]A New Orchard and Garden, p. 57.

[67]Rohde, p. 129.

[68]A New Orchard, p. 12.

[69]A Way to Get Wealth.

[70]The Gardeners Labyrinth, p. 24.

[71]Garden-Craft, p. 129.

[72]The Profitable Art of Gardening, p. 10; see also The Gardeners Labyrinth: "The framing of sundry Herbers delectable in a Garden, with the walkes and alleys artely devised in the same," pp. 22-25 passim.

[73]"Of Gardens," p. 445.

[74]"A Christian Paradise," in Mount-Orgueil (1641), p. 124.

[75]Leonard Meager in The English Gardener (London, 1670) gives a list of suitable arbor plants, among them sweet-bryer, jessamine, roses, piracantas, lawrels, pp. 248-249. For a discussion of the laurel, myrtle, and acanthus of Paradise, see Chap. V.

[76]Some Graver Subject, p. 180.

[77]Giamatti, p. 312.

[78]A Treatise of Fruit-Trees, p. 37.

[79]Paradisi, p. 413.

[80]Herball, p. 4.

[81]For a study of Patristic, Midrashic, and Reformation commentators on "Work in Paradise," see Sister Mary Irma Corcoran, Milton's Paradise with Reference to the Hexameral Background (Washington, 1945), pp. 54-55; see also Arnold Williams, The Common Expositor (Chapel Hill, 1948), pp. 109-111.

[82]According to The Book of Jubilees, the angels "instructed him to do everything that is suitable for tillage," The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament, ed. R. H. Charles (Oxford, 1913), II, 16. See also The Solitary or Carthusian Gard'ner, Written in French by Francis Gentil and Newly done into English (London, 1706): "The Culture of Gardens. . . has always been look'd upon as the First Art in the World: Nothing can afford more Pleasure than the Pursuit of it," p. i.

[83]Acetaria (London, 1699). Evelyn's contributions to the gardening literature of England include: The French Gardiner (London, 1658), whose dedication was written by Evelyn; "Directions for the Gardiner at Sayes-Court," ed. Geoffrey Keynes, 1926; The Compleat gard'ner by De La Quintinye, translated from the French by Evelyn, 2 vols. (1693). Also a letter to Dr. Thomas Browne (January 28, 1657-8) mentions a projected contribution to a gardening book: "I have drawne it in loose sheetes, almost every chapter rudely. . . ."

[84]Evelyn, III, 324.

[85]Fovre Bookes of Hvsbandrie (London, 1586), pp. 5-6.

[86]See Lorenzo di Credi, "Our Lord Appearing to Mary Magdalene," Uffizi Gallery, Florence.

[87]Thomas Tusser, London, 1573.

[88]Gervase Markham, 5th edn., 1637.

[89]A New Orchard and Garden, p. 56.

[90]A number of the gardening manuals give detailed instructions, many complete with illustrations, of the art of pruning. See Stephen Blake, The Compleat Gardeners Practice (London, 1664); Joseph Blagrave, The Epitomie of the Art of Husbandry (London, 1685).

[91]The Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, Mass., 1953), p. 245.

[92]Carey and Fowler suggest: "overwoody] Probably 'excessively bushy'; pampered] Primarily 'overindulged'; but a secondary play on Fr. pampre . . . may be Miltonic. Some authorities regarded the two words as etymologically related," p. 687.

[93]P. 69.

[94]Pp. 81-82.

[95]Googe, p. 80.

[96]For Milton's figurative use of the term manure, see Animadversions, Complete Prose Works of John Milton (New Haven, 1953), I, 715, and Reason of Church-Government, I, 785.

[97]Of Education, Works, IV, 282: Cato, Varro, and Columella.

[98]See H. Stuart Jones, Companion to Roman History (Oxford, 1912), pp. 304-315; see also PW on Ackerbau, Gartenbau, Gemüsebau, Getreide.

[99]Metamorphoses, XIV.622ff.

[100]See Thomas Hill's The Profitable Art of Gardening, in which he cites 18 ancient authors and "sundrie others."

[101]London, 1613; see also John Worlidge, Systema Agriculturae (3rd edn., London, 1681), which includes "An Account of the several Instruments and Engines used in this Profession."

[102]London, 1685; he does not give his name but describes himself as a Physician of Rochelle.

[103]Besides the materials cited, see The Compleat Planter & Cyderist (London, 1690).

