

ART. IX. – *Ralph Tyrer, B.D., Vicar of Kendal, 1592-1627.* By the late EDWARD M. WILSON, M.A., Ph.D., F.B.A.

Read at Hull, September 10th, 1978.

RALPH Tyrer's most famous work is the epitaph on a brass plate in Kendal Parish Church, which he himself composed. Though it has often been reprinted,¹ it has often been misinterpreted. It runs thus:

HERE VNDER LYETH YE^E BODY OF M^R RAVLPH
TIRER LATE VIC[A]R OF KENDALL BATCHLER
OF DIVINITY, WHO DYED THE 4TH DAY
OF IVNE AN^O: DNI: 1627.

London bredd me, Westminster fedd me
Cambridge sped me, my Sister wed me,
Study taught me, Liuing sought me,
Learning brought me, Kendall caught me,
Labour pressed me, sicknes distressed me,
Death oppressed me, & graue possessed me,
God first gave me, Christ did saue me
Earth did crave me, & heauen would haue me

Earlier local writers have assumed that the second half of the second line meant that Tyrer's sister led him unwillingly into marriage; a contributor to a pamphlet entitled *Fragments . . . relating to the Parish Church of Kendal* proved from the parish registers that Tyrer was "a family man" whose wife had died three years before he did.² Those who have tried to explain the second line have not noticed that there is a kind of parallelism between the halves of each line. If we omit the second and fourth lines this parallelism is reasonably observed: London-Westminster; Study-Liuing; Labour-sicknes; Death-graue; God-Christ; Earth-heauen. The connection between Learning and Kendall is less obvious; but if we keep in mind the other parallelisms, then the natural equivalent of Cambridge would be Oxford. We know that this vicar of Kendal had taken both his B.A. and M.A. at Cambridge, after which he migrated to Oxford, where he became a Bachelor of Divinity. Confirmation of the use of the word sister to mean "the other university" can be found under the sense 10C in the *New English Dictionary*: "In collocations tending towards specialized uses, as *sister art, dialect, island, kingdom, language, ship, tongue, university*, or the plurals of these". And from an item dated 1679 in a miscellaneous collection of 1781, that Dictionary quotes the sentence: "If we are justified, the advantage will extend to our Sister University". I am therefore persuaded that the second line of Tyrer's epitaph does not refer to a perhaps non-existent sister but to the sister university to that at which he first studied.³

The Venns' *Alumni cantabrigienses*⁴ tells us that he went from Westminster School to

Trinity College (Cambridge) in 1573, where he had been matriculated the year before; that he took his B.A. in 1576/7 and his M.A. in 1580. He became a Fellow of Trinity in 1579. On 12 July, 1580 he incorporated at Oxford, where he was granted the degree of B.D. in 1587. He received priest's orders at Lincoln in May 1586 and became Vicar of Exton, Buckinghamshire, in the same year. A year later he was appointed to the cure of souls at Eaton Bray (Bedfordshire), whence he transferred to Chesterton (Cambridge) in 1590. In 1592 his old College appointed him Vicar of Kendal.

The Kendal registers give us these details about the Tyrer family:

[Christenings – September, 1607] Raphaell y^e sonne of M^r Tyrer vicar of Kendall xxj^o die.

[Buryings – January, 1607/8] Raphaell sonne of Ralph Tyrer vicker of Kendall xxv^o die.

[Christenings – July, 1610] John y^e sonne of m^r Rauphe Tyrer vicar of Kendall xiiij^o die.

[Christenings – July, 1611] Randall y^e sonne of M^r Raulph Tyrer vicar of Kendall xxj^o die.

[Buryings – April, 1612] Randall y^e sonne of M^r Raulph Tyrer vicar of Kendall xiiij^o die.

[Buryings – April, 1624] Mary y^e wife of m^r Rauphe Tyrer vicar of Kendall ii^o die.

[Buryings – June, 1627] Mr Raulph Tirer Vicar of Kendall vi^o die.

The registers mention also the burial on 21 March, 1612/3 of “Mr William Ingall of Hyegate, Schoolmaster, curate”; he presumably helped Ralph Tyrer at the Parish Church and in the Grammar School.

Ralph Tyrer made his will on 17 April, 1627. The abstract of it, published by the Chetham Society in 1893,⁵ enables us to fill out some details of his life. He left all to his son John Tyrer, whom he commended to the care of his wife's sister Mrs Elizabeth Edwards (“dwelling neare Powles Wharffe in London”) and, should she refuse, to Robert Harrison of Kendall Parke, and Lucrece his wife, daughter of Mrs Edwards. If John Tyrer were to die before the age of 21 his estate was to go to Trinity College to found a scholarship “to be Tyrers Scholler or the Stationers Scholler” for the benefit of those from “the schoole of Powles or Westminster”, with special favour for those surnamed Tyrer, Harrison or Maid and failing them “then for anie other stationers sonne borne in London which shalbe found fitt for the place”. One wonders whether there could have been a family link either between Mrs Elizabeth Edwards and one of the London stationers of that name, or between Robert Harrison and the John Harrison, who published the book of sermons soon to be described. If the College did not accept the legacy then the money was to go to his next of kin, either to the Tryars [sic] of Lancashire or to the descendents of his maternal uncle, Humphrey Keene in Buckinghamshire or elsewhere. After specifying some small legacies to various nieces and goddaughters he charged his executor and his guardian that “they cause that epitaph that I have made of myselfe in Englishe verse, here annexed, to be engraven in a plate of brasse, and the same to be fastened upon the marble stone over the grave where I shall be buried, and to speake to a sufficient man to preach my funerall sermon and for his paines to give him 10s.” The will was proved at York on 4 July, 1627. There is no record at Trinity College of either a Tyrer Scholarship or of a Stationers Scholarship; presumably John Tyrer went to London after his father died and survived his twenty-first birthday.

The inventory of Ralph Tyrer's goods was made on 8 June, 1627. It included a sword, a rapier, two pistols, a case and a steel cap; a gilded psalter, a Greek testament and a psalm book; a pair of virginals (valued at ten shillings) and all his books (valued at twenty pounds). I suppose that even a country parson found the possession of weapons prudent at that time; the other items mentioned show some civilised taste as well as piety.

He was undoubtedly a cultivated man. It is a pity that the titles of his books were not given in the inventory.

