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THE AMALGAMATION OF POETRY, PHILOSOPHY, AND CHRISTIAN FAITH: A STUDY OF HENRY VAUGHAN AND HIS "THE RETREAT" AND "THE WORLD"

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I cannot reach it; and my striving eye
Dazzles at it, as at eternity[1].

Abstract

Vaughan may not be the greatest poet of his age but he is still included in the majority of noteworthy anthologies. He has often been regarded as a Metaphysical poet by many critics although, in tone and subject matter, his poetry is richer than many minor Metaphysical. This is because Vaughan's poetry is a culmination of Christian teachings, Hermeneutics, and his special interest in Welsh history and mythology. Like his mentor, George Herbert, Vaughan is preoccupied with the state of human person in the world. But unlike Herbert, Vaughan is more philosophical in questioning the ways of God and the universe. The aim of this paper is to study "The Retreat" and "The World," two such poems similar in nature as far as man's place in the cosmos is concerned. While "The Retreat" offers going back to childhood, the pure, unspoiled state of human person, to escape from the sinful adult world that distract humans on the way to God, "The World" is a Hermeneutic contemplation on the cosmos encompassing all beings and all he creation that fills this cosmos.

Keywords: *Henry Vaughan, Christianity, Hermeneutics, Philosophy*.

[1] "Childhood" 1-2.

Berkan Ulu

ŞİİR, FELSEFE VE HRİSTİYAN İNANCININ KARIŞIMI: HENRY VAUGHAN'IN "THE RETREAT" VE "THE WORLD" ŞİİRLERİ ÜZERİNE BİR İNCELEME

Özet

Vaughan zamanının en büyük şairi olmayabilir ancak yine de önemli antolojilerin çoğunda kendisine yer bulabilmiştir. Çoğu eleştirmen tarafından genellikle Metafizik şair olarak değerlendirilen şairin şiirleri, kendi döneminin daha az bilinen Metafizik şairlerinden aslında daha zengindir. Bunun sebebi Vaughan'ın şiirinin Hristiyan öğretileri, Hermenötik felsefe, ve şairin Gal tarihi ve mitolojisine olan özel ilgisinin bir karışımı olmasıdır. Ustası George Herbert gibi Vaughan da insanın dünyadaki durumunu sorgular. Ancak Herbert'ın aksine, Vaughan, Tanrı'nın işlerini ve evreni daha felsefi bir yaklaşımla irdeler. Bu çalışmanın amacı Vaughan'ın insanın evrendeki yerini sorgulaması açısında benzerlik gösteren "The Retreat" ve "The World" şiirlerini incelemektir. "The Retreat" insanı Tanrı yolundan alı koyan günahkar dünyadan bir kaçış olarak, saf ve bozulmamış çocukluğu önerirken, "The World" tüm canlıları kuşatan evreni ve evreni dolduran tüm varlıkları Hermenötik felsefesine dayandırarak ele alır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Henry Vaughan, Hristiyanlık, Hermenötik felsefe, felsefe.*

Vaughan the Metaphysical

What is *metaphysical*? Who is *a metaphysical poet*? Or, to put it more precisely, what makes a poet a *metaphysical poet*? If philosophy's task is to ask questions rather than finding answers to questions as Derrida puts it, this study may disappoint its readers for the simple fact that it does not strive to find answers to these questions (*Derrida*). Yet, it is true that such questions are very familiar, if not new, to those who have been reading or studying metaphysical poetry. The question of categorising certain poets reached such limits that critics started spelling the word with a capital "M" in order to mark a distinctly different historical/literary period in which certain poets in England had many things in common (Reid 2, 11). Therefore, the reactions to the "Who is a metaphysical (or *M*etaphysical) poet?" issue is varied today; the list of metaphysical poets goes on

and on while answers vary from critic to critic[2]. Although John Donne and George Herbert's metaphysical qualities are usually observed to be out of the question, Andrew Marvell keeps changing sides from a metaphysical poet to a follower of Ben Jonson, or from a lyric pastoral poet to a political pamphleteer in almost every anthology – very much like he frequently changed sides during and after the Civil War. Cowley, as another example, has been credited as a Cavalier poet rather than metaphysical in many anthologies[3].