[104]See D'Auxerre's The Compleat Florist, which has ten pages of illustrations of gardening tools, pp. 145-154.

[105]Wordsworth, "The Recluse," ll. 804-808.

CHAPTER V

[1]For a survey of laurel and myrtle, see Chap. III.

[2]P. 653.

[3]*N.h.*, XV.127-138.

[4]*Ep.*, V.vi.32-33.

[5]Gerard (1636), pp. 1405-1410; Parkinson, *Theatrum*, pp. 205-207.

[6]Pp. 598-599.

[7]*Flora of Buckinghamshire*, pp. lxi, 293.

[8]Gerard, p. 1405; see also William Coles, *Adam in Eden*, p. 311.

[9]Cf. *Samson Agonistes*, ". . . and plant it round with shade/ Of laurel ever green," ll. 1734-1735.

[10]*Sylva*, p. 132.

[11]*Diary*, IV, 365.

[12]*Diary*, II, 251-252.

[13]*Diary*, II, 287.

[14]Masson, I, 803-805; Parker, I, 177.

[15]*Gardens of Epicurus*, p. 28.

[16]*Paradisi*, pp. 598-599.

[17]Babb, *The Moral Cosmos*, p. 1.

[18]Parker, I, 172, 177.

[19]Masson, I, 769.

[20]*Georgics*, II.112; *Eclogue*, VII.

[21]For the symbolism of myrtle, see Chap. III; see also Evelyn's *Diary*, where he calls attention to the Italian "Elysian Fields so celebrated by the Poets, nor unworthily for their situation & verdure, being full of myrtils. . . , II, 351.

[22]The Compleat Florist, pp. 427-428.

[23]N.h., XV.122.

[24]Herball, pp. 1411-1413.

[25]Theatrum, pp. 1452-1455.

[26]Louis Ginzberg, tr. H. Szold (Philadelphia, 1901-1959), I, 20. In this connection it may be added that Queen Esther's other name, Hadassah, meaning "myrtle," was appropriate because "the sweet fragrance of the myrtle pervades the air in which it grows," I, 383-384.

[27]Faerie Queene, III.vi.43.

[28]"Of Plants in Scripture," Works, III, 44-45.

[29]Diary, II, 287.

[30]Diary, II, 390.

[31]Diary, II, 322.

[32]Diary, II, 182.

[33]Adamus Exul, ed. and tr. W. Kirkconnell, The Celestial Cycle (Toronto, 1952), i. 40-44.

[34]P. 869.

[35]P. 869.

[36]Murr, pp. 78-91. Pausanias's "Description of Greece" (VI.24.6) refers to the two attributes of Venus, the rose and the myrtle. There are also Greek coins representing Venus sitting down at the foot of a myrtle tree.

[37]PW, VII, i, 781-782.

[38]PW, VII, i, 810.

[39]Cassianos Bassos, Libri XX; Needham, Liber XI, Cap. VII, p. 307. According to G. Sarton, Introduction to the History of Science (Baltimore, 1927), Cassianos Bassos's sources were Vindonius Anatolius of Beirut and Didymos of Alexandria, both of whom flourished in the fourth or fifth century, A.D. I am indebted for this information to Drs. J. Heniger, Biehistorisch Instituut der Rijksuniversiteit (Utrecht, The Netherlands), letter dated 19 April 1971.

[40]P. 68; see also the English Dialect Dictionary, where the notation appears that in Suffolk "Other young . . . stuff is also called Spring."

[41]Paradisi, p. 20.

[42]Fovre Bookes of Hvsbandrie, p. 67.

[43]Stirpium Historiae Pemptadis Sextae (1616), p. 773; I owe this reference to Drs. J. Heniger.

[44]Herball, p. 1413.

[45]Kruyt en Bloem-hof (Amsterdam, 1663), p. 209; I owe this reference to Drs. J. Heniger.

[46]Introduction by Harold Nicolson to Peter Coats, Great Gardens of the Western World (London, 1968), pp. 9, 13.

[47]Great Gardens, p. 254.

[48]Great Gardens, p. 262. See also Villa Taranto, where flowering trees provide shelter for many rare plants, pp. 266-267; and the rose garden at Bampton Manor, Oxfordshire, in which appear standard roses amidst flowering trees, Peter Coats, Flowers in History (London, 1970), pp. 180-181.