On 6 May 1602, John Harrison, son of Master John Harrison the elder, entered on the Stationers' Register "*certen sermons preached by master RAFFE TIROLL*" [sic]; the sermons listed under this entry were one of Matthew 23.5, two respectively on *The charge of the clergie and ye crowne of christians, a festiuall sermon at pentecost The anointing of CHRIST or christian ointment* (John 2.20) and another *festiuall sermon on ye natiuitie of CHRIST* (Timothy 3.16); the titles and texts correspond with those of a book of sermons preached by R.T. and printed by John Harrison later in the same year.⁶ References to Kendal in its dedication confirm that Raffe Tiroll = R.T. = Ralph Tyrer.

Ralph Tyrer's *Fiue godlie sermons* were published, then, in London in 1602. The book is rare, but not extraordinarily so; copies are recorded in the British Library, in that of St Paul's Cathedral, in the Old Library of Magdalene College, Cambridge, in the Edinburgh University Library, at the Folger Library, Washington D.C. and in the Modern Humanities Research Centre of the University of Texas at Austin.⁷ There is also a cancelled title-page in the Cambridge University Library (Plate II). The volume bears the numbers 24475 and 24475.5 in the second volume of the second edition of *A Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, & Ireland . . . 1475-1640*.⁸ A description of it follows:

Title-page: [see the accompanying Plate I].

π1^v: blank. [In the Texas copy the armorial book-plate of "Sr Richard Newdigate of Arbury in the County of Warwick Baronet 1709" is pasted over this page.]

π2^r-4^r: [Line of printers' ornaments] | To the right worfhipfull | Maifter *Iohn Smith* Alderman, Mai-fter *William Wilfon* Senior Burgeffe, Iufti-ces of peace, and the ref of the Brethren, | Gouvernors, and Magiftrates of the Bur-rough towne and corporation of | Kendall: Grace, mercie and | peace, in Chrift Iefus | our Lorde.

[Begins] A [ornamental initial, 2.5 × 2.4 cms, displaces six lines of type] *S the Beare* (to begin | not with an homelie cō-parifon as it may feem, | but . . .

π4^r [ends] Your moft louing Paftour | in the Lord, R. T.

π4^v [Blank].

Leaf A1 is missing from all copies.

Collation: 8^o.π⁴A [—A1]—T⁸V⁴. C4 missigned B4; S3 misnumbered Siiiij; V4 blank.

Pagination: [i-viii] 3-232 234 234-240 243 242-256 259 258 259-272 259 260 259 260
173 278 *279 278 283 282 283 282 *287 286 *287 286 289-292 301 294 295
298 299 298 299 300 303 302-309 [310-312] = viii+307+iii pages.

The asterisks denote that the page-number occurs on the inner margin of that recto leaf. The chief irregularity in the numbering begins on S1^r; the fifth sermon begins on S3^r (wrongly signed) page 277 (wrongly numbered 173). The numbers of the pages in the inner forme of gathering S are correct; those of the outer are confused until T1^r. (p. 289). The fleur de lys ornament on the title-page resembles McKerrow's no. 251 (variant with shading in the stem from left to right).⁹

A2^r, page 3: [Line of ornaments] | The Charge of the clear-gie: And the crowne of | Chriftians. | I. PET. 5. 3. 4. v. | *Not as though yee were Lords ouer Gods heritage, but | that yee may be examples to the flocke; And when the | chiefe shepheard fhall appeare, yee fhall receiue an in-corrutable Crowne of Glorie.*

[Begins] P [ornamental initial, 2.5 × 2.5 cms] ETER the bleffed A-ppofle of our Sauior . . .