Henry Vaughan (1621-1695), too, has been subject to a similar controversy. T.S. Eliot thinks that it is hard to place Vaughan (and Traherne, as well) among metaphysical poets (63). However, Eliot, whose retrospective essays have provided a great deal of valuable commentary on the metaphysical tradition, stands alone in his argument. With the exception of Eliot, all major critics agree on Vaughan's metaphysical nature. Indeed, Vaughan, combining different aspects of life, philosophising on the inner nature of things, contemplating divine matters that culminate in a Hermetic worldview, *is* a metaphysical poet in many ways.

Vaughan the Poet

Vaughan is the second of the two major metaphysical poets who are of Welsh origin, the first being George Herbert. His educational background is like that of Donne; like Donne, he was sent to Oxford only to leave the university after two years in 1640 with the intention of studying law in the famous Inns of London (Mulder 29). It was during these years when he was much influenced by his twin brother Thomas Vaughan, who, against the will of his father, turned out to be a well-known Hermetic thinker and alchemist. During the Civil War, Vaughan, like most of the Oxonians, had royalist tendencies in a Puritan environment and, along with Crashaw, he worked for the Royalist cause. After the war, he returned to his home town, Breconshire, and became a secretary while he also carried on his semi-alchemical medicinal studies that he had begun while he was with his brother.

[2]There are over thirty poets who have been labelled "metaphysical" at different times by several critics. Some of these poets are John Donne, Andrew Marvell, Robert Herrick, George Herbert, Thomas Carew, Abraham Cowley, Richard Crashaw, Henry King, John Suckling, Richard Lovelace, John Cleveland, Henry Vaughan, Edmund Waller, Thomas Traherne, Francis Quarles, Lord Herbert of Cherbury, John Willmot the Earl of Rochester, Edward Benlowers, Richard Fanshawe, Aurelian Townshend, William Habbington, James Shirley, Richard Corbett, John Hall, and Sidney Godolphin.

[3]Rosemond Tuve and David Reid argue that Cowley is far from being a Metaphysical poet whereas Hammond thinks that he is more Cavalier than metaphysical (44).

His first publication, *Poems with the Tenth Satire of Juvenal Englished* (1646), a collection with translations of some of Juvenal's satirical poems, received little appreciation. In 1650, however, the first part of *Silex Scintillans*[4], showed Vaughan's real capability. The collection, with its twenty-six poems, was basically religious. The volume was republished in 1655 along with the second part with eleven more poems. The second edition also contained a preface in which Vaughan expressed his indebtedness to his literary mentor George Herbert and his work *The Temple* with the following words: "the blessed man, whose wholly life and verse gained many piovs converts of whom I am the least" [*sic*] (7). Vaughan's later works such as *Olor Iscanus* (1651) and *Thalia rediviva* (1678) never achieved *Silex Scintillans*'s literary accomplishment.

Understanding Vaughan the Poet

To understand Vaughan's poetic style and worldview, one would need four keywords. The first of these keywords is the adjective "Silurian". While reading Vaughan, it should be kept in mind that he called himself a Silurist, a member of the ancient Welsh tribe, the Silures, in Southern Wales. This detail is essential because every now and then it is possible to come across references to his Welsh origins in his poetry. Stylistically, too, Vaughan's use of the English language may be traced back to his Welsh origins with its music, harmony, and *locale*.

Vaughan's interest in the *ancient* is very much in line with his tendency towards Hermetic philosophy, our second key word. There is much debate on who he was, or whether he ever existed, but Hermes Trismegistus is usually regarded as the founder of the so-called Hermetic philosophy. Blending ancient Egyptian idea of universe with that of the Cabbala and a variety of religious and mystical practices such as alchemy, Hermeticism is an esoteric tradition as well as a prominent concept for Vaughan. Taking Thomas Vaughan's influence on the images Vaughan uses in his poetry into consideration, one may trace his idea of cosmos and "eternity" (a very frequent word in his poetry) to see how much Vaughan was under the influence of the seven Hermetic principles[5]. He thinks that everything in the universe is in a perpetual movement to be one with the

[4]"The Flashing Flint," "The Sparkling of the Flintstone," or "The Fiery Flint" (Grosart's translation).

[5]Mentalism (The All is Mind), Correspondence (As above, so below; as below, so above), Vibration (Nothing rests), Polarity (Everything is dual), Rhythm (Everything flows), Cause and Effect (Every cause has its effect; every effect has its cause), and Gender (Gender is in everything).

universe itself. The rhythm that comes out of this motion keeps the cosmic harmony intact.

