

ESCHATOLOGICAL POETRY IN THE
EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

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INTRODUCTION

The eighteenth century was a period in which new ideas were competing with those of long established tradition for existence in the world of the future. The English renaissance had come to full flower, and Baconian science had carried with it the intellect of Europe. In the religious world the reformation was nearly a hundred and fifty years old, the Puritan commonwealth had tried its political experiment and failed, the hilarious reaction of the restoration was a thing of the past, and England had settled down to the via media with a hearty and verbose respect for religion, common sense, and good taste.

Into this atmosphere we have come to enquire about the fate of one of the oldest ideas in European culture--the Christian doctrine of the end of the world.

From the very earliest days of Christianity the belief that Jesus would one day return to gather his servants into an everlasting kingdom of joy and peace had been the hope of his follwers in every land, particularly during times when persecution gave men but little present comfort. The eighteenth century was not such an age, however. It was a period of latitudinarian tolerance, of material prosperity, intellectual enlightenment, and cultural development. It was not the kind of age when one might expect the eschatological idea to inspire a fervid devotion such

as it produced in the early years of Christian history, but if eighteenth-century Englishmen had been subject to similar persecution they would probably not have found opportunity to convert their cherished hopes into poetry, certainly not into the kind of poetry which we shall be reading for the most part in the coming pages.

During the course of this study the first object will be to find out what kinds of ideas the poets set forth in their lines. Then we shall note which of those concerning a given topic appear to be the most prevalent and which seem to be rare or isolated instances. When this is determined some attention will be devoted to imagery and other modes of expressing these concepts. Imagery is a matter of particular interest in a religious subject because the doctrines of the Christian faith can often be more clearly understood by analogy than by any other means of explanation. Finally some effort will be made to relate these ideas to the theological background of the period by noting parallels in thought in works of religious prose which might have interested a literary audience of the time.

The various ideas will be discussed in the natural groups into which they fall--preliminary events, the resurrection, the second coming of Christ and judgment, the conflagration, and the rewards and punishments of men. Under the last heading will also be mentioned certain ideas which are not in themselves eschatological but which do have a direct bearing upon certain aspects of the judgment day--doctrines such as the immortality of the soul, belief in the justice and benevolence of God, and in the

freedom of the will. In discussing any particular idea, poets will be mentioned in chronological order according to the writer's best knowledge. Reasons for the dates given are set forth in the annotated bibliography of poetry which appears at the end of this study. The verse listed in this bibliography is culled from the works of the major and minor poets between 1700 and 1800, but it includes also a few poems written either before or after the eighteenth century—works which seem to belong to the period in thought and style.

Something should perhaps be said at this point about the standard position of the Church of England in regard to the last day, for almost every poet would be sure to have such information in mind when he began to write. The Thirty-nine Articles were then, as they still are, the final authority upon doctrine in the Anglican Church. Not very much space is devoted to the day of judgment. Only the bare core of traditional Christian belief upon the subject is contained in Article IV, but this is stated emphatically as follows:

Christ did truly rise again from death, and took again His body, with flesh, bones, and all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature, wherewith He ascended into Heaven, and there sitteth, until He return to judge all men at the last day.¹

Even more familiar to the Englishman was the Book of Common Prayer, which

¹Burnet, Gilbert, An Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, 1699, ed. Rev. James Robert Page. This article was identical with that published in 1739 in The Thirty-nine Articles, and the Constitutions and Canons of the Church of England...To which are added His Majesty's Directions for the preserving of unity in the church, and the purity of the Christian faith;...and the Archbishop of Canterbury's Letter to the Bishops of his province...(London: Printed by John Baskett), 1739.

It is also identical with that found in E. Harold Browne, An Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles Historical and Doctrinal, 2nd ed., 1854.

governed every divine service. The Apostles' Creed which would be particularly well known because of its central position in the Morning and Evening Service,² is similarly very general.

I believe in God the FATHER Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.
And in JESUS CHRIST His only SON our LORD, Who was conceived by the HOLY GHOST, Born of the Virgin Mary, Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, dead, and buried, He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead, He ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of GOD the FATHER Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the...Forgiveness of sins; The Resurrection of the body, And the Life everlasting. Amen.³

The Athanasian Creed which also occurs periodically in the Anglican worship gives very little more information. Belief is expressed in Christ,

...Who suffered for our salvation: descended into hell, rose again the third day from the dead.

He ascended into heaven, He sitteth on the right hand of the FATHER, GOD Almighty: from whence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

At Whose coming all men shall rise again with their bodies; and shall give account for their own works.

And they that have done good shall go into life everlasting: and they that have done evil into everlasting fire...⁴

These are the orthodox statements of belief for the Church of England in the eighteenth century. They must have been familiar to all, even to dissenters, for quarrels with the established church either in England or Scotland seem never to have centered about any of these points.

²The Annotated Book of Common Prayer, being an Historical, Ritual and Theological Commentary on the Devotional System of the Church of England, ed. Rev. John Henry Blunt, 1903.

³Idem.

⁴Idem.

CHAPTER I

CHRONOLOGY OF FINAL EVENTS

There is no orthodox Anglican dogma about the order of final events--resurrection, conflagration, second coming of Christ, and judgment. Statements in the Thirty-nine Articles and the Book of Common Prayer suggest, as we have seen, that everything happens almost at once. Common sense, of course, demands some kind of sequence. Otherwise the door is left wide open for speculation. The dead have to be resurrected and Christ has to descend before the tribunal or there would be no judge and no one to be judged. One would expect a good deal of variety of opinion upon certain points. As a matter of fact, the poets are divided in their opinions about whether Christ raises the dead after he arrives upon the scene or whether they are resurrected ahead of time and waiting for him. There is also some disagreement about whether the conflagration occurs at the beginning or at the close of the other events.

Generally speaking, the poets do not labor their chronology. That is, they have an order, for they cannot very well describe all these occurrences at once; but they do not insist that one thing must come before another. Nevertheless, a survey of those events which poets are wont to take up first or last does tell us something about their thinking and the influences that have formed it. It is interesting, for example, to note that by far the majority have the idea that destruction begins somewhere--either in the

heavens or upon earth or in both places--at the first sound of the trumpet.¹ It is particularly interesting because Gilbert Burnet's fully authorized and doubtless influential Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles, published in 1699, sets forth the same idea.²

In conclusion, when all God's design with this world is accomplished, it shall be set on fire, and all the great parts of which it is composed, as of elements, shall be melted and burnt down; and then when by that fire probably the portions of matter, which was in the bodies of all who have lived upon earth, shall be so far refined and fixed, as to become both incorruptible and immortal, then they shall be made meet for the souls that formerly animated them, to re-enter every one into his own body, which shall be then so moulded as to be a habitation fit to give it everlasting joy or everlasting torment.

Then shall Christ appear visibly in some very conspicuous place in the clouds of heaven, where every eye shall see him: ...and then shall he pass a final sentence upon all that ever lived.

The sequence here is conflagration first; then, after all is burnt out, the resurrection occurs, which is in turn followed first by the descent of the judge and then by the tribunal.

John Pomfret, Aaron Hill, and William Gilbank give exactly the same chronology as Burnet. Pomfret wrote two poems which appeared at about the

¹See Chapter iii for a discussion of signals for the beginning of the consummation.

²Gilbert Burnet, An Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, ed. James Robert Page, 1852, pp. 81-83, hereafter cited as Exposition.