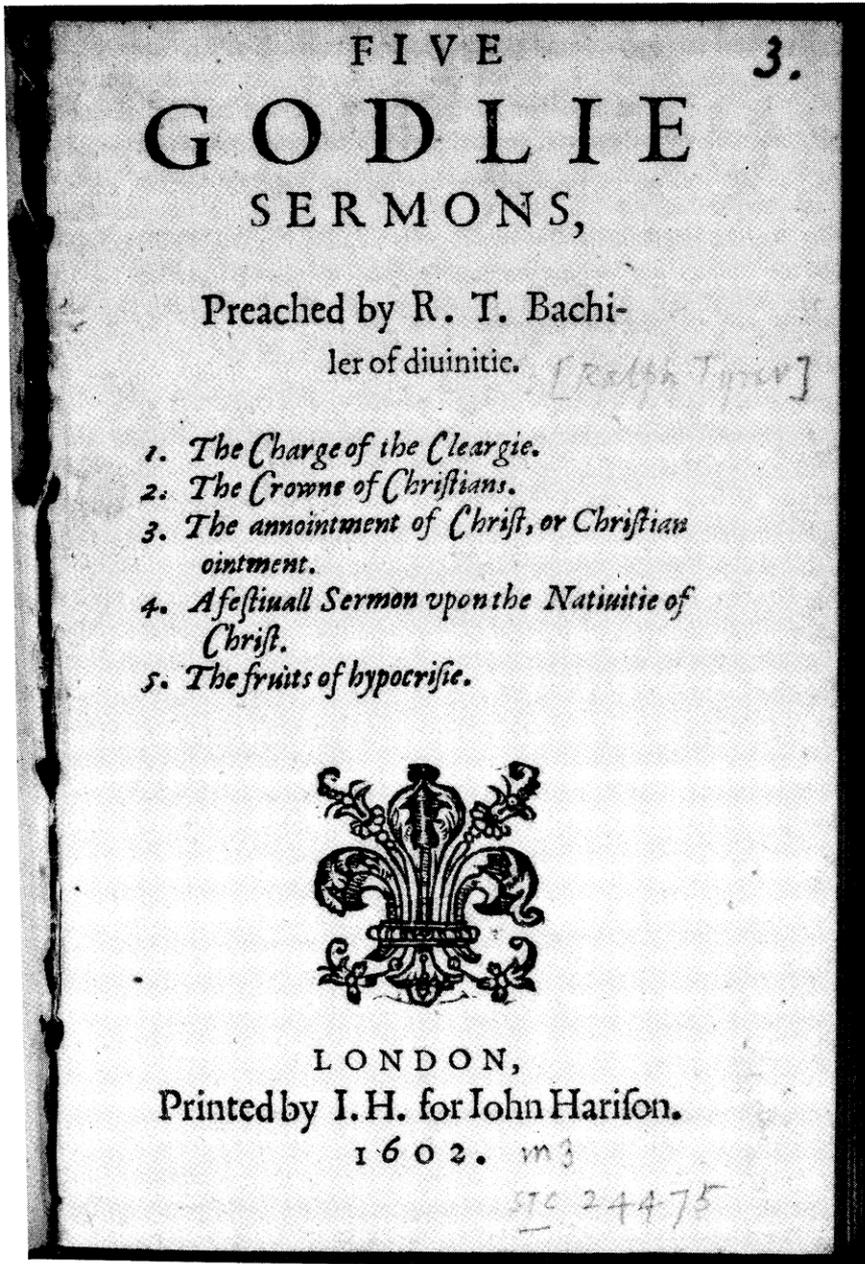


PLATE I. — The published title-page (Magdalene College Old Library, G. 4. 50 (3)).

The other four sermons begin on leaves C2^v (p. 36), E2^r (67), L7^r (173), S3^r ([277]). The second begins with an ornamental initial I, the others with two forms of T of approximately the same measurements.

Those patient enough to read through my description will have seen that there are two bibliographical problems that need explanation: 1. Why should the surviving detached title-page in the Cambridge University Library (Syn. 8. 60. 103 – see Plate II and *STC* no. 24475) have been cancelled? 2. Why is the first leaf of the book itself missing from all the known copies? The two problems prove to be one and the same.

The preliminary leaves (π^4) and the final gathering (V^4) were probably printed as one octavo sheet which was cut in two after printing. Thus the preliminaries were printed last, as was usual in the case of new texts. The title-page is not separate from the other leaves; it is conjoint with the fourth. So the title-page and Tyrer's dedication form a unit, of which the cancelled title-page (see Plate II) never formed a part. Almost certainly, then, the cancelled title-page was originally the missing leaf A1 (pages 1 and 2); a fact that implies that the *Fiue godlie sermons* were first printed with no dedication and that the first sermon began on A2r (p. 3) immediately after the cancelled title-page. So the new title-page and the dedication must have been printed after the book – or perhaps the main part of the book – had already been printed. The preliminary gathering as a whole represents either some after-thoughts by the author, or perhaps the printer assumed, when he received the text of the sermons, that Tyrer did not intend to include any prefatory matter. Kendal is far from London; the postal service was slow.

There are two obvious differences between the two title-pages. The words “and learned” and “at Kendal” appear on the cancelled one but not in the printed book. The same modesty that made Tyrer put only his initials to show his authorship probably made him suppress the first phrase; perhaps the words “at Kendal” were removed because the town is prominently mentioned in the heading to the dedication. Perhaps – and as a Kendalian I am loath to admit it – his “many tedious discontentments in this place” (a phrase he uses towards the end of the dedication) were partly responsible for this second change.

Under the terms of Queen Elizabeth I's charter of 1575 Kendal was to be governed by one Alderman and twelve capital burgesses. (The first Mayor of Kendal was appointed as a consequence of the charter granted by Charles I in 1637, ten years after Tyrer's death). The Alderman had the powers of a chief magistrate, though a document of 1586 tells us that “in all matters and causes belonginge this Bourghe he is (as it were) tyed to the Societie Counsell and Brotherhood of others wth him Not havinge power in hymselff to appoynte and sett downe Orders and constitucons of hymselff in all things”. Two nominations were to be made for this position on the Monday next before Michaelmas, so that all the free inhabitants of the borough might elect one of them for the following year. It was also stipulated that the man so elected “for the space of one year shall not be againe elected and ordained Alderman of the Burgh aforesaid within the four years next following”. Presumably the new Alderman took up office immediately after his election. John Smith, to whom Tyrer dedicated his sermons, was a chapman, who had been chosen as Alderman already in 1594, was re-elected in 1601 and again in 1612. William Wilson, the Senior Burgess, the co-dedicatee, was made Alderman in 1583, a Justice of the Peace in 1591 and again Alderman in 1593. His title is mentioned from time to time in the records of Kendal and in the charter of 1575.¹⁰ He also was a chapman.¹¹