Cosmos, the third key concept, usually refers to a synthesis of nature outside and inside in Vaughan's work. It is that of a *discordia concors*, which evokes musical synchronization on every level in the cosmos. Removed from the influentially pacifist millenarian views of his time, nature in his poetry is ever active; it crashes into fragments and reforms the one perfect unity. However, the state of being one with nature is best expressed in Vaughan's interest in childhood. At this point, Vaughan is often compared with Wordsworth because both poets share a nostalgic view for childhood. Nevertheless, unlike Wordsworth's secular view of childhood, Vaughan's thematic focus is on the divine purity and sinless past of infancy. Attributing Christian qualities to childhood, Vaughan regards childhood as a happy state that cannot be regained because man (to use Vaughan's term) is bound to grow sinful. In short, the degeneration of man, and the spiritual attempts to go back to the pure state of youth, both of which represent the conflicting nature of man, are common themes in Vaughan's works.

The focus on man as an ever-searching being in the universe completes the four pivotal concepts. Man, or the self, is at the centre of Vaughan's poetry. As man matures, he becomes worldlier, loosing his pure state. Thus the search mentioned above becomes a struggle to shake off his sins. This journey to the self, which is also found in the Hermetic idea of the cosmos, is a quest that will end either in salvation or in damnation. In that sense, Vaughan's "tolerant and undogmatic strain in Anglicanism" and his views on the divine nature of man are different from those of Herbert, who has certain Arminian believes, and of Crashaw, who sticks to Catholic dogmatism (Matar 2).

Vaughan is usually likened to Herbert, to whom he gives direct references. Indeed, *The Temple*, by Herbert, seems to be a great source of inspiration for Vaughan. However Vaughan is far from being a mere copy of Herbert. In many respects, they hardly share any similarities. Unlike Herbert, overtly personal accounts of philosophical struggles, for instance, are infrequent in Vaughan's work. Instead, avoiding placing himself on the front stage, Vaughan is more of a man of universal generalities. Thus, putting emphasis on Vaughan's "spiritual quickening and the gift of gracious feeling" to solve the mysteries of the universe, Grosart states that Herbert was only the master who showed the way to Vaughan in his poetic quest (2).

Vaughan has a straightforward language. Vaughan's restrained tone, ingenious imagery, and avoidance of the extravagant figures of speech of his age form the basis of his simplistic language and fresh poetic expression. The uncomplicated language does not, however, mean that Vaughan's poetic diction is shallow by any means. Considering his Hermetic background mixed with Christian overtones, one can easily sense the conceptual complexity in his poetry. Indeed, it is typical of Vaughan to present witty, complicated, and argumentative ideas through such a pure diction. In that sense, he shares the quick wit, precision, and sudden contrasts of images of Donne and Herbert, the major qualities that make him a metaphysical poet. In Vaughan's works, themes like love of nature, joy, earnestness, grace, beauty, devotion, inwardness, and self-discovery are contrasted and intensely woven with themes of corruption, regret, degeneration, and loss of faith and of grace in order to represent the dualism in nature. In other words, Vaughan admires the works of God, especially man, though he is also critical about his deterioration. Consequently, unlike Herbert, who presents a vexed soul and its bitter experiences in life, or Donne, who wants to kill "Death" in order to achieve eternal life, Vaughan wants to kill life so as to go back to his pure state of childhood. Thus, Vaughan is after a backward move (See "The Retreat," 29-30), as opposed to Donne, in the Christian idea of human life:

> False life! a foil and no more, when
> Wilt thou be gone?
> Thou foul deception of all men,
> That would not have the true come on!
>
> ("Quicknesse" 1-4)

On "The Retreat"[6]

Pointing out the differences between Vaughan and Herbert, Grosart claims that Herbert "never wrote anything so purely poetical as 'The Retreat'" (3). This may be the reason why the poem is one of the most quoted works of Vaughan. Both technically and thematically, the poem differs from mainstream metaphysical poems. Vaughan seem to have avoided structural complexities such as emblems and indented lines (typical of Vaughan's poems) to create a particular impression of the flow of the journey back to childhood. The poem deals with an issue that is scarcely found in metaphysical poetry. Unlike many of his

[6]A copy of the poem has been attached to the Appendix.

contemporaries, Vaughan touched upon another aspect of human life in which "contraries meet in one" (Donne 1).