The following comment by Burnet is found in the editor's preface: "I published this year (1699) an Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion.... I was moved first by the late Queen, and pressed by the Archbishop Tillotson to write it." The editor adds that the work was carefully revised by Tillotson and Stillingfleet.

same time as Burnet's exposition.³ One was written originally in Latin and is called "Dies Novissima; or, the Last Epiphany. A Pindaric Ode, on Christ's Second Appearance to judge the World,"⁴ probably 1699. The other, an entirely different poem, bears the title "On the Day of Judgment,"⁵ also 1699. In both of these the progress of events is as follows. Before the resurrection the conflagration gets under way. After terrible convulsions, the earth opens "her burning womb" and swallows all wicked mortals. The sun grows dark, the moon appears like blood, and the larger planets are shaken from their center and become motionless and dark. Then when the archangel blows his trumpet, nature is seized with fresh agonies, the dead are raised, and joyful angels fly hither and thither gathering the righteous tenderly to a place above the earth, while the wicked stand in the midst of the burning world awaiting sentence to fiercer torments. When all of these things are accomplished, the Judge appears in glory in the eastern skies. The saints are placed at his right hand, and the wicked are dragged up before him. When sentence has been passed upon the latter, a miserable cloud encloses the wicked, and they are hurled into a lake of

³An effort has been made to ascertain the approximate year of composition or first publication for most of the poems dealt with in this study. Notes attached to bibliographical entries supply the authority for such dates. When dates of first appearance are not embodied in the text, as above, and differ from the dates of the text used, they will appear in footnotes at frequent intervals immediately after the title of the poem.

⁴Text of A Collection of Poems on religious and moral Subjects extracted from the most celebrated Authors, 1797. Hereafter cited as "Dies Novissima."

⁵Text of The Christian Poet: or Divine Poems on the Four last Things. (Viz.) Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell. Written by the Rev. Mr. Poulret, the Earl of Roscommon, Mr. Morris, Mr. Wesley, Daniel De Foe, and others. To which is added a Poem on the Resurrection By the late Joseph Addison, etc., 1735. Hereafter cited as The Christian Poet.

fire while the righteous pass to "Joys immense, and everlasting Extasy."

In Aaron Hill's "The Judgment Day: a Poem," 1721,⁶ one blast of the trumpet stops the starry systems in their tracks. A second blast causes earth's axis to snap and the world to be thrown into confusion. Then when "accomplish'd ruin sleeps" and "untask'd angels rove o'er empty skies," the trumpet is heard for a third time. Presently the voice of God calls the dead to life, and the judgment takes place.

William Gilbank places his detailed description of the conflagration after the judgment scene in The Day of Pentecost, Book XI,⁷ but he conceives of it as beginning before the resurrection. After the conflagration has started and the dead have been raised, the gates of heaven are heard to open, and Christ descends. Then all appear before the bar of God and sentence is passed. Meanwhile the earth vanishes so completely that even its track is lost among the stars.

Other poets agree with Burnet in placing the conflagration first but differ slightly in making the resurrection and occasionally the descent

⁶Text of Works, 1754, III.

⁷Text of The Day of Pentecost or Man Restored, a Poem in Twelve Books, 1789—cited hereafter as The Day of Pentecost. This poem reviews the history of mankind up to the Day of Pentecost. The day of judgment is worked into Book XI as a part of a vision given to Abraham after he had successfully passed his test regarding the sacrifice of Isaac. The vision was granted in response to the patriarch's request to be "made acquainted with the particular nature and extent of the Christian Sacrifice."

of Christ synchronous. Isaac Watts,⁸ John Norris,^{9,10} and Mary Masters¹¹ are among this group. The winners of first and second prize for the Gentleman's Magazine contest in 1735—contestants VII (Noses Browne)¹² and VIII¹³ and John Ogilvie¹⁴ sandwich the resurrection between two phases of the final destruction. First the sun, moon, and planets fall. Afterwards the dead are raised. Then the Judge is seen approaching the earth, preceded by a flood of fire or sulphur which sets the world ablaze. When he arrives the judgment occurs.

William Blake's chronology, surprisingly enough, fits comfortably into this now conventional pattern. First, the universe explodes, and all things are reversed. Then bones join bones, and it is the resurrection. All gather to judgment in fear, while in the distance appears the cloud of the "Son of Man" "descending from Jerusalem with power and great glory."

⁸"The Day of Judgment," 1706. Text of Works of the English Poets, ed. A. Chalmers, XIII--cited hereafter as Chalmers.

⁹"The Consummation: a Pindaric Ode," 1706--cited hereafter as Norris or "The Consummation." Text of Miscellanies of the Fuller Worthies Library, ed. Rev. Alexander B. Grosart, 1872.

¹⁰Henceforth all poets represented in this study by one poem only will be cited either by the poet's last name or, at reasonable intervals, by the last name and a short title.

¹¹"A Meditation upon these Words, Arise ye Dead, and come to Judgment"--cited hereafter as Mary Masters or "A Meditation."

¹²"On Life, Death, Judgment, Heaven and Hell." Text of the Gentleman's Magazine "Extraordinary," 1735. All thirteen of the contestants for the Gentleman's Magazine prize will be referred to hereafter by number as contestant IV, contestant IX, etc.

¹³Contestant VIII.

¹⁴"The Day of Judgment," 1753, Text of Poems on Several Subjects, 1762.

Unconventionality takes over with the close of judgment, and the poet goes sailing off on his own balloon until the end of the poem when he lands squarely on firm ground again with a description of the recreation of the earth, which will be considered later.¹⁵

Other poets place the resurrection first and the conflagration last. Thomas Ken,¹⁶ for example, tells how the archangel blows the trumpet to awaken the dead and how after that Jesus is seen descending from the skies with his attendants. The globe shakes, and legions of angels are dispersed to gather the "elect" to the bar of God; but it is not until after the sentence has been passed and the celestial retinue has departed for heaven that the last fire is lit. Joseph Addison,¹⁷ and Edward Young¹⁸ give the same order of events.

Those who place the descent of Christ before the resurrection are Lady Mary Chudleigh,¹⁹ Joseph Trapp,²⁰ John and Charles Wesley,²¹ and

¹⁵Blake's chronology is found chiefly in "Vala, or the four Zoas. Night the Ninth being the Last Judgment" (cited hereafter as "Vala"), but it also appears in Milton, Books I and II, written at about 1785. Text of The Writings of William Blake, 1925, II.

¹⁶Hymnotheo: or the Penitent—cited henceforth as Hymnotheo. Text of The Works, 1721, III.

¹⁷"On the Resurrection," 1718. Text of The Christian Poet, 1735.

¹⁸The Last Day, 1713, and Night Thoughts, 1742-1745—"Night IX"—"Night IX" will hereafter be cited as Night Thoughts since no other part of the poem is being used. Text of The Works, 1813, II, I.

¹⁹"The Song of the Three Children paraphrased"—cited hereafter as "Song of the Three Children." Text of Poems, 1703.

²⁰Thoughts on the Four Last Things, Death, Judgment, Heaven and Hell. A Poem in four Parts, 1734—cited hereafter as Trapp or Thoughts on the Four Last Things.

²¹"A Funeral Hymn," based on I Thess. iv:13, 1742, Vol. II; Hymn xxi, 1746, Vol. IV; a paraphrase of Dan. ix:13, 1762, Vol. I. Text of The
(continued)

William Cowper.²²

A considerable number of poets have something to say about the time when the consummation is expected to begin but not one ventures a date. The prevailing attitude, however, is that the time cannot be far off.

Whoe'er observes the little Faith on Earth,
Would think the wond'rous Period near its Birth.
Ourselves perhaps, not fated to expire,
May in These Bodies see the World on fire.²³

In 1755 John Wesley published a book in which he placed the consummation two thousand years from 1836. (See below under discussion of the millenium.) It is, therefore, a matter of no ordinary interest to observe that no such idea ever occurs in the poetry of John and Charles Wesley and that, in fact, there is a constant insistence throughout its extent upon the imminence of doomsday. "Thy Kingdom Come," which is Hymn XL in volume VI (1758) contains a characteristic statement:

Lift your heads, ye friends of Jesus,
Partners in His patience here,
Christ to all believers precious,
Lord of Lords, shall soon appear:

Footnote 21, contd.

Poetical Works of John and Charles Wesley, ed. G. Osborn, 1868-1872. 13 vols. Since all poems by John and Charles Wesley used in the present study are taken from this text, future citations will be made only to specific volumes.