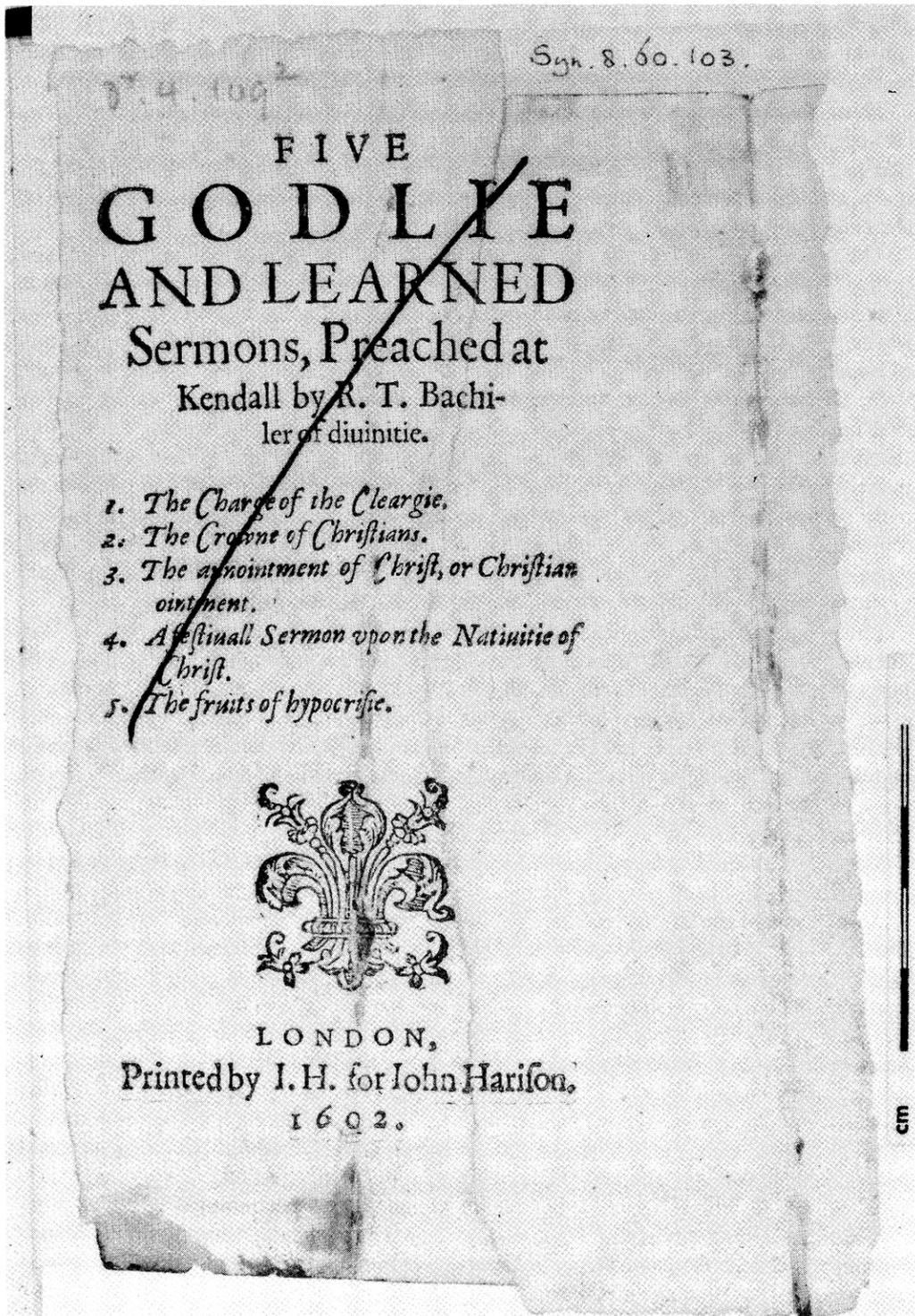


PLATE II. — The cancelled title-page (University Library, Cambridge, Syn. 8. 60. 103).

The sermons, as one finds in most early books that were new texts, were printed before the dedication in the preliminaries. Both title-pages bear the date 1602. If the author meant the book to arrive in Kendal before a new Alderman was appointed, he must have sent the full text of the dedicatory letter off to London at a date after 6 May but nearer 25 March than 29 September. The letter itself is of considerable local interest, so I reprint it in full.

To the right worshipfull Maister *John Smith* Alderman, Maister *William Wilson* Senior Burgesse, Iustices of peace, and the rest of the Brethren, Gouvernors, and Magistrates of the Burrough, towne and corporation of Kendall: Grace, mercie and peace, in Christ Iesus our Lorde.

As the Beare (to begin not with an homely cofm]parison as it may seem, but such as the best wits, and most learned haue not been ashamed to vse before me) when she bringeth forth her young one, as Aristotle, or rather as Scaliger the subtiler refiner of grosse Philosophie, when she casteth out her abortiue broode, finding it to be a rude vnformed¹² and confused lump of flesh, not liking the shape thereof, neuer ceaseth to licke the same, till it hath brought it to a perfect forme and fashion, with apt proportion of euerie parte and member;¹³ Euen so (right worshipfull) those suddaine, extemperall, and tumultuarie speeches, which at the first I did rawly and rudely deliuer in your audience, as no absolute broode of full growth, but rather as vnripe fruite of little labour, for matter sound I am sure, but for maner not so sweete as I could wish, such howsoeuer as God the[n] presently gaue me grace to vtter; Behould here the same reduced into better forme, perfected, polished, published, and presented vnto your selues, not for my owne prayse which I neuer deserued nor desired, but for your profit, which I alwaies aymed at, and sought after, wishing not only your worldly wealth that you may flourish still as hetherto you haue done, in peace, plentie, and prosperitie, but thirsting after your soules health that you might growe vp more and more in grace and knowledge, which is the finall and fruitfull ende and intendement of all sermons either preached or written: as Peter making it his conclusion of his latter Epistle 3. Chap. 18 [i.e. 2 Peter, 3.18] For therefore haue I especially and of purpose, directed and dedicated these few sermons vnto you (worshipfull and welbeloued Bretheren in the Lord) that as you first harde them, so you might againe regarde them, yea remember and ruminate them, that by often reading and perusing them, through continuall meditation they may be so inwardly engrafed and ingrauen in your harts and consciences, that you may take proffit, and make vse of them in the actions of your life and conuersation. O that you would consider thankfully, that as our Gracious Soueraigne hath greatly graced you, in making your town of a country village, a corporate Borough, and vouchsafed to bestow vpon you a faire and large Charter for the establishing of your state of gouernment, and publike benefit of your populous multitude. So likewise that God himselfe hath as graciously blessed you in commending by his good prouidence your parish, for the spirituall cure and charge of your soules, to the patronage of so flourishing a Colledge,¹⁴ & so fruitfull of learned preachers, that you may be certaine and sure, neuer to faile of a sufficient and vigilant pastour ouer you, and whereby noe doute you shall euermore cofn]tinew: I speake it to your comforte as one of the goulden candlesticks of Gods true catholike church,¹⁵ alwaise shining with the bright light of the Gospell. And would to God that as your towne is famous thorough the most partes of this Land, for your great trading lik a little Tirus,¹⁶ for your meane yet n[ece]ssarie and profitable commodities for the common wealth; so your feruent zeale and fruitfull obedience vnto the word, were as faithfully showne heere & as famously knowne elsewhere, to your owne cofm]mendation and consolation of others, that with gratulation vnto God I might truly say of you and your people and the rest of my parish, as the Apostle Paule of the Romans. I. 8. I thanke my God thorough Iesus Christ for you all because your faith is published thorough out the whole world: which would be my credit and crowne, yea and a cordiall of comfort to my conscience, among my many tedious discontentments in this

place, which would gladly feaste it selfe with the fruits of my labours in you, which I hope hereafter to finde in such ample measure in you all, that I may say with the Apostle vnto the Rom.[sic] That I shall reape and receaue at the length consolation together with you thorough our mutuall faith both yours and myne. I. 12. VVhich grace I trust in due time the Lord God in Christ Iesus will vouchsafe to grant vnto vs both to our owne good and his glorie.

Your most louing Pastour
in the Lord, R. T.