The poem consists of two parts. In the first part, Vaughan presents the reminiscences of his childhood. He longs for the innocence of "angel-infancy" (2) and relates how he began his journey in life. Unconscious at first, he soon finds out that he is moving away from that "white, celestial thought" of infant purity. He looks back and sees himself as a child with a "bright face" (10). Then he returns to his present state and contemplates his sins. He states that as he grew older, he (and his "conscience") became surrounded by misdeeds and "sinful sound[s]" (16). The second part opens with an exclamatory remark on the nostalgic idea of his childhood, a place of "shady City of palm-trees" (26). However, his sinful soul drags him back because it is "drunk, and staggers in the way" (28). The poem closes with a paradox that states the backward movement mentioned in the previous section:

> Some men a forward motion love,
> But I by backward steps would move;
>
> (29-30)

Though criticising his state, he also distinguishes himself from others, for at least he has the courage and will to go back and not forward in time. However, conscious of its impossibility, he relieves himself by concluding that he will only return to that state when he dies.

The title of the poem is essential for the context of the poem. "Retreat" is a military term and indicates a drawing back due to an inability to deal with the enemy. Throughout the poem, Vaughan regards life in this world as a "race" (4) and a war in which he is wounded by the sins (14-16). He knows that this is not the first time he is undergoing this race because, Vaughan implies, the journey actually began in Heaven, when man was enjoying the beauties and the "happy those early days" in the garden of Eden, which are also regarded as his "first love" (8). The very last word of the poem, "return", changes the tone of the poem. Now, rather than a retreat, his journey back to his self and his infancy becomes a homecoming.

With its simplicity and honesty, "The Retreat" is a remarkable poem that gives important clues about Vaughan's idea of poetry. The wish to go back to infancy is a recurrent theme in his poetry. Although this attitude has been regarded as an escapist attempt, Vaughan's journey back is merely wishful

thinking. Vaughan finds the relief not in the tumultuous Stuart era, Puritanism, Presbyterian principles, or in the Catholic faith. His idea of religion and faith is more minimalist than that of Crashaw, for example. It seems that Vaughan had passed the steps of religious enlightening such as curiosity, doubting, and questioning, and looks as if he had found the answers he was looking for in the naïve state of childhood and the Hermetic philosophy:

> And looking back—at that short space—
> Could see a glimpse of His bright face;
> When on some gilded cloud, or flow'r,
> My gazing soul would dwell an hour,
> And in those weaker glories spy
> Some shadows of eternity.
>
> (9-14)

The lines above reflect the Hermetic idea of oneness and rhythm, which in turn suggest that everything in the cosmos was formed up to make *the one body*, usually depicted as light or God himself. Vaughan can observe this light (the "bright face" of his childhood) in "some gilded cloud, or flow'r". The idea of correspondence, which is also dominant in the poem, similarly indicates that everything has a reflection in eternity as in the principle "as above, so below; as below, so above." The "some gilded cloud, or flow'r" line, with its reference to the cloud (above) and the flower (below) provides readers with yet another code of Hermetic thinking. For Vaughan, all these objects are in a perfect harmony and rhythm, which he finds in the "shadows of eternity." No matter how shadowy *his* eternity gets due to his sins, he still reflects its music and synchronisation:

> But felt through all this fleshly dress
> Bright shoots of everlastingness.
>
> (19-20)

On "The World"[7]

"The World" first appeared in the 1650 publication of *Silex Scintillans*. Containing Vaughan's characteristic notion of eternity and faith, it received much critical appreciation. The poem was written as a response to the New Testament

[7]A copy of the poem has been attached in the Appendix.

warnings against unfaithfulness of Saint John (1 John 2:16-17). The section Vaughan refers to has actually been made a part of the body of the poem in verse form and constitutes the conclusion:

> All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the
> lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the
> Father, but is of the world.
> And the world passeth away, and the lusts thereof ;
> but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.
>
> (51-5)

The poem is composed of five sections, including the Biblical reference above. Each part moves from one theme to another and, at the end, comes to a conclusion with the image ("ring") which also found in the first stanza. In order to see this circular, *ring-like* movement, therefore, it is a good idea to study the stanzas one by one.

The poem opens with a personal experience on the oneness of the eternity and on its brightness, a typical Hermetic idea:

> I saw Eternity the other night,
> Like a great ring of pure and endless light,
> All calm, as it was bright;
> And round beneath it, Time in hours, days, years
> Driv'n by the spheres
> Like a vast shadow mov'd ; in which the world
> And all her train were hurl'd.
>
> (1-7).