²²Cowper's sequence is not all given in any one poem but is to be discovered by examining "Hope"; The Task, Book VI; and Hymn lxxiii. Text of The Life and Works of William Cowper, ed. T. S. Grimshaw, 1864--cited hereafter as Works.

²³Trapp, Thoughts on the Four last Things, 1734.

Mark the tokens
 Of His heavenly Kingdom near!
 Hear all nature's groans proclaiming
 Nature's swift-approaching doom!
 War and pestilence and famine
 Signify the wrath to come;

.....

Close behind the tribulation
 Of these last tremendous days,
 See the flaming revelation,
 See the universal blaze!
 Earth and heaven
 Melt before the Judge's face!

Again in 1762 the idea appears in a paraphrase of Matthew 24:37 in
 volume X.

Earth shall soon receive her doom,
 Delayed with a flood of fire.²⁴

²⁴The Wesleys also point out how it is possible to expect the end soon without setting a date for it. In the same paraphrase of Matthew xxiv quoted above appear the following lines:

Thy judgment is reveal'd,
 The time from man conceal'd;
 Yet His saints the signs shall know
 When their Lord will soon appear,
 When the floods of sin o'er flow,
 Then they find that Christ is near.

The poet also offers an explanation for the mystery surrounding the time of the last judgment.

Why hath God conceal'd the day
 When He will to judgment come?
 That we every moment may
 Stand prepared to meet our doom....

All the poets agree that the subject is involved in mystery. Some take particular pains to tell the reader so. The following are a few of these: Joseph Trapp, Thoughts on the Four Last Things, 1734. R. Glynn, "The Day of Judgment," which received the Seatonian prize for religious poetry,

(continued)

It is true that the later eschatology teaches that Christ will return soon, that is in 1836, but he will not return then to final judgment and the destruction of the world.

William Cowper also looks about him for signs of coming dissolution. Speaking of the wickedness of his own age he remarks in The Task:

Thy prophets speak of such; and noting down
The features of the last degenerate times,
Exhibit every lineament of these.

In addition to Trapp, the Wesleys, and Cowper there are many in the century who look for history to close at almost any time. Among these are Edward Young,²⁵ Samuel Catherall,²⁶ the anonymous author of "A Winter's Thought,"²⁷ Jane Brereton,²⁸ Mary Barber,²⁹ Elizabeth Rowe,³⁰ Samuel

Footnote 24, contd.

1757. Text of The British Poets including Translations, ed. R. A. Davenport, 1822. Isaac Hawkins Browne, On the Immortality of the Soul, Book II, 1765. Text of Poems upon Various Subjects, Latin and English, 1768. The translation is by Soame Jernys. Michael Bruce, "The Last Day," Text of The Life and Complete Works, ed. by John Guthrie Barnett, 1927. Richard Cumberland, Calvary; or the Death of Christ, a Poem in Eight Books, 1792, Book VIII. Text of the two-volume edition, 1800. This poem will be cited henceforth as Calvary.

²⁵In The Last Day, Young has not the faintest idea whether judgment is near or distant. It may be soon, he thinks, or it may be ten thousand harvests off. In Night Thoughts, however, he seems to have settled the matter, for he declares that the shadow of the flood prophesies "Another dissolution soon...." The same idea occurs elsewhere in the work also.

²⁶An Essay on the Conflagration, 1720.

²⁷Text of the Gentleman's Magazine, Feb., 1731.

²⁸"Thoughts on Life, Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell," 1735—cited in future as "Thoughts on Life, Death, Judgment." Text of Poems on Several Occasions, 1744.

²⁹"Occasion'd by reading the Memoirs of Anne of Austria written by Madame de Motteville." Text of Poems on Several Occasions, 1735.

³⁰"Soliloquy xx" and "Soliloquy xiv." Text of Miscellaneous Works in Prose and Verse, 1739.

Boyse,³¹ Moses Browne,³² and the anonymous author of Meditations, 1762.³³

Some come a little closer than others towards setting a time for the last day. They suggest that history will terminate after it has run five or six thousand years. Jane Brereton says, for example, in "Thoughts on Life, Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell":

Reflect, my Soul! on that tremendous Day
When the GREAT JUDGE his Glory shall display;
When the last Trumpet's Sound this Globe shall shake,
And those, who slept five thousand Years, awake.

Thomas Maurice speaks of the resurrection in a poem called Westminster Abbey,³⁴ 1784:

I see the spectres of five thousand years,
Bards, sages, chiefs, in long succession rise:...

William Cowper is more definite in The Task:

The groans of Nature in this nether world,
Which Heaven has heard for ages, have an end.
Foretold by prophets, and by poets sung,
.....
The time of rest, the promised sabbath, comes.
Six thousand years of sorrow have well nigh
Fulfill'd their tardy and disastrous course
Over a sinful world; and what remains

³¹The Deity--"Providence," 1740. Text of Chalmers XIV.

³²Sunday Thoughts containing the Publick, Family, and Solitary Duties..., 1750.

³³Meditations on the Incomprehensibility of God in his Works of Creation, Providence, and Redemption: as also, on the General Judgment, by "J.W." Boston, 1762--cited hereafter as "J.W."

³⁴Text of Westminster Abbey with other occasional Poems, 1813.

Of this tempestuous state of human things
Is merely as the working of a sea
Before a calm, that rocks itself to rest.

There are two places in the poetry of William Blake and one in his prose where he speaks of six milleniums as the duration of the present world. In Wilton³⁵ he describes Christ as wearing to judgment a garment called "the woof of six thousand years." In a prose passage from The Prophetic Books called "A Memorable Fancy," he observes: "The ancient tradition that the world will be consumed in fire at the end of six thousand years is true, as I have heard from hell."³⁶ Again in the poem "Time" he makes a rather cryptic remark, which seems, nevertheless, to be an echo of the foregoing idea.

Every time less than a pulsation of the artery
Is equal in its period and value to six thousand years.
Events of time start forth and are conceived in such a period,
Within a moment; a pulsation of the artery.³⁷

John Wesley does not specifically mention the period of six milleniums, but he does speak of a "sabbatic year" in connection with the state of the righteous after the consummation. In volume 1, he introduces the idea into an adaptation of George Herbert's "Home."

³⁵Book VI. Text of The Writings of William Blake, 1925, II, 371-372.

³⁶The Poems of William Blake, ed. William Butler Yeats, 1927, p. 185.

³⁷Ibid., p. 234.

Illy we talk of Harvests here,
 Eternity our Harvest is:
 Grace brings the great sabbatic Year.³⁸

Later, in a paraphrase of Mal. IV:5, he writes:

When the seventh trumpet's sound
 Proclaims the grand sabbatic year,
 Come Thyself, with glory crown'd,
 And reign triumphant here.³⁹

This idea, that the world will last only six thousand years, was fairly prevalent among theologians of the period. Thomas Burnet included it in The Sacred Theory of the Earth as early as 1684. He explains it thus:

The Jews, 'tis well known, held the Renovation of the World, and a Sabbath after Six Thousand Years; according to the Prophecy that was current among them;... And that future State they called the World to come, which is the very same with Saint Paul's habitable Earth to come,... Heb. 11.6. Neither can I easily believe, that those Constitutions of Moses that proceed so much upon a septenary, or the Number seven, and have no Ground or Reason, in the Nature of the Thing, for that particular Number. I cannot easily believe, I say, that they are either accidental or humoursome, without Design or Signification; but that they are typical, or representative of some Septenary State, that does eminently deserve and bear that Character. Moses, in

³⁸p. 65. Herbert's original reads:

We talk of harvests--there are no such things
 But when we leave our corn and hay;
 There is no fruitfull year but that which brings
 The last and lov'd, though dreadfull day:...