Tyrer tells us first that he has elaborated these five sermons from “those suddaine, extemporall, and tumultuarie speeches”, “rawly and rudely” delivered to the Kendal congregation. He has polished them and (no doubt) expanded them so that his original hearers – and especially the two magistrates – might now study intensively what he had tried vainly to say to them from the pulpit. Here he is in line with many of his contemporary preachers, as can be seen in the late H. S. Bennett’s *Books and readers*.¹⁷ Later he refers specifically to the charter granted to Kendal by Queen Elizabeth I and relates how it brought prosperity to his parish, which he compares to Tyre, with perhaps a concealed pun on his own name. Here the references to Kendal before the charter as “a country village” and to its “meane yet necessarie and profitable commodities” (?Kendal cottons and Kendal greens), to say nothing of his later complaint about his “many tedious discontentments in this place”, seem the comments of a stranger, one who was in Kendal and not of it. His loyalty to his old college is obvious too; his confidence in his successors’ abilities does it credit, but he could not foresee the troublesome happenings that would occur during the Civil War.

Richard Brathwait,¹⁸ (born at Burneside Hall in 1588, died at East Appleton in 1673) much admired Tyrer and mentions him with praise in his poem *To all truebred Northerne Sparks, of the generous society of the Cottoneers, who hold their High-rodde by the Pinder of Wakefield, the Shoo-maker of Brandford, and the white Coate of Kendall: Light gaines, Heauie Purses, good Tradings, with cleere Conscience*, first printed in *A Strappado for the Diuell*, London, 1615. In a long eulogy of Kendal in this poem he wrote:

But of all blessings that were reckoned yet,
In my opinion there is none so great,
As that especiall one which they receiue,
By th’ graue and reuerend Pastor which they haue;
Whose life and doctrine are so ioint together,
(As both sincere, there’s no defect in either,)
*For in him both Urim and Thummim be,*¹⁹
O that we had more Pastors such as he:
For then in Sion should Gods flocke encrease,
*“Having such Shepheards would not flea but fleece;”*²⁰
Thus what wants Kendal that she can desire,
*Tyrer’s her Pastor, and her selfe is Tyre,*²¹
He to mistrust her people, she to bring
Wealth to her Towne by forraine trafficking?

His praise of the vicar is certainly based upon the references to Tirus in the preface to the *Fiue godlie sermons*. The praise of Tyrer was sincere, but the use of “mistrust” to describe the vicar’s moral lessons to his parishioners hints at some distance between them. Though

not printed until 1638 (eleven years after Tyrer's death), Brathwait's *Barnabae itinerarium* was probably composed bit by bit after his travels up and down the country. In the fourth part he referred to the worldly leanings of the inhabitants of Kirkland in Kendal, with an implied contrast with their minister:

<i>Nunc ad Kirkland, & de eo</i>	Now to <i>Kirkland</i> , truly by it
“Prope Templo, procul Deo	May that Say be verified,
<i>Dici potest, spectent Templum,</i>	“ <i>Far from God but neare the Temple,</i>
<i>Sacerdotis & exemplum</i>	Though their Pastor give exemple,
<i>Audient tamen citius sonum</i>	They are such a kind of vermin,
<i>Tibiae quam concionum.</i>	Pipe they'd rather heare than Sermon. ²²

The reference to Tyrer seems more than possible.

Another passage in yet another of Brathwait's works²³ may be contrasted with Tyrer's claim that the prosperity of Kendal was due to the charter. Writing in 1630 Brathwait commended the diligence of the town's inhabitants, but pointed out the distress caused by a recent slump in the wool trade:

Againe, in our *Townes* lying further within Land, the inhabitants use some especiall Trade to keepe their *Youth* in labour; whereby they become not only beneficiall to themselves, but useful and helpfull unto others. Amongst which, I cannot be unmindfull of the diligence of the Towne of *Kendall*, and worthy care which they have to see their very young children put to work, being a labour which requires no great strength, to wit, *Wool-worke*. Wherein, so approved hath their care and industrie beene, as they have gained themselves no small esteeme in forraine places, who are made partakers of the fruit of their labours. For I have known a familie, consisting of seven or eight persons, maintained by the work of two or three stonnes of wooll, which amounted not above thirty shillings: and with this they maintained credit, living in an honest and decent manner. Whose labours as they were laudable, so have they beene no lesse furthered, favoured, and encouraged by our late gracious Sovereigne²⁴ of renow[n]ed memory; who, of his princely clemencie, hath dammed all such impositions or heavy taxations as might any way impaire or impeach the free use of that Trade. Albeit now of late, the Towne of *Kendall*, so famous for *Wool-worke*, by reason of a late decrease or decay of Trade in those parts, is growne no lesse penurious than populous: so as (With grieffe I speake it) such inhabitants as formerly by their paine and industrie were able to give an almes at their doore, are now forced to begge their almes from doore to doore. The redresse whereof, as it hath beene by the Prince and those prudent guides and guardians of our State, the Lords of his Privie Counsell, duely intended; so no doubt, but by their wise care it shall be accordingly effected, & those poore people after so many miseries sustained, wholly releevd; for the advancement of Gods glory, the supportance of many a needfull family, and the succeeding renowne of his Majesty, to whom every subject oweth his life, love and loyalty.

Brathwait went on to praise the “*Copperworkes* used in the North; more especially about *Keswicke*”²⁵ manned by industrious and skilful Dutchmen – but this passage is not relevant to our subject. The juxtaposition of these texts indicates that Kendal was more prosperous in 1602 than in 1630.

Tyrer's sermons were printed in London in 1602; three years before that year Richard Leake, then “Preacher of the word of God at Killington” – not very far from Kendal – had published in London his four plague sermons.²⁶ Leake had dedicated this book to “M. Thomas Stikeland [read Strickland] and M. James Bellingham, Esquires, and two of her Maiesties Iustices of the peace, within the Baronrie of Kendall”; Tyrer dedicated his to

John Smith and William Wilson, justices of peace, Alderman and senior Burgess, respectively, in the Borough of Kendal. Leake's publication may well have provoked Tyrer's though the temper and the attitudes of the two men widely differed. Leake published four sermons, Tyrer five. Leake's were all concerned primarily with the lessons that could be drawn from the visitations of famine and plague in the North West; Tyrer's sermons were far broader in their learning and more general in their intentions. In his fourth sermon Tyrer inveighed against:

Manie superficial diuines, leane cleargions,²⁷ and speaking preachers, who think they haue a sufficient Librarie, if they haue a bible, *Caluins Institutions*, and *Peter Martyrs Common places* in English; and knowledge and learning enough if they can Paraphrastically post ouer in haste a whole Psalme or Chapter at once, like vnto him that with light foote runneth ouer a quackmire for feare of falling in ouer head and eares, and can speake extempory, and that many houres togither, neither tying themselues to text nor time. (pp. 261-2 fo. R3r-v)

Leake referred fourteen times to Calvin in his text and in his marginalia;²⁸ his will mentions particularly the works of Peter Martyr.²⁹ I am tempted to think that Tyrer had Leake in mind when he attacked his less learned (and perhaps more tedious) fellow clergymen.