[49]London, 1964, p. 24. Cf. Marjorie Nicolson, The Breaking of the Circle (Evanston, 1950), who suggests that the wild luxuriance of the Garden contrasted to the ordered restraint imposed upon it by Adam and Eve reflects "two persistent aspects of Milton's personality, one satisfied with proportion and limitation, the other revelling in the luxuriant and the unrestrained," p. 186. It seems to me, however, that the alternation between the two is a reflection of the English gardening temperament.

[50]Hyams, p. 115.

[51]Hyams, p. 125.

[52]P. 428.

[53]Heresbachius, p. 68. This notion is based on the belief that garlic absorbs impure juices and that this chemical action in the soil makes the rose more fragrant, Thorndike, VII, 312.

[54]From a letter to me dated 27 May 1971.

[55]"Outwit the Plant Pests" (May 30, 1971).

[56]Hyams, p. 214.

[57]Cf. Chaucer, Troilus and Criseyde, "But right as floures, thorugh the cold of nyght / Iclosed, stoupen on hire stalke lowe, / Redressen hem ayein the sonne bright, / And sprede on hire kynde cours by rewe," II, 967-970.

[58]Francis Gentil, The Solitary or Carthusian Gard'ner (London, 1706), p. 103.

[59]Hill, The Profitable Art of Gardening, p. 85.

[60]N.h., XXIII.165.

[61]Theatrum, p. 1454.

[62]Theatrum, p. 1191.

[63]Acorus Calamus, popularly called "Sweet Myrtle" or "Sweet Flag" in Britain, had a variety of uses, including its use as a binder for grafts; see Ralph Austen, A Treatise of Fruit-Trees, p. 135, and Mrs. M. Grieve, A Modern Herbal (New York, 1931), II, 726-729.

[64]The myrtle wand referred to in "On the Morning of Christ's Nativity" (l. 51) is perhaps Myrtus sylvestris, also known as "pricking myrtle" or "wild myrtle," mentioned by Virgil as useful for spear shafts (Georgics, II.447) and in the Aeneid as "bristling" (III.22-23).

[65]Fumifugium, p. 14.

[66]Herball, pp.1259-1270.

[67]Fovre Bookes of Hvsbandrie, p. 68.

[68]The Classical Museum, III (1846), 1. For a detailed survey of the problem in both ancient and Renaissance botany, see Appendix. For the application of this perplexing identification, see Carey and Fowler, literary critics, who take Virgil's acanthus as acacia and, therefore, Milton's acanthus as acacia, p. 653; and Benjamin A. Barton and Thomas Castle, medical botanists, who in British Flora Medica take Milton's acanthus as acanthus mollis, pp. 34-35.

[69]Gerard, pp. 1146-1148, 1603-1604; Parkinson, Paradisi, pp. 604-606, Theatrum, pp. 1025-1026.

[70]Gerard, pp. 1146-1148; Parkinson, Paradisi, pp. 329-330, Theatrum, pp. 992-993.

[71]Parkinson, *Paradisi*, pp. 604-606.

[72]*The English Gardener* (London, 1670), pp. 248-249. See also Worlidge, *Systema Agriculturae* (1681), p. 101.

[73]Cited by Yates, p. 13.

[74]I realise that logic hardly applies to horticultural aesthetics, and that, in spite of the reasons adduced for pyracantha, Milton may have liked the way *acanthus mollis* grew in such profusion in Italian gardens and may have preferred it to pyracantha. It might be added, however, that Dr. J. S. L. Gilmour, Director of the Cambridge University Botanic Garden, thinks it more likely "that Milton had in mind pyracantha rather than *Acanthus mollis*," since *acanthus mollis* is not a shrub. Letter to me dated 6 June 1971.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX

Josef Murr's observations on acanthus confirm Yates's researches and reveal the difficulty of identifying acanthus in the ancient world:

"An einer Stelle des Plinius (n.h. XXII, 22, 34) erfahren wir, dass die dornenlose Art des Akanthus (Acanthus mollis L.) auf welche die Beschreibung des Pausanias ganz wohl passt, paederos gennant werde. Der weiche Acanthus wurde nun freilich in Griechenland nirgends vorgefunden und wir könnten daher am ehesten auf einen ähnlichen distel- (z.b. die Jurinea mollis L) oder alantartigen Korbblütler der Mediterranflora, von denen mehrere die beschriebene Blattgestaltung aufweisen, zu denken haben. Angefügt kann noch werden, dass Plinius an einer anderen Stelle (h.n. XIX, 8, 54) bemerkt auch das caerefolium (der Küchenkerbel, Anthriscus Caerefolium Hoffm., ein würziges Doldengewächs) werde bei den Griechen paederos gennant." (Die Pflanzenwelt in der Griechischen Mythologie, pp. 202-203)