Text of The Complete Works in Verse and Prose of George Herbert, ed. Alexander B. Grosart, 1874, I, 123. No mention is made of a "sabbatic year" anywhere in the poem.

the History of the Creation, makes six Days Work, and then a Sabbath: Then, after six Years, he makes a Sabbath Year; and after a Sabbath of Years, a Year of Jubilee, Levit. xiv. All these lesser Revolutions seem to me to point at the grand Revolution, the great Sabbath or Jubilee, after six Millenaries; which, as it answers the Type in point of Time, so likewise in the Nature and Contents of it; being a State of Rest from all Labour, and Trouble, and Servitude; a State of Joy and Triumph, and a State of Renovation, and pristine Order.⁴⁰

Robert Boyle (1627-1691) expressed his belief that the world would be destroyed after six thousand years in a pamphlet called "The Excellency of Theology Compared with Natural Philosophy."⁴¹ Thomas Newton said the same thing in the Boyle lectures which he published in 1754⁴² under the title of Dissertations on the Prophecies.^{43,44} In 1760 the Reverend Richard Clarke wrote A Spiritual Voice to the Christian Church, and to the Jews, applying the Levitical institutes as types for the age of the world to prove that the millenium was not far off. Four years later Thomas Hartley used this work as the basis for A Testimony to the doctrine of

⁴⁰The Sacred Theory of the Earth containing an Account of the Original of the Earth, and of all the general Changes which it hath already undergone, or is to undergo, till the Consummation of all Things, 6th ed., 1726, II, 210—cited hereafter as The Sacred Theory.

⁴¹John Hunt, Religious Thought in England from the Reformation to the end of last Century, III, 180.

⁴²Ibid., III, 332.

⁴³1796 edition.

⁴⁴Cowper mentioned his approval of this work in a letter which he wrote to Lady Hesketh on July 5, 1765, about twenty years before he published The Task. The Correspondence of William Cowper, 1904, I, 33-35.

the Blessed Millenium,⁴⁵ which he called the "millenial sabbath." Hartley traced the idea back to the fathers. These are by no means the only ones in the century who stressed the parallel between the days of creation and the milleniums of history. It is not surprising, therefore, that it arose in the poetry of the period.

The millenium as a state of bliss upon the earth is an idea that occurs occasionally among the eighteenth-century poets, but the millenium as a period of limited duration is conspicuous for its rarity, a fact which is surprising considering the number of prose writers of note who favored the idea. One need only mention Milton,⁴⁶ Daniel Whitby,⁴⁷ who seems to have introduced the idea to Jonathan Edwards in America,⁴⁸ Thomas Newton,⁴⁹ Richard Clarke, and Thomas Hartley.

Lady Mary Chudleigh talks about a millenium in lines from the essay "Of Justice,"⁵⁰ but her description of it is so similar to her description

⁴⁵Paradise Restored or A Testimony to the Doctrine of the Blessed Millenium with some Considerations on its Approaching Advent from the Signs of the Times, 1764.

⁴⁶Milton thought that Christ would reign personally on earth for a thousand years; then at the end of that time those saints who died before his coming would awaken to eternal life. Hunt, *op. cit.*, I, 195.

⁴⁷"A Treatise on the Millenium," A Paraphrase and Commentary on the New Testament, 1706, II, 715-742. Whitby explains here that under a special dispensation of divine power men would proclaim Christianity and convert all the world. By this means a millenial reign of righteousness would be introduced, after which Christ would come.

⁴⁸Nathaniel West, "History of the Pre-millenial Doctrine." Second Coming of Christ, Premillenial Essays of the Prophetic Conference. Held in the Church of the Holy Trinity, New York City: with an Appendix of Critical Testimonies, ed. Nathaniel West, 1870, pp. 384-385.

⁴⁹Dissertations on the Prophecies, p. 521 and elsewhere.

⁵⁰Text of Essays upon Several Subjects, 1710.

of the new earth after the conflagration in "The Song of the Three Children Paraphrased"⁵¹ that both must be referring to the same period.

The Wesley brothers speak very frequently of a millenium in their poetry—a millenium which they expect to be ushered in soon. But we have already found that they also think that doomsday—the judgment and conflagration—is near. This could not be if they have in mind a limited duration of time. Furthermore, there are passages that make it amply clear that the millenium of which they are thinking is the earth made new which follows the judgment and conflagration. Several of these will be cited here because of the contrast they present with John Wesley's later eschatology which pushed the day of judgment and final destruction two thousand years off. In 1746 the Wesleys associate the millenium with the consummation, for they desire God to

...bring the final scene,
Accomplish the redeeming plan,
Thy great millennial reign begin,...⁵²

In a paraphrase of Isa. 11:17 in Volume IX, 1762, they make a like association:

Son of Man, we long to see
Thy last and brightest day;
.....
That every soul its Lord may own
Seated in full glorious power
On Thy millennial throne!

⁵¹Text of Poems, 1703.

⁵²Hymn xxii, Vol. IV.

In the following passage the poets say that the kingdom set up at the millennial day will never end.

God of heaven, appear below,
And let Thy kingdom come,
All these worldly powers o'erthrow,
And scatter, and consume!
Let the last on earth take place,
Never, never to decline,
Founded in perpetual grace,
The monarchy Divine.

.

In the great millennial day
With all Thy saints descend:
Now display'd with glorious power
Let that final empire rise,
Stand, when time shall be no more,
Eternal in the skies.

Other passages such as the paraphrases of Joel III:18 and Matt. XXIV:22 in volume X of The Poetic Works echo the same idea, namely, that John and Charles Wesley as long as they were writing poetry identified the millenium with the new earth state. No contradiction has been found anywhere in the thirteen volumes of their sacred verse.

In 1755, however, John Wesley published his Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament,⁵⁴ in which he borrowed from the complicated eschatology of a contemporary German theologian, Johann Albrecht Bengel,⁵⁵ for a radically different view of the millenium and the time when the consummation is to be expected. In this work Wesley, following Bengel closely,

⁵³ A paraphrase of Dan. 11:44, Vol. X.

⁵⁴ Notes upon The Revelation.

⁵⁵ Idem.

now looked for two milleniums, the first of which was to begin upon earth in 1836 after certain wicked powers had been overthrown.⁵⁶ After the first millenium is over, says Wesley, the saints are to be taken to heaven for a second period of about a thousand years, during which Satan and the forces of evil will be allowed to rage upon earth. After this time is passed, the judgment and conflagration will take place.⁵⁷

A comparison of the eschatology outlined in the poetry with that given in the Explanatory Notes throws into relief the sketchiness of the former and the elaborateness of the latter. At the beginning of the comments upon Revelation, Wesley himself seems to explain the difference, for here he admits that he had come to despair of ever understanding the last book of the New Testament,

...after the fruitless attempts of so many wise and good Men; and perhaps I should have lived and died in this Sentiment, had I not seen the Works of the Great Bengelius. But these revived my Hopes of understanding even the prophecies of this Book; at least many of them in some good degree.... The following Notes are mostly those of that excellent Man; a few of which are taken from his Gnomon Novi Testamenti, but far more from his Erklarte Offenbarung, which is a full and regular Comment on the Revelation.⁵⁸

Sometime, therefore, between 1742 and 1755, John Wesley's views about the end of the world began to undergo a change, but the fact that he went on

⁵⁶ Cf. Johann Albrecht Bengel, comments upon the book of Revelation, in Gnomon of the New Testament, V, 1858.

⁵⁷ John Wesley, comments upon the Revelation, Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament, 1755.