In themselves Leake's sermons throw more light on conditions in sixteenth-century Westmorland than do Tyrer's. Leake's remarks about the plague, about the vices of the inhabitants and about their furtive catholicism have no parallels in Tyre. The vicar of Kendal concluded his first sermon with the words:

But not to inforce this point with any particular application for feare of offence, *Nam quicquid tetigero vlcus erit*:³⁰ For yee knowe the olde Prouerbe, *A gauld horse will soon winch and a scabbed head is soon broken*: Wherefore to passe on to the next wordes. [i.e. the second sermon. p. 17, fo. B1r]

His attitude contrasts with Leake's; Leake relished breaking scabbed heads. Nevertheless Tyrer's reticences have their implications; they show a more purely Anglican spirit than do Leake's Calvinist tirades. Tyrer too was anticatholic; the sermon on *The fruits of Hypocrisie* is mainly directed against the Church of Rome. But he occasionally dissented from famous reformers ("*Beza non vidit omnia*"³¹ and he also acknowledged some merits in the Catholic apologist Bellarmine³² ("the great Champion of Rome and refiner of many grosse errors of other drossied Papists" – (p. 129, fol. I1r; see also pp. 261-2, fo. R3r-v). Leake saw dangers only on the right; Tyrer denounced both right and left, extolling

. . . neither the abhominable Idolatrie of the Papists, nor the absurd vbiquitie of the Lutherans, nor the confused community of the Famelists, nor the Phrenetical extacie of the Brownists, nor the phantasie of the Anabaptists, but only the pure diuinity of the Protestants, which embrace the synceritie of the Gospell.³³ (p. 189, fo. M7r)

He tried, then, to keep to the middle way chosen by the Church of England.

He also strove to back his religious persuasions with humane learning. He knew his classics well, and his pages are sprinkled with quotations from Homer, Plato, Aristotle, Horace, Virgil, Terence, Cicero, Seneca, Martial . . . in the original languages. He never quoted the exact words of an English man of letters. There were probably among his local

readers men who could follow some of the classical tags. But he catered for the less learned too; proverbs and direct popular idiom added vigour to his prose:

Many things may happen betweene the cuppe and the lippe. And while the grasse groweth the steede may starue, and it is ill hoping for dead mens shooes, as we say; and one birde in the hand is worth two in the wood; a little *in re & esse* is better than much *in spe & posse*: and a small thing in present possession is more, then³⁴ a great deale in reuersion and remainder. (p. 75, fo. E6r)
[God's generosity is] Not giuen sparingly as man doth by pence, farthings, & mites; but plentifully by talents, by pressed down measure, and running ouer; and not with one hand, but with both hands, yea with a full hand, full horne, and full haruest. (p. 76, fo. E6v)

Whereas Leake placed all his emphasis on the hard places of the Gospel and their interpretation by the extreme reformers, Tyrer brought religion into relation both with classical culture and with the wisdom gathered by common men in their daily lives. He of course insisted that daily life should be serious and that learning should be useful. On the one hand he warned against the vain worldlings who

do fondly suppose, who deem peeuishly & peruersly, that the holy Scripture is but a toy and a trifle, and the matter thereof too base, as beeing too course and grosse for the fine edge of their politicke sconces. (p. 200, fo. N4v)

and on the other the curious students of

foolish trifling things, which rather swimme in the braine with puffed vanitie, then sincke downe into the heart with sound veritie . . . such trash and trumperie which *Paul* biddeth *Timothy* and *Tytus* to beware, that they giue *no heed vnto them* . . . *Profane fables, vaine bablings, olde wiues tales, endlesse genealogies, oppositions of science*, falsely so called, foolish questions and braulings about the Lawe, which are vnprofitable, and breed contentions and controuersie, rather then Godly edifying, which is by faith. (pp. 158-9, fos. K7v-8r)

Like Richard Leake, Ralph Tyrer often used the traditional rhetorical devices of Elizabethan times. Like Leake also he sometimes abused them:

Let them remember what the Apostle saith, to plucke downe the peacocks feathers³⁵ of all proud presumers . . .

But we can find little fault with the way that sentence is completed:

presumers, which are carried away with an ouerweening conceit of their own endowments. What hast thou, that thou hast not receiued? (p. 123, fo. H6r)

The alliteration and the doublets seem to me pardonable in such passages as the following in which he tells us of the plight of

men that are ouerwrought and ouerweared with worke, for-swat and for-swunck³⁶ with labour; finally toiled and turmoiled with ouermuch trauell . . .³⁷ (p. 100, fo. G2v)

After reading a number of his pages we can accept these over-used devices and feel the strength of the expression in the words he used:

The time of cooling or refreshing . . . wherein after we haue sweat and swounke in this toilesome and troublesome world, and been scorched in the purgatorie of this life in the parching heate of persecution, we shal be cooled and comforted, refreshed and reuiued againe; not only with the fresh & wholesome ayrie wind of the Holy Ghost, but with the sweete springing water of the mercie of God; with which not only the tips of our tongues shall be cooled, which was all that Hel-burnt *Diuies*³⁸ did desire, but our whole bodies and soules shall be sprinckled with. (p. 46, fo. C7v)

Tyrer's prose is at times overloaded, but he was in earnest; his concern for his parishioners comes through the too obvious rhetoric. He did not attempt to rival the sermons of his great contemporaries (John Donne, Richard Hooker, Lancelot Andrewes). But he pleaded for an educated and instructed piety that avoided extremes and was not too inaccessible to his congregation.