This scene, described in a single sentence, calms the poet although the hurling elements of the universe contrast with the calmness and brightness in the first three lines (3). It is typical of Vaughan to move from general to specific and throughout the poem he narrows down from a big universal picture to a single object; he begins with the whole of eternity and then concentrates on "a flow'r" (15). Vaughan's zoom-in does not only work on the image level though; on the way down to the flower, he touches upon the confusion and the discord of the universe with references to the chaotic atmosphere of the Civil War England. Thus the first part of the poem, including the flower image, which is singled out to represent the perplexities of his time, is full of references, which will be followed

by yet others in the following stanzas, to the Cavalier tradition ("the doting lover in his quaintest strain / Did there complain") (8-9), Hermes Trismegistus ("near him, his lute, his fancy, and his flights"[8]) (10), and to the socio-political and religious turmoil of the mid-seventeenth century England. Although the world is "driv'n by the spheres" (5) and filled with "gloves, and knots, the silly snares of pleasure" (12), Vaughan still finds the universe harmonious.

After the first stanza, which serves as a prelude, the second part presents several shifts by pinpointing more particular subjects. The tone becomes critical in which Vaughan criticises those who are selfish and ignorant of the eternal beauties, principles, and faith. The so-called ambiguous "darksome statesman" is at the centre of the stanza (16). There is no direct reference to any specific person or place, but the anonymous statesman could be regarded as Cromwell, whom Vaughan thought to be responsible for the chaotic atmosphere in England. Another interpretation would be to assume that Vaughan merely refers to man in general, likening him to a statesman of his own heavenly state i.e. his body and soul, a very frequent Renaissance metaphor. Whoever the statesman is, he is trapped in all sides and surrounded by a chaotic atmosphere both politically (16-8, 25-8) and religiously (27-30). The lines "Churches and altars fed him; / perjuries were gnats and flies…", for example, can be read as a reference to the religious strife between Catholicism and Anglicanism, while they may also be regarded as a criticism of the Catholic Church's use of images, which opposes Vaughan's simpler and less demanding Hermetic world view (27-8). The persona in this stanza, however, is still ignorant. Sinful as he is, he is depicted in great confusion and utterly bewildered: "It rain'd about him blood and tears, but he / Drank them as free" (29-30).

The third part continues to depict the ignorance and blindness of those who prefer to live in misery. As a compliment to the second stanza, which deals with the spiritual dryness of man, this section focuses on man's tendency towards worldly values and the exchange of material gain for bliss. This time the stanza opens with a "fearful miser" who keeps counting his money. This powerful image, with "heap of rust" (30), "spinning all his life there, did scarce trust / His own hands" (31-2), and "in fear of thieves" (35) depicts a sick man who is obsessed with the idea of earning money. Vaughan states that the number of such men, who "[hugs] each one his pelf [coin, money]" (36-7), is surprisingly great. Calling them "the weaker sort" (42), he likens them to slaves of money. Towards the end,

[8]Lute, knowledge, and fancy were regarded as symbols representing the messenger god Hermes (and Thoth in Middle Eastern mythology), and in turn, Hermes Trismegistus himself.

the portrayal of the money-lover gets more allegorical and, contrasted with "…[the] poor, despisèd Truth sate counting by / Their victory," more powerful (44-5).

The last original stanza, before the Biblical quotation that forms the last section, gathers in the pieces and concludes the poem. Seeing all their vices, Vaughan calls such men "fools" because they prefer darkness to the light of wisdom, truth, and faith (49). But all is not lost for Vaughan and there is a way out of this seemingly unsolvable dilemma. Vaughan's solution is "the way" which leads to salvation. It is a way of light that may win man the divine brightness and purity. The end of the poem reminds us of Herbert's poems. The interior monologue that has been dominating the poem is now broken with an alien voice. As he contemplates the vices and the wrongdoings, he hears a man whisper: "This ring the Bridegroom did for none provide, / But for His bride" (54-55). The whispering man is content that the "ring", the symbol of the beauties in nature and of God, cannot be attained, because God had made all for himself. Thus the tone shifts again to a more thoughtful and gloomy idea. The poet who was suggesting salvation as the only possible escape a moment ago becomes a man who accepts the chaos of his age and shows no effort to get himself out of this futility. Resigning himself to failure, Vaughan seems convinced that man is created unable to see the truth and to enjoy the true faith of God. Unlike the divine interventions that put man to the right path in Herbert, Vaughan, readily accepting to live in worldly turmoil, is highly pessimistic.