⁵⁸ The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopaedia of Religious Knowledge, 1910, says that the Erklarte Offenbarung Johannis was first published in 1740 and the Gnomon Novi Testamenti in 1742.

publishing the old eschatology in the hymns for several years after he himself was convinced of the new idea without attempting to press the influence which he undoubtedly exerted over both his brother and his followers does, perhaps, add something to our understanding of the character of the man as a thinker and a leader.⁵⁹

Besides Lady Chudleigh and the Wesleys, there is one other poet in the period who talks about a millennium but means, like these, merely the new earth state. This is William Cowper, whose longest eschatological passage in The Task has already been discussed in regard to the six thousand year idea. In connection with this he mentions that "the promised sabbath"--that is, the seventh millennium, will soon come introduced

⁵⁹ The "Advertisement" to volume V of The Poetical Works makes the following comment about the relationship of John Wesley to the many volumes of sacred poetry issued jointly under the names of himself and his brother Charles:

The "Hymns and Sacred Poems," of which this Volume completes the reprint, differ from other Wesleyan publications having the same title in being originally published in two volumes, and in bearing the name of Charles Wesley alone. His brother John not only contributed nothing to them, but did not see them before they were published, as we learn from an express statement made many years afterwards in the eighteenth section of his "Plain Account of Christian Perfection." (Works, vol. xii., p 391.) As a consequence, he distinctly declined to be responsible for all they contained, and particularly for those passages which favour the notion that to those who are perfected in love apostasy is impossible. Traces of this disagreement will be found in various parts of the present Volume. In the main, however, he approved and admired the publication, and drew largely upon it for that "Collection of Hymns" to which the Methodist Societies are so deeply indebted.

Some of the pieces contained in these volumes had appeared previously, being appended to various publications designed to explain or defend Methodism; and in this form supply a beautiful illustration of the oneness of heart subsisting between the two brothers.

by God's "last advent and the destruction of nature."

The groans of Nature in this nether world,
Which Heaven has heard for ages, have an end.

For He whose ear the winds are...

When sin hath moved him, and his wrath is hot,
Shall visit earth.

From here Cowper launches into a description of the millennial world which can be no other than the earth renovated after the conflagration. Passages from "Hope,"⁶⁰ and Hymn LXIII⁶¹ bear out this conclusion.

Although most of the eighteenth-century poets have no true millenium in their eschatological thinking, two genuine millennialists did break into verse during the period. The first is John Bulkeley, who finished writing his twelve-book epic called The Last Day in about 1716 when he was but twenty-two years of age. (Bulkeley died two years later.) In style, The Last Day is a flamboyant imitation of Milton, but unlike most of such eighteenth-century imitations it bears the decided imprint of the author's own personality. No other eschatological work of the period is so unconventionally imaginative except Blake's "Vala." Color, action, and novelty are its prime characteristics, but the eighteenth century would find it lamentably wanting in restraint and common sense or probability.⁶² It came long enough after Daniel Whitby's A Paraphrase and Commentary on the New Testament to have absorbed from it the ideas which it presents of a post-

⁶⁰ Text of Works, 1864, p. 545.

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 584.

⁶² Anticipating, no doubt, this latter objection, Bulkeley's editor defends the introduction of certain elements into the poem on the grounds that "Poetry differs from History, as one describes what may, the other what does happen." From the Preface, 1720.

millennial advent of Christ and the conversion of the whole world including the Jews before the millenium.

In Book I attention is focused first upon heaven and then upon hell. The action begins with the decision of God the Father that time has come to halt the course of human history and bring men to judgment. At the Son's intercession, however, the consummation is delayed long enough to send Elijah to convert the world, which, despite two Satanic wars, he does in the course of the next three books. In Book V, God looks down from heaven, sees righteousness thriving upon earth, and is so pleased that he banishes Satan from earth completely for a thousand years. Book VI deals with Messiah's descent to earth and his triumphal procession from France to Jerusalem. Book VII presents a retrospect in the manner of Paradise Lost of events leading up to Elijah's visit. In Book VIII, Messiah departs from earth, and the time of wrath begins. The resurrection, judgment, conflagration, and recreation of the earth are described in Books IX, X, XI, and XII respectively.

Because of the fantastic nature of The Last Day it is no wonder that Bulkeley's epic exerted scarcely any influence upon eighteenth-century poetry. None of the judgment-day poets seem to have paid any attention to it. There are, of course, some points of similarity in John Wesley's later chronology, but as we have seen, his source was Bengel, not Bulkeley or Whitby. The only other genuinely millennial poetry appears in the Dorchester and Sherborne Journal of 1793 and 1794 as a reflection of Wesley's later scheme. The style and contents of most of these articles are so similar that one can only suppose that they were written by the same man. In the issue of November 15, 1793, Wesley is mentioned specifically

as authority for the ideas; and although the lines here do not mention a millenium by name, they strongly suggest Wesley's Bengelian eschatology, which does contain a millenium. In January 3 and July 10, 1794, however, the millenium is directly referred to in connection with other characteristic Bengelian details as the event towards which current signs, such as the atheistic upheaval in France, point. The latter, for example, includes the following lines:

Milleniums lord, his bride, his conquest cheers!
Reign richly, grace-born globe! with Christ thy thousand years!

Bengel's scheme has a place for the conflagration and judgment after the two milleniums, which are, accordingly, distinct from the new earth state that appears after the final destruction. There is one poet, however, who talks about a millenium but has no place for a violent consummation. This is John Logan, actually no more of a millennialist than the majority of eighteenth-century poets because he, too, identifies the millenium with the new earth state; but he differs with them in one important point: he specifically denies a sudden climax to world history, substituting in its place the idea of gradual human progress. Logan was a Scotoman and friend of Michael Bruce who included in some paraphrases of the Psalms for the Scottish hymnal the following novel ideas:

No trumpet-sound, at his approach,
Shall strike the wondering ears;
But still and gentle breaths the voice
In which the God appears.

The liquidation of evil in the world will be accomplished, he adds, by human efforts rather than by a sudden cataclysm.

The onward progress of his seal
 Shall never know decline,
 Till foreign lands and distant isles
 Receive the law divine.⁶³

The concept of human progress is not, however, altogether wanting among the more orthodox poets. John Wesley, among others, even in his early period thought that the bounds of Christianity would widen before the end of the world, although not sufficiently to usher in the millenium without the help of judgment and conflagration. This point of view he makes clear in a paraphrase of Isaiah lxvi:18, published in 1762.

FATHER of boundless grace,
 Thou hast in part fulfill'd
 Thy promise made to Adam's race,
 In God incarnate seal'd;
 A few from every land
 At first to Salem came,
 And saw the wonders of Thy hand,
 And saw the tongues of flame!
 From thence Thy heralds run
 To earth's remotest bound,
 And made Thy glorious mercy known,
 And spread the joyful sound:
 They call'd the listening throng
 To know their sins forgiven,

⁶³ Hymn vi, of paraphrases of the Psalms, 1781. Text of Shalmers IV. A little dispute has arisen regarding the authorship of these paraphrases, some having accused Logan of pilfering from the work of Bruce; but the Rev. R. Small seems to have saved Logan's reputation in an article called "Michael Bruce versus John Logan," The British and Foreign Evangelical Review, vol. xvii, April, 1879. Small declares that the lines which caused the chief dispute, and which Bruce did teach his music classes before Logan included them in his paraphrases, were not Bruce's but part of an older version of the Psalm which appeared in the 1745 hymnal. The writer regrets that it has been impossible to consult this hymnal in the New York Public Library to determine whether the progress stanza quoted above is part of the old hymn or an innovation by Logan. The idea had appeared early enough in the century for either to have been the case. See Ronald S. Crane, "Anglican Apologetics and the idea of progress," MP, XXXI, 1934, pp. 273-306, 349-382.

And brought them in, from every tongue
And nation under heaven.
Yet still we wait the end,
The coming of our Lord,
The full accomplishment attend
Of Thy prophetic word;
Thy promise deeper lies
In unexhausted grace,
And new-discover'd worlds arise
To sing their Saviour's praise.
Beloved for Jesu's sake,
By Him redeem'd of old,
All nations must come in, and make
One undivided fold;
While gather'd in by Thee,
And perfected in one,
They all at once Thy glory see
In Thine eternal Son.

CHAPTER II

PRELIMINARY EVENTS AND SIGNS

Relatively few of the judgment-day poets bother to inform the reader about events leading up to the resurrection, second coming, and conflagration; but there are some who show interest in such matters. Physical phenomena in the heavens or upon earth occupy the attention of several. John and Charles Wesley give a typical general description of such manifestations.