A glance at the Index of Plants in Pliny's Natural History reveals the difficulty of accurate identification:

Paederos. (1) = caereofolium, Anthriscus cerefolium, XIX.170;

(2) = melamphyllum, a type of acanthus, Acanthus mollis, XXII.76

(Loeb, vol. 7, p. 526)

Virgil's use of acanthus highlights the same difficulty:

(Living Plants)

A. Georgics: "ille comam mollis iam tondebat hyacinthi" IV.137
(inferior ms. acanthi)

B. Georgics: "quid tibi odorato referam sudantia ligno
balsamaque et bacas semper frondentis
acanthi" II.118-119

C. Georgics: "aut flexi tacuissem vimen acanthi" IV.123

(Ornamental Plants)

D. Eclogues: "et molli circum est ansas amplexus acantho" III.45

E. Aeneid: ". . . et circumtextum croceo velamen
acantho. . . " I.649

The following brief summary on the commentary and identification of Virgil's acanthus will show the complexity of the problem.

Elfriede Abbe, in The Plants of Virgil's Georgics, identifies the acanthus of II.119 and of IV.123 as acacia (P. 129). He identifies the acanthus of IV.137 as Acanthus mollis L., brankursine, bear's foot (P. 179). It might be remarked that Abbe follows an inferior manuscript reading in Georgics IV.137, which substitutes acanthi for hyacinthi.

The confusing identification of acanthus with acacia is further confirmed by the entry on Akanthos in Pauly's Real-Encyclopädie: "Übrigens heisst A. auch ein stacheliger, immergrüner, einen gummiartigen Saft ausschwitzender Baum in Ägypten, der mit der vorigen Pflanze nichts zu thun hat. Das Nähere über denselben s. under Akazie." (I.1.1149)

Parkinson, in the Theatrum Botanicum, refuses to consider Virgil's acanthus as the acacia, since acacia has no berries:

". . . it is most probable Virgil intended the Pyracantha, that we most usually so call, for Pliny so called it also. . . ." (P. 1549)

Yates's study concludes that Acanthus and Acanthium "may be conveniently reduced to five classes, each including plants which, though now accurately distinguished in botanical systems, have so many common properties that in ancient times they would all be comprised under the same denomination." (P. 1)

I shall in the following pages outline ancient and Renaissance herbal commentary on acanthus.

Pliny on Acanthus - Acanthus spinosus and Acanthus mollis

"There are two kinds of acanthus, a plant of the ornamental garden and of the city, which has a broad, long leaf, and covers the banks of borders and the flat tops of the raised portions of gardens. One is thorny and curled, which is the shorter; the other is smooth, and is called by some paederos, by others melamphyllum." (N.h. XXII.76)

Pliny on Acanthion

". . . usually cotton thistle, Onopordon acanthium, and probably also O. illyricum, but in XXIV 108 a thorn-tree, perhaps Acacia arabica."

("Index to Plants," Loeb, vol. VII, p. 486)

Pliny on Pyracantha

"There is also a thorn with the name of appendix, because the bright red berries hanging from it are called appendixes. These, either raw by themselves or dried and boiled in wine, check looseness of the bowels and colic. The berries of pyracantha are taken in drink for the bites of serpents." (N.h. XXIV.114)

Gerard on Thistles

Acanthus sativus = *Garden Beares-breech* and *Branke Ursine* of Renaissance gardeners

= *Acanthus lavis* = smooth *Branke Ursine* of Pliny

= *Acanthus* of Virgil's Third *Eclogue* but not *Acanthus* of Virgil's *Georgics*

"Beares breech of the garden hath broad leaues, smooth, somewhat blacke, gashed on both the edges, and set with many cuts and fine nickes between which riseth vp in the midst a big stalke brauely deckt with flours, set in order from the middle vpward, of color white, of some long, which are armed as it were with two catkins, one higher, another lower: after them grow forth the husks, in which is found broad seed. . . .

"Dioscorides . . . garden Branke Vrsine groweth in moist and stony places, and also in gardens: it were vnaduisedly done to seeke it in either of the Germaines any where, but in gardens onely; in my garden it doth grow very plentifully. . . .