"The World," thus, focuses on the ignorance of man and shows that man may not be saved no matter how hard he struggles to reach the salvation of God. Vaughan agrees that the whole universe experiences an everlasting chaos but man should seek for the hidden harmony behind this chaotic atmosphere. Although Vaughan is rather critical of the mentality of his age to take everything (every fault, every vice, and sin) for granted from the beginning and end the poem without leaving any space for hope, many of his other poems, as this poem also occasionally hints, express the idea that there is hope for man but only through "the way . . . [which] leads up to God" (49).

CONCLUSION

Both “the Retreat” and “the World” are Vaughan’s noteworthy poems and show characteristic qualities of his poetry as well as of metaphysical poetry. The straightforward poetic diction Vaughan employs is rarely vapid on an ideational level. As one can see from the brief analysis of the two poems, Vaughan is a poet who successfully brings together philosophical ideas with anti-dogmatic religious beliefs.

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APPENDICES

THE RETREAT

HAPPY those early days, when I
Shin'd in my angel-infancy !
Before I understood this place
Appointed for my second race,
Or taught my soul to fancy ought
But a white, celestial thought ;
When yet I had not walk'd above
A mile or two from my first love,
And looking back—at that short space—
Could see a glimpse of His bright face ;
When on some gilded cloud, or flow'r,
My gazing soul would dwell an hour,
And in those weaker glories spy
Some shadows of eternity ;
Before I taught my tongue to wound
My conscience with a sinful sound,
Or had the black art to dispense
A sev'ral sin to ev'ry sense,
But felt through all this fleshly dress
Bright shoots of everlastingness.
    O how I long to travel back,
And tread again that ancient track !
That I might once more reach that plain,
Where first I left my glorious train ;
From whence th' enlighten'd spirit sees
That shady City of palm-trees.
But ah ! my soul with too much stay
Is drunk, and staggers in the way !
Some men a forward motion love,
But I by backward steps would move ;
And when this dust falls to the urn,
In that state I came, return.

Berkan Ulu

THE WORLD

1
I SAW Eternity the other night,
Like a great ring of pure and endless light,
All calm, as it was bright ;
And round beneath it, Time in hours, days, years
Driv'n by the spheres
Like a vast shadow mov'd ; in which the world
And all her train were hurl'd.
The doting lover in his quaintest strain
Did there complain ;
Near him, his lute, his fancy, and his flights,
Wit's sour delights ;
With gloves, and knots, the silly snares of pleasure,
Yet his dear treasure,
All scatter'd lay, while he his eyes did pour
Upon a flow'r.

2.
The darksome statesman, hung with weights and woe,
Like a thick midnight-fog, mov'd there so slow,
He did nor stay, nor go ;
Condemning thoughts—like sad eclipses—scowl
Upon his soul,
And clouds of crying witnesses without
Pursued him with one shout.
Yet digg'd the mole, and lest his ways be found,
Work'd under ground,
Where he did clutch his prey ; but one did see
That policy :
Churches and altars fed him ; perjuries
Were gnats and flies ;
It rain'd about him blood and tears, but he
Drank them as free.

3.
The fearful miser on a heap of rust
Sate pining all his life there, did scarce trust
His own hands with the dust,
Yet would not place one piece above, but lives
In fear of thieves.
Thousands there were as frantic as himself,
And hugg'd each one his pelf ;*
The downright epicure plac'd heav'n in sense,
And scorn'd pretence ;
While others, slipp'd into a wide excess
Said little less ;
The weaker sort slight, trivial wares enslave,
Who think them brave ;
And poor, despisèd Truth sate counting by
Their victory.

4.
Yet some, who all this while did weep and sing,
And sing, and weep, soar'd up into the ring ;
But most would use no wing.
O fools—said I—thus to prefer dark night
Before true light !
To live in grots and caves, and hate the day
Because it shows the way ;
The way, which from this dead and dark abode
Leads up to God ;
A way where you might tread the sun, and be
More bright than he !
But as I did their madness so discuss,
One whisper'd thus,
“This ring the Bridegroom did for none provide,
But for His bride.”

JOHN, CAP. 2. VER. 16, 17.

All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

And the world passeth away, and the lusts thereof ; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.