Hear all nature's groans proclaiming
Nature's swift-approaching doom!¹

...before the final judgment day [God will]
His mighty wonders show,
Wonders in the heavens above,²
And signs in earth below,...

Richard Cumberland offers the same picture when he tells how Christ predicted that before the end

The powers of earth and heaven must undergo
Direful convulsion;...³

Others enter into greater detail, mentioning changes in sun or moon, meteoric displays, the appearance of comets, the dimming of the stars, storms, floods, and earthquakes. John Pomfret, for example, says:

¹Hymn xl, Vol. VI, 1758.

²A paraphrase of Joel 11:30, 31, Vol. X, 1762.

³Calvary; or the Death of Christ, a Poem in Eight Books, 1792, Book II.

See, see the tragical Portents,
 Those dismal Harbingers of dire Events!
 Loud Thunders roar, and darting Light'ning fly
 Through the dark Concave of the troubled Sky:
 The fiery Ravage is begun, the End is nigh,
 See how the glaring Meteors blaze!
 Like baleful Torches, O they come,
 To light dissolving Nature to her Tomb!
 And scatt'ring round their pestilential Rays,
 Strike the affrighted Nations with a wild Amaze.
 Vast Sheets of Flame, and Globes of Fire,
 By an Impetuous Wind are driven,
 Thro' all the Regions of th' inferior Heaven,
 Till hid in sulph'rous Smoke, they seemingly expire.⁴

Pemfret is not typical, however, in his treatment of the subject, for his "Harbingers" are more in the nature of introductory conditions and causes of the conflagration than signs. Joseph Trapp gives a more representative description, for the events which he anticipates occur about a year before the consummation begins. Since he deals with almost all of the phenomena mentioned by other poets of the century, a passage from his Thoughts on the Four Last Things, 1734, is given at some length.

It must be so then. God will judge Mankind;
 The Dead shall rise, the scatter'd Parts rejoin'd
 In human Bodys; This fair Frame must burn, 100
 And Earth's vast Globe to Smoke and Ashes turn.
 But first with solemn Tragick Pomp, and State,
 To introduce This last great Scene of Fate;
 Fire, horrible Prognosticks shall appear.
 For more, perhaps, than one preceding Year. 105
 (To God alone 'tis known how long Before,
 These Signs shall come; Enquire not, but Adore:)
 Earthquakes in various Climates shall abound,
 And Subterraneous Thunder rend the Ground.
 The Earth, its Dissolution to foreshow, 110
 Shall stagger, like a Drunkard, to and fro:
 Cracking, and crashing, with a dreadful Shock,

⁴"Dies Novissima: or, the Last Epiphany, A Pindaric Ode of Christ's Second Appearance to judge the World," 1699.

And bellowing Noise, the Mountains reel, and rock;
 Great Atlas, whose high Top thick Darkness shrouds,
 And Teneriff, a League above the Clouds,
 Th' unbounded Alps, That endless Chain of Hills, 115
Alps pil'd on Alps, [illegible] of their living Hills
Dry'd up, and strip'd of their eternal Snow,
 Roll rattling Fragments to their Feet below,
 Immeasurable Loads of massy Stone; 120
 Nod their stiff Heads, and in Convulsions groan.
 Flames wreath'd with Smoke from burst Volcanos rise,
 And hurl their melted Bowels to the Skys;

 Loud roar the Seas; Thro' Nature Terrors spread;
 And Mortals Hearts o'er all the World with Dread
 Sink shudd'ring, and appal'd. With hideous Glare,
 Till now unseen, strange Lightnings whiz in Air;
 Lightnings, which lan'd thro' cloudless Skys shall blaze,
 And without Thunder terribly amaze. 131
 Thick Meteors, blue, and red, with dismal Light
 Shall trail along, and wound the Gloom of Night;
 The Pow'rs Celestial shake, Stars shooting fall
 Sudden from Heav'n, and singe This frightened Ball. 135
 Comets, which thro' th' Infinity of Space
 Have, Ages, roam'd, now meeting in one Place
 (So God ordains) unite their baleful Streams,
 And at each other shoot their fiery Gleams.
 The Moon withdraws her pale nocturnal Ray; 140
 The Sun, 'twixt Earth and Heav'n, in deep Dismay,
 Hangs like a Lump of Blood, and saddens Day.
 In Words like These, Himself, the Judge to come,
 Foretold Jerusalem's approaching doom.
 But so is the divine Prediction cast; 145
 That in Jerusalem's, already past,
 We read the World's, all Nature's future End:
 Thus double Senses Truths sublimest blend.
 So Notes in Musick make with grateful Tone
 Harmonious Mixture of Two Sounds in One. 150
 . . . In falling Stars He sings
 The falling Pow'rs of Empires, States, and Kings:....

Most of the other descriptions of signs appearing in the heavens or
 upon earth are similar to Trapp's in one or more particulars.⁵ Only John

⁵ Samuel Catherall, An Essay on the Conflagration, 1720. Elizabeth
 Rowe, a paraphrase of Rev. xvi, 1739. Text of Miscellaneous Works in Prose
 and Verse, 1739. Martha Brewster, "God's Judgments are our Monitors." Text
 of Poems on Divers Subjects (New London), 1757. An anonymous poem in the
Dorchester and Sherborne Journal, Jan. 3, 1794.

Bulkeley gives a really different account. After Messiah returns to heaven from his millennial reign upon earth, strange and terrible things happen in the sublunary regions. The forces of hell have been released to torment mankind. For a while Satan entertains himself by tearing up mountains in a manner which reminds us of Milton's battle of the angels. Soon, however, he tires of such minor exploits and decides to play with the moon. Tearing her loose from her moorings, he sets her afloat never more to exert a genial influence upon the earth. As a result the sea stagnates and becomes filthy. The sea creatures die, and men lie expiring along the shores. Besides these disasters

The deviate Orb severe Effects produc'd
On Mortal Minds; Thence Lunacies, and Rage
Possess the Globe

causing war and family strife.

In frantick Madness: Ev'ry Tree with Weight
Of pendant Lovers groan'd, and ev'ry Stall
With Poetry oppress'd.

When Satan threatens to release the moon completely from his grasp, the guardian angel of earth intervenes to protect the ball from annihilation.⁶

More important to the poets than weird sights in the heavens are trouble and wickedness among men as signs of coming dissolution. Either trouble in general or pestilence and war in particular are mentioned as heralds of the last day by Pomfret, Catherall, Travers, Thomas Warton, the Wesleys, Martha Brewster, Cumberland, an anonymous poet of Jan. 3, 1794, and

⁶The Last Day, Book VIII, 1716.

the author of lines in The Sun for June, 1794. In "The Day of Judgment," Pomfret says that just before the end providence will forsake the earth and fiends will be permitted to enact their worst malice so that war and pestilence will be raging among men just as Christ descends. The Wesleys echo these thoughts:

Before the last great day
He doth his judgments shower.⁷

Hear all nature's groans proclaiming
Nature's swift-approaching doom!
War and pestilence and famine,⁸
Signify the wrath to come.

Over in America, Martha Brewster looks upon pestilence, earthquake, and current wars with the Indians as omens of approaching doom.

CREATION fair below the approachless Throne,
Give Audience to the high and lofty One,
Who loud proclaims by Heralds, round this vast,
Her final Dissolution hastens fast.
The Preludes of that awful Day appears, [sic]
Which long before was sounded in our Ears.
At least some rare Event will soon disclose,
After such fearful Signs and dreadful Woes,
The bloody Banners flourish'd o'er our Head,
For many Years did strike our Hearts with dread;
Both Air and Earth did Quake, with hideous Groan,
And Pestilence did mow our Children down;...

Around the year 1794 considerable attention was centered upon the French Revolution as a specific manifestation of the kind of trouble expected

⁷ A paraphrase of Isa. lxvi:15, 16, Vol. IX.

⁸ "Hymn XL," Vol. VI, 1758.