Tyrer was a cultivated and intelligent man; Leake was a narrow-minded Calvinist, at least when, as a young man, he wrote his sermons. Both of them were able to put down telling phrases and use vivid metaphors. But Tyrer's erudition and elaborations sometimes hold up the reader, and his sermon-plans are not always easy to follow. The fact that his subjects were wide meant that his focus was not always sharp. Leake tried to do something less complicated and – to use a Wordsworthian phrase³⁹ – looked steadily at his subject and never forgot about it. His graphic description of the north-western villagers' Communion Service, his terrifying simile of God the schoolmaster, have a greater impact on the reader than any passage in Tyrer's sermons, which nevertheless are more truly "godlie" than Leake's. Tyrer's prose has some merit, but his main interest to us today lies in his attitude towards Kendal expressed in his *Dedication to the Sermons* and in his more humane attitude towards Christianity in his contemporary world. We have no means of knowing how he affected his congregation; Richard Brathwait was not a typical provincial church-goer.

Acknowledgements

I thank the following persons for the help they gave me in the preparation of this paper. Mr J. C. T. Oates of the University Library, Cambridge, brought the cancelled title-page to my attention and solved for me the problems raised by it and by the missing leaf A1; he also criticised my essay and informed me of the whereabouts of other copies of Tyrer's book. The Revd John Hodgkinson spared me some time, made me a rubbing of the epitaph and showed me the rare pamphlet about Kendal Parish Church and its vicars. Miss Sheila MacPherson of the County Record Office at Kendal helped me with a doubtful point in the transcription of the epitaph and showed me the Kendal registers. Thanks to Mr John Payne and the staff of the Rare Book Room at the Humanities Research Center of the University of Texas at Austin, Mr D. Pepys Whiteley of Magdalene College Cambridge, Mr A. R. B. Fuller, Librarian of St Paul's Cathedral and the staff of the British Library I was able to inspect four copies of the *Sermons*. The Master and Fellows of Magdalene College gave me permission to enable Mr Rawlings to photograph for publication the title-page of their copy; he also photographed the cancelled title-page preserved in the Cambridge University Library. Mr Charles P. Finlayson of the Edinburgh University Library kindly sent me a print of the title-page of their copy of the sermons and told me that leaf A1 is missing also from their book. Mr Angus Bowie of Emmanuel College kindly traced for me the quotation from Cicero. Dr Philip Gaskell, librarian of Trinity College, Cambridge, was able to assure me that there had never been a Tyrer or Stationers' Scholar at that College.

Notes and References

- ¹ Sir Daniel Fleming of Rydal, *A description of Westmoreland* [sic], (1671), CW Tract Series 1, 1882, pp. 7-8; J. Nicolson and R. Burn, *The history and antiquities of Westmorland and Cumberland*, London, 1777, I, 76; Edward Bellasis, *Westmorland church notes*, Kendal, 1889, II, 66-7; Cornelius Nicholson, *The annals of Kendal*, Kendal and London, 1832, p. 35; 1861, p. 61; John F. Curwen, *Kirkbie-kendall*, Kendal, 1900, p. 251; B. Nightingale, *The ejected of 1662 in Cumberland and Westmorland*, Manchester, 1911, II, 877; Francis Nicholson and Ernest Axon, *The older nonconformity in Kendal*, 1915, p. 251.
- ² *Fragments . . . relating to the Parish Church of Kendal and the vicars thereof . . .* an undated nineteenth-century pamphlet, a copy of which is preserved in the vestry of Kendal Parish Church.
- ³ Mr J. C. T. Oates tells me that Thomas Fuller in his history of the University of Cambridge (1655) repeatedly referred to Oxford as his aunt!
- ⁴ J. and J. A. Venn, *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, part I, IV (1927), 285b; Joseph Fisher, *Alumni Oxonienses*, IV (early series), (1892), p. 1527.
- ⁵ J. P. Earwaker, *Lancashire and Cheshire wills and inventories, 1572 to 1696, now preserved at Chester; With an appendix of Lancashire and Cheshire Wills and inventories proved at York or Richmond, 1542-1649*. (Chetham Society) 1893, pp. 197-9.
- ⁶ Edward Arber, *A transcript of the Register of the Company of Stationers in London*, III (1876), 205.
- ⁷ The British Library, 4453, 22. 13; The Old Library, Magdalene College, Cambridge, G. 4. 50 (3); St Paul's Cathedral, 38. h. 7; Edinburgh University Library, Dd. 10. 24; Humanities Research Center, Austin, Texas, STC/24475.
- ⁸ *A Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, & Ireland and of English books printed abroad 1475-1640*, first compiled by A. W. Pollard and G. R. Redgrave, Second edition Revised and enlarged, Begun by W. A. Jackson and F. S. Ferguson, Completed by Katherine F. Pantzer, Volume 2, (I-Z) items 24475 and 24475.5. London, 1976.
- ⁹ R. B. McKerrow, *Printers' and Publishers' Devices in England and Scotland*, London, 1913.
- ¹⁰ See Richard S. Ferguson's edition of *A Boke off Recorde or register Containing all the acts and doings in or concerning the Corporation within the town of Kirkbie-kendall . . . to which are added the several charters granted by Q. Elizabeth, K. Charles I and K. Charles II*. Kendal, 1892. (Queen Elizabeth's charter, pp. 274-305). My statements are supported by reference to the following pages of the *Boke* and of that charter: 22, 23, 27, 136-7, 150-2, 154, 276-9, 292-3, 300-1.
- ¹¹ "Chapman" here means a trader or dealer rather than a pedlar or hawker. See Richard Brathwait's lines:
- Plaine home-bred chapmen (yet of such due note)
Their word is good, how plaine so ere's their coat.
Yea doe I wish, I may haue such as they,
Ingag'd to me, for they'l do what they say,
When silken coats, and some of them I know,
Will say farre more then ere they meane to doe.*
- To all true-bred Northerne Sparks . . .* (full title given later in the text) from *A Strappado for the diuell* [1615], ed. J. W. Ebbsworth, Boston, Lincs., 1878, p. 196. The first edition of 1615 has the same page number.
- ¹² The catchword reads *informed*.
- ¹³ See Sir Thomas Browne's *Pseudodoxia Epidemica: Or, Enquiries into Very many Received Tenents* [sic], *And commonly Presumed Truths*. The Second Edition, London, 1650, Book III, chapter 6, p. 116: "That a bear brings forth her young informous and unshapen, which she fashioneth after by licking them over, is an opinion not only vulgar, and common with us at present, but hath been of old delivered by ancient Writers upon this foundation, it was a Hieroglyphic among the AEGyptians: Aristotle seems to countenance it, Solinus, Plinie and Aelian directly affirme it, and Ovid smoothly delivereth it . . ." Nevertheless some scholars in recent times denied it, "among them Julius Scaliger [1484-1558] in his *Exercitationes*."
- ¹⁴ The College is of course Trinity College, Cambridge, patron of the living of Holy Trinity, Kendal and Tyrer's old college.
- ¹⁵ See the Revelation, chapter I.
- ¹⁶ Tirus (Tyrus), or Tyre. "Tyre, the crowning city, whose merchants are princes, whose traffickers are the honourable of the earth". Isaiah, 23. 8. "And Tyrus did build herself a strong hold, and heaped up silver as the dust, and fine gold as the mire of the streets". Zechariah, 9. 3. See also Ezekiel, chapters 27 and 28.
- ¹⁷ H. S. Bennett, *English Books and Readers - 1558-1603*, Cambridge, 1965, pp. 148-156.