". . . yet doth *Acanthus* signifie generally all kinde of Thistles. . . .

"The tame or garden Branke Vrsine is named in Latine, *Sativas*, or Hortensis Acanthus. . . . Pliny also calleth this *Acanthus lavis*, or smooth Branke Vrsine, and reporteth it to be a city herbe, and to serue for arbors. . . . The Ingrauers of old time were wont to carue the leaues of this Branke Vrsine in pillers, and other workes, and also vpon the eares of pots, as among other Virgil testifieth in the third Eclog of his Bucolicks:

Et nobis idem Alcimedon duo pocula fecit,
Et molli circum est ansas amplexus Acantha.

I take Virgils Acanthus to be that which we now commonly call Pyracantha. . . ." (Herball, pp. 1146-1148)

Parkinson on Thistles (Carduus)

Thistles = Acanthus sativus

= Acanthus siluestris

"You may somewhat maruaile, to see me curious to plant Thistles in my Garden, when as you might well say, they are rather plagues then pleasures. . . but when you have viewed them well . . . I will then abide your censure, if they be not worthy of some place, although it be but a corner of the Garden. . . .

"Acanthus sativus. Garden Beares breech.

"The leaues of this kinde of smooth thistle . . . are almost as large as the leaues of the Artichoke. . . . it sendeth forth from among the leaues one or more great and strong stalkes, three or foure foote high, without any branch at all. . . .

"Acanthus siluestris. Wilde or prickly Beares breech.

"This prickly Thistle hath diuers long greenish leaues lying on the ground, much narrower then the former. . . ."
(Paradisi, pp. 329-330)

Parkinson on Acanthus. (Acanthus sive Branca ursina. Beares-breech)

Acanthus sativus = Garden gentle or manured Beares-breech

Acanthus Sylvestris = Wilde or prickly Beares-breech

Both grew in Italy, Spain, and France, "but are onely nursed up in the gardens of the curious with us. . . .

". . . the forme of the leaves was usually the patterne for many engravings, etc. in pillars and other workes. . . ."

Parkinson makes the further observation that some doubt whether this is the true acanthus of Dioscorides, and Parkinson speculates on reasons for calling Acanthus sativus "Acanthus," since it has no spines. (Theatrum, pp. 992-993)

Gerard on Evergreen Thorn

Evergreen thorne tree = oxyacantha of Theophrastus
= acanthus of Virgil's Georgics, Book II
= pyracantha of Renaissance gardens

"This plant, which Lobel and some other late Writers have called by the name of Pyracantha, is the Oxyacantha mentioned by Theophrastus, lib. 1, cap. 15 lib. 3, cap. 4, hist. plant. amongst the euer-green trees; and I thinke rather this than our white Thorn to be Oxyacantha of Dioscorides, lib. 1, ca. 123. And certainly it was no other than this Thorn which Virgil mentioneth by name of Acanthus, lib. 2. Georg. in these words, Et bacchas semper frondentis Acanthi: That is, And the berries of the E're-green Thorn.

". . . It grows wilde in sundry places of Italy and Province in France, but is kept in gardens with vs, where it is held in good esteem for his euer-greenesse and pliablenesse to any work or forme you desire to impose vpon him." (Herball, pp. 1603-1604)

Parkinson on White Thorne or Hawthorne,

Perhaps = oxyacantha of Dioscorides
Perhaps = oxyacanthus of Galen
(Barbery may be Oxyacantha)
(Pyracantha = oxyacantha of Dioscorides)

"Very many . . . doe take this Thorne to be Oxyacantha of Dioscorides which hee describeth to be like the Peare-tree but lesser, and very thorny, bearing a berry like unto those of the Myrtle. . . . others take it to be the Oxyacanthus of Galen. . . . [some] take the Barbery to be Oxyacantha . . . but by the judgement of the best and most expert Herbarists in our times, the Pyracantha . . . is the true Oxyacantha of Dioscorides . . . and Theophrastus. . . ."
(Theatrum, pp. 1025-1026)

(Note: The white thorn of Lycidas is the hawthorne.)