⁹ "God's Judgments are our Monitors," 1757. (See footnote 5, p. 26).

before the end. Many lines upon the subject appear in the Dorchester and Sherborne Journal for November, 1793 and January, February, and October, 1794. The upheaval in France is held up in these as a sign of the imminent millennium in the fashion of John Wesley's later eschatology. The following two passages illustrate the style of these poems, all of which seem to be the work of a single pen.

Plague, earthquake, and atheism, and tumult, and war,
The wonderful coming of Jesus declare!¹⁰

.....
These last hind'rances hence, should Deity stay,
The date of these Extracts, evince his delay.

.....
One look on proud Paris rude rulers remove!
For France and wide warriors, "a wonder" of Love!
Then shall the glad converted world
To God their homage pay;
And Scatter'd nations of the earth
One sov'reign Lord obey. Psa. xcii:27.
"Much wanted Millennium!"

In the October 3 issue for 1794, we find another incoherent jumble of fragmentary quotations upon the same subject.

"No peace earth's proud (Barreres) know!
"Their triumphs short!" to Heav'n soon show.
"Great voices" these, "heard first in heav'n,
"The trumpet sounds, the last of sev'n."
Earth then in vain with heav'n contends,
"Mad wars must cease to earth's broad ends."
See! gazing worlds! the thousands slain!
See! "brothers' blood," all nations stain!
.....
See! wars wash Frenchmen's wealth away!

¹⁰ The Dorchester and Sherborne Journal, Jan. 3, 1794.

The prevalence of wickedness and sinful pleasure are other frequently mentioned marks of approaching destruction. John Pomfret looks around and remarks:

Already, stupid with their crimes,
Blind mortals prostrate to their idols lie;
.....
Dissolv'd they lay in fulsome ease,
And revell'd in luxuriant peace;
In Bacchanals they did their hours consume,
And Bacchanals led on their swift advancing doom;...¹¹

Bulkeley says in The Last Day, Book IX, that just before "the solemn season" earth is sunk in thoughtless pleasure. Then suddenly comes the judgment. In 1739 Elizabeth Rowe writes:

Supine as men before the deluge lay,
In melting joys and luxury dissolv'd,
Till swift destruction swept them all away,
The stupid world will then be found;
In all licentiousness and sin involv'd,
When loud to judgment the last trumpets sound.
Then time shall be no more,
Nor months and years proportion'd by the sun;
Which ne'er again shall run,
With vigorous pride, the shining Zodiac o'er.¹²

The Wesleys are sure that although the time of the end is hidden, the saints will know when the event is at hand because

When the floods of sin o'erflow,
Then they find that Christ is near.¹³

¹¹"Dies Novissima," 1699.

¹²"The Conflagration; an Ode." Text of The History of Joseph, A Poem, in Ten Books with Miscellaneous Poems, 1815.

¹³A paraphrase of Matt. xxiv:37, Vol. X, 1762.

It will be recalled that Cowper thought he was living near the end because of the prevailing wickedness around him.

Thy prophets speak of such; and noting down
The features of the last degenerate times,
Exhibit every lineament of these.¹⁴
Come then,...

Infidelity is another sign of the last days. Pomfret says of the conditions that immediately precede the second advent: "Erratic throngs their SAVIOUR'S blood deny."¹⁵ Catherall speaks in "The Conflagration" of "Infidelity, Heresie, and Profane Scoffing at Religion," and the Dorchester and Sherborne Journal of January 3, 1794 asserts that atheism is among those abominations which "The wonderful coming of Jesus declare."

Aside from the signs certain events are looked for by the poets before the consummation can occur. Pomfret and the Wesleys are among those who expect antichrist to appear and then be destroyed.

The anti-christian power has rais'd his hydra-head,
And ruin, only less than JESUS' health, does spread.
So long the gore thro' poison'd veins has flow'd,
That scarcely ranker is a fury's blood;
Yet specious artifice, and fair disguise,
The monster's shape, and curst design, belies:
He quaffs and scatters the contagious spleen;
Straight, when he finishes his lawless reign,
Nature shall paint the shining scene,
Quick as the lightning which inspires the train.¹⁶

¹⁴The Task, Book VI, 1785.

¹⁵"Dies Novissima."

¹⁶Loc. cit.

LET the God of truth and love
 His mighty wonders show,
 Wonders in the heavens above,
 And signs in earth below,
 Every Antichrist consume,
 And all His glorious power display:
 Then Jehovah's day shall come,
 The final judgment-day!¹⁷

This antichrist the poet identifies as the Pope of Rome.

Yes; we know, our Lord will come,
 Smite the Antichrist of Rome,
 All His plagues and judgments pour,
 Earth accursed with fire devour!
 But the powers shall soon remove,
 But ~~Sitting on His throne shall show~~
 But ~~EARTH REIGN'D IS HEAVEN BELOW.~~¹⁸
 Sitting on His throne shall show
 EARTH REIGN'D IS HEAVEN BELOW.¹⁸

When Antichrist erects his throne
 And fills the earth with daring crimes,
 The Lord, in favour of His own
 Exposed to those tremendous times,
 Shall shorten the last pontiff's reign,
 And chase him back to hell again.¹⁹

Pemfret speaks of "Adul'trate CHRISTEN" in "Dies Novissima," and Bulkeley says that necromancy will abound in the interval of wrath that precedes the judgment; but Blake is the only one in the whole century who tells of a counterfeit second coming of Christ in glory. Satan will appear, says Blake, in the clouds of heaven with trumpets and flaming fire, declaring:

¹⁷The Wesleys, a paraphrase of Joel ii:30, 31, Vol. X, 1762.

¹⁸A paraphrase of Mal. iv:6, Vol. X, 1762.

¹⁹A paraphrase of Matt. 24:22, Vol. X, 1762.

"I am God...the judge of all, the living & the dead.

Then

...
 Loud Satan thunder'd, loud & dark...
 Coming in a Cloud with Trumpets & with Fiery Flame,
 An awful Form eastward from midst of a bright Paved-work
 Of precious stones by Cherubim surrounded, so permitted
 (Lest he should fall apart in his Eternal Death) to imitate
 The Eternal Great Humanity Divine surrounded by
 His Cherubim & Seraphim in ever happy Eternity.
 Beneath sat Chaos: Sin on his right hand, Death on his left,
 And Ancient Night spread over all the heav'n his Mantle of Laws.²⁰

A few poets expect Elijah to return to the earth before the end of the world. The Wesleys write in a paraphrase of Malachi iv:2-6:

Once He in the Baptist came,
 And virtue's paths restored,
 Pointed sinners to the Lamb,
 Forerunner of his Lord;
 Sent again from paradise,
 Elijah shall the tidings bring,
 "Jesus comes! ye saints, arise,
 And meet your heavenly King!"

Previous to the dreadful day
 Which shall Thy foes consume,
 Jesus, to prepare Thy way,
 Let the last prophet come;
 When the seventh trumpet's sound
 Proclaims the grand sabbatic year,
 Come Thyself, with glory crown'd,
 And reign triumphant here.

About fifty years earlier John Bulkeley devoted the first four books of The Last Day to a discussion of Elijah's return to earth. The two poems have certain elements in common. For example, both say that Elijah descends from heaven, and both agree that he converts the world. Bulkeley begins

²⁰Milton, Book II, pp. 366-368, 1785.

his work by telling how the Son persuades God the Father to relent towards Man, the darling child of Deity, and postpone the day of judgment until righteousness had been set forth in a more appealing light, that is, until

Elijah had been sent to

Re-visit thy terrestrial Globe, and ope
The Charns of Virtue to th' admiring Earth.

After Elijah's missionary venture Bulkeley adds, Jehovah looks down from heaven and is so pleased to see virtue blossoming among mankind that he commands Gabriel to drive the Satanic legions from earth in order that righteousness might shine forth visible to every eye. Then Satan is bound for the thousand years spoken of in Revelation xx, and Messiah descends to establish his millennial kingdom at Jerusalem. The Wesleys likewise say that a beatific condition follows the prophet's visit, but this "grand sabbatic year" is associated in the same paraphrase with

...the dreadful day
Which shall thy foes consume.
...thine awful day,
[when] heaven and earth shall pass away.