- ¹⁸ For Richard Brathwait, see Matthew Wilson Black, *Richard Brathwait – An account of his life and works*, Philadelphia, 1928; G. E. Braithwaite, *The Braithwaite clan – a Genealogical Study (A sequel to “Generoso Germine Gemmo”)*, no date (?1974), privately circulated; W. G. Collingwood, “*The Fatall Nuptiall*, a tract (by Richard Brathwaite?) on the Windermere Ferry Accident of 1635”, CW2, xiii (1913), 147-159; H. S. Cowper, “Notes on Richard Brathwait of Burneside”, CW2, xxii (1922), 79-84; Jean Robertson, “Civil war in the Brathwait family”, CW2, xxxviii (1938), 138-145; G. E. Braithwaite, “Some unknown works by Richard Brathwait (1588-1673)”, *Quarto*, (Abbot Hall, Kendal), xiii, 4 (1976), 4-7.
- ¹⁹ Urim and Thummim. “And thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim: and they shall be upon Aaron’s heart, when he goeth in before the Lord”. Exodus 28, 30. The meaning of these Hebrew words has been much disputed. Possibly Brathwait took them to signify Doctrine and Truth: cf. the Vulgate’s “Doctrinam et Veritatem”.
- ²⁰ “Not flea [= flay] but fleece”. The conceit seems to derive from John, 10. 1-18. Tyrer quoted John 10. 8 in his first sermon and added: “All that euer were before me are theeves and robbers when as they doe not feed, but fleese, and not fleese but flea the flocke of Christ”. (p. 12, fo. A6v) Brathwait must have taken the expression from this sermon.
- ²¹ Ebbsworth’s edition (see note 11 above) reads here: “Tyre’s her Pastor” – an obvious error. The London first edition reads: “Tyrer’s her Pastor” (p. 206).
- ²² *Barnabees Journall, Under the Names of Mirtilus & Faustilus shadowe: for the Travellers Solace lately published, to most apt numbers reduced, and to the old Tune Barnabe commonly chanted. By Corymboeus.* [London, 1638], unpagged, fos. CC6v and CC7r.
- ²³ *The English Gentleman: Containing Sundry excellent Rules or exquisite Observations tending to Direction of every Gentleman, of selecter ranke and qualitie; How to demeane or accommodate himselfe in the manage of publike or private affaires.* London, 1630, pp. 125-6 (fos. R3r-v).
- ²⁴ King James I.
- ²⁵ There are other references to the coppermines in Brathwait’s *The Schollers Medley*, London, 1614, p. 6, fo. 12v; slightly modified in *A survey of History: Or, a Nursery for Gentry . . .* London, 1638; unpagged, fo. B4r and p. 214, fo. Ff3v.
- ²⁶ See Edward M. Wilson, “Richard Leake’s plague sermons, 1599”, CW2, lxxv (1975), 150-173.
- ²⁷ *The New English Dictionary* gives various forms of this word: clergion, clergeon, clergiou, etc. It originally meant a young clerk or member of a clerical order; a chorister or choir-boy; hence a term of depreciation = petty clerk (as here).
- ²⁸ See Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 166.
- ²⁹ See B. L. Kentish and Edward M. Wilson, “The later career of Richard Leake”, CW2, lxxvii, 113ff.
- ³⁰ Cf. Cicero, *De natura deorum*, 1. 37. 104: “quicquid horum attigris, ulcus est”. Tyrer means: “For anything I shall touch will be a tender spot”.
- ³¹ Theodore Beza (1519-1605), famous French Calvinist. “Beza did not comprehend all things”.
- ³² St Robert Bellarmine, 1542-1621.
- ³³ Ubiquity: Luther’s doctrine that Christ in His human nature is everywhere present. Famelists: also called the “Family of Love” – a pantheistic sect founded in Holland in about 1580. Brownists: the followers of Robert Browne, c. 1550-1633, who advocated a Presbyterian form of Church government and fled to Holland in about 1580. The name of Anabaptist was applied to various continental dissident groups in the sixteenth century.
- ³⁴ then = than.
- ³⁵ Compare: “Wherefore, good people, let us beware of such hypocrisy, vainglory, and justifying of ourselves. Let us look upon our feet; and then down peacock’s feathers, down proud heart, down vile clay, frail and brittle vessels”. *The first part of the Sermon on the Misery of Man from Certain sermons or homilies appointed to be read in Churches in the time of Queen Elizabeth of famous memory.* London, 1890, p. 15.
- ³⁶ for-swat = covered with sweat; swunck (swounke) was the past participle of the obsolete verb to swink = to labour, to toil.
- ³⁷ trauell = travail.
- ³⁸ *Dives* – the rich man, traditionally applied to the rich man in the parable of Lazarus, Luke 16. 19-31, especially verse 24.
- ³⁹ “I have at all times endeavoured to look steadily at my subject”. *Advertisement to the Lyrical Ballads* (1798), see *The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth*, edited by E. de Selincourt, II (Oxford, 1944), 390.

Professor Edward M. Wilson died in November 1977, without seeing the proofs of this paper.