Parkinson on Pyracantha. (The Euergreene Hawthorne, or Prickly Corall Tree)

Pyracantha = Oxyacantha of Dioscorides

= Hawthorne tree or bush of Renaissance gardens

"This euer greene shrubbe is so fine an ornament to a Garden or Orchard, either to be noursed vp into a small tree by it selfe, by pruining and taking away the suckers and vnder branches, or by suffering it to grow with suckers, thicke and plashing the branches into a hedge, for that it is plyable to be ordered either way. . . . The younger branches are couered with a smooth darke blewish greene barke, and the elder with a more ash coloured thicke set with leaues without order, some great and others smaller, somewhat like both in forme and bignesse vnto the leaues of the Barberry tree, but somewhat larger, and more snipt about the edges, of a deeper greene colour also, and with small long thornes scattered here and there vpon the branches: the flowers come forth as well at the ends of the branches, as at diuers places at the ioynts of the leaues, standing thicke together, of a pale whitish colour, a little dasht ouer with a shew of blush, consisting of five leaves a peece, with some small threads

in the middle, which turne into berries very like vnto Hawthorne berries, but much redder and dryer, almost like polished corall, wherein are contained foure or fiue small yellowish white three square seede, somewhat shining. It is thought to be Oxyacantha of Dioscorides, but seeing Dioscorides doth explaine the forme of the leafe in his Chapter of Medlars, which he concealed in the Chapter of Oxyacantha, it cannot be the same for Mespilus Anthedon of Theophrastus, or Aronia of Dioscorides, hath the leafe of Oxyacantha, as Dioscorides saith, or of Smalladge, as Theophrastus, which cannot agree to this Thorne; but doth most liuely delineate out our white Thorne or Hawthorne, that now there is no doubt, but that Oxyacantha of Dioscorides is the Hawthorne tree or bush.

". . . an ornament to a Garden or Orchard, by reason of euer greene leaues, and red berries among them, being a pleasant spectacle and fit to be brought into the forme of an hedge, as one please to lead it. . . ." (Paradisi, pp. 604-606)

(Note: In Parkinson's description, pyracantha is the Evergreen Hawthorne, the Prickly Coral bush; it is not to be confused with the White-thorn Hawthorne. In the Renaissance, the term Hawthorne was popularly applied to both the Evergreen Hawthorne and to the White-thorn Hawthorne. The ambiguity springs from this dual usage.)

Gerard on Barberry

Does not = Oxyacantha of Dioscorides

Does not = Oxyacanthus which = Hawthorne tree

Oxyacantha = Galen's barberry bush

". . . Galen . . . plainely made a difference, Oxyacantha the Barberry bush, and Oxyacanthus the Hawthorne tree.

"Dioscorides hath not made mention of this Thorne; for that which he called Oxyacantha, in the feeminine gender, is Galens Oxyacanthus in the masculine gender." (Herball, pp. 1325-1326)

Parkinson on Barberry Bush or Tree

Does not = Oxyacantha of Dioscorides (Oxycantha of Dioscorides = Pyranantha)

Does not = Pyracantha

"It hath formerly beene held by very good and learned Authours, that this bush is the Oxyacantha of Dioscorides, and hath continued to this day, especially among the Apothecaries, yet Cordus accounted it an error. . . but we have showed elsewhere what the true Oxyacantha of Dioscorides is, even the Pyracantha which hath ever greene leaves, and red friable berryes, neither of which can agree with this Barbary bush." (Theatrum, p. 1559)

John Rea says: "Pyracantha. The ever-green Hawthorn, if suffered to grow at large, riseth up six or more feet high, full of branches, set with ever-green leaves snipt about the edges, and long sharp thorns: the flowers come forth in the Spring, many clustering together like those of Hawthorn, as the Berries are which succeed, but more in number on one branch, of the colour of Coral. . . this Green serveth with others to make an ever-green Hedge."
(Flora: seu De Florum Cultura. London, 1665, p. 237)

What emerges from this investigation is that nomenclature is more the problem than taxonomy. The term acanthus, meaning spine or thorn, was so elastic as to include not only spiny plants but also non-spiny brankursine. The Renaissance herbalists, in their

attempts to work their way through the ancient nomenclatural maze, did reach a number of unanimous conclusions on *acanthus*.

One further conclusion may be drawn from this survey: popular names breed difficulties. Not restricted to the ancients, the problem continues today. The popular name *myrtle*, for example, applies to many dissimilar plants. Dr. F. W. Went, Professor of Botany at the Laboratory of Desert Biology (Reno, Nevada), remarked in a letter to me (30 April 1971) that a number of plants are called *myrtle*: periwinkle (*Vinca*) moneywort (*Lysimachia nummularia*) and even blueberry (*Vaccinium myrtillis*).