The poem belongs, therefore, to John Wesley's earlier eschatological thought and thus differs from Bulkeley's scheme.

²¹ Bulkeley and contestant IV of the Gentleman's Magazine "Extraordinary," 1735, also speak of the gathering or conversion of the Jews as an event which must occur before the consummation. In Book VI of The Last Day, Bulkeley says that when Messiah descends to earth after Elijah's visit to

begin the millennial reign, he lands in Gaul and then strides Pied Piper fashion across Europe calling the seed of Abraham out from every nation. Finally he arrives at Jerusalem at the head of a triumphal procession. There he sets up a government under which all men are happy and the Jews enjoy special privileges.

Contestant IV, apparently considers it inappropriate for nations to arise from the dead away from their homelands at the last day, for he suggests that "long before" the conflagration there may be a general repatriation not only of the Jewish people but of all other races.

But long before this destin'd fabric burn, 65
 Kingdoms & kings may take a diff'rent turn;
 Peru once more her antient race behold,
 The Indians freed, & christian empires sold;
 Else Jesus' race wou'd quit th' oblivious grave,
 From antient Tiber's celebrated wave, 70
 Impet'ous Rhone, and Ister's foaming streams,
 The sandy Tagus, and the fertile Thames,
 And where the surges of the Baltic roar,
 And icy Russia's hyborean shoar;
 These christians all, tho' different in their name,
 The same their saviour, & their God the same.
 The Turkish race shall quit Byzantium's towers,
 And the fam'd windings of Meander's shoars,
 And where Euphrates laves his genial soil,
 Arabia's deserts, & the mouths of Nile. 80
 But Italy's faith, & antient priests of fire,
 From native Persia's ample womb retire:
Mogul to answer for his pagan tales;
 And China hazard, if Confutius fails:
Tartarian sects for various gods be known,
 The Moors for all, and Hottentots for none.
 Now every land and every faith come in,
 The books unfold, and Adam must begin;...

Other poets later in the century also mention the return of the Jews but rather as an event introduced by the second coming than as a preliminary to it. In 1792 Cumberland, addressing the Hebrews, writes:

...There yet remains
 An awful consummation unreveal'd,
 Till God shall gather up your scattered race
 Still vagrant o'er th' earth.²²

Another poet writing in 1799 says:

Tho' sown and scatter'd thro' the earth,
 And long despoil'd of rights of birth
 By Esau's servile race;
 Yet you from north and south shall come,
 And dwell with David in your home,
 And build the ruin'd place.²³

About three weeks later some similar verses appear.

This once again was Israel's seed
 As captives sold and led,
 'Till times of mercy as decreed,
 Should raise them from the dead.

Now, tho' they ston'd the prophets all,
 And crucified the Lord,
 Yet God will raise them from their fall,
 And love and light afford.

Nay, more, his sov'reign pow'r shall save
 Their seed from ev'ry land;
 And break their seal, and ope their grave,
 Tho' all should them withstand.

Like doves to Zion they shall come
 With swift and rapid flight;
 And dwell in peace, rebuild their home,
 And be our God's delight.²⁴

It may very well be that this is a Wesleyan idea, for it was even a part of the earlier eschatology.

²² Calvary, Book V, 1792.

²³ The Weekly Register, August 7, 1799.

²⁴ Ibid., September 11, 1799.

But Christ shall work at His return
 A speedier work of grace,
 While nations by His Spirit born
 Their Lord at once embrace:
Heathens and Turks shall both receive
 Whom God to both hath given,
 And Jews themselves shall then believe
 The glorious sign from heaven. 25

The idea was no novelty at Wesley's time, however, for Daniel Whitby had taught it as early as 1706. His theory is that human agencies under a special dispensation of providence would proclaim Christianity and convert the entire world including the Jews. Then after a millenium of
 26
 righteousness, Christ would come. We cannot be sure that Whitby's work was the dominant influence upon these poets, but it does show that the idea of the conversion of the Jews was in the air early in the century.

After the Jews have been converted, after Elijah has preached his last sermon, and after the expected signs have appeared in the heavens or upon earth, a moment will come, say the poets, a terrible moment, when God decides to call a halt to mundane history. At that time the archangel puts to his lips the fatal trumpet that raises the dead and unhinges the rolling spheres. Whether the poem is an epitaph of four lines or an epic of twelve books, this event is sure to be mentioned. The trumpet, in fact, is one of those stock symbols which is capable of calling to mind the whole train of final developments.

²⁵ A paraphrase of Matt. xxiv, Vol. X, 1762.

²⁶ A paraphrase and Commentary on the New Testament, II, 715-742.

While occasionally the voice of God or of the archangel is substituted,²⁷ the trumpet is the generally accepted signal. In short poems one blast is usually sufficient to raise the dead, introduce the second coming, call men to the assembly, and strike the match that lights the conflagration.

Mark, hark! e're long a dreadful Sound
Of the last Trump will shake the Ground,
And JESUS come again---
The yonder Skies dissolve with Fire,

²⁷In a poem called "To Mrs. Vesey, 1766," Elizabeth Carter hopes to sleep in the grave until

The glad Archangel lifts his awful voice;
He swears that Time and Change shall be no more;
Hear Earth and Heav'n and Earth and Heav'n rejoice!

Text of Memoirs of the Life of Mrs. Elizabeth Carter with a new edition of her poems; ... ed. the Rev. Montagu Pennington, 3rd. ed., 1816, Vol. II.

Mary Barber also expresses a pious desire for the last day to come in a poem called: "Occasion'd by reading the Memoirs of Anne of Austria written by Madame de Motteville, inscrib'd to the Right Honourable the Countess of Hertford." She hopes: "That I may, unappall'd, lift up my Head, / When the Arch-Angel calls--Arise, ye Dead." Text of Poems on Several Occasions, 1735.

Anna Maria Williams says simply: "The voice which bade the last dread thunders roll, / Shall whisper to the good and cheer their soul." These lines are taken from a paraphrase of Isa. xlix:15. Text of Poems, 2nd. ed., 1791, Vol. I.

One poet treats thunder as the signal

When awful thunder, from on high,
Bursts forth, and shakes the very sky,
And raises from the clay
Each guilty wretch, o'erwhelm'd with fear,
Attends his God, his doom to hear---
Methinks I hear him say:--
"Depart ye murd'ring, plund'ring souls!"

From an untitled poem by "Alexander." Text of the Middlessex Journal, Oct. 30, 1770.

The Earth will melt, the Seas retire,
And shall no more remain. 28

But in the longer poems such as Joseph Trapp's Thoughts on the Four Last Things, a separate blast is frequently required to herald each event.
At first Trapp tells how the trumpet raises the dead.

... The Trumpet's Sound
Pierces the inmost Solid of the Ground.
And echoes to the Centre. Strait the Earth
Yields up its Dead to This second Birth. 204

Then the conflagration is introduced with an impressive hush.

A solemn Pause, and Silence most profound
Ensues. At length th' ethereal Trumpet's Sound
Again the infinite Assembly wakes,
And Earth a third Time to its Centre shakes. 270
A gen'ral Shout the Saints and Angels raise.

In the midst of general destruction comes the call to judgment.

Amidst This wild Combustion, and the Crush
Of lab'ring Nature; while to Ruin rush
The warring Elements; All now prepar'd,
Once more the Trumpet's Clangor shrill is heard: 320
The Summons sounds; "To Judgment All; Appear.
"Ye Sons of Men; your final Sentence hear.
The Books are open'd; Rang'd on either hand,
Th' Accusing, and Defending Angels stand:
Those, fall'n, Apostate Angels, Fiends of Night— 325
These, Sons of purest, and ethereal Light,
Benevolent to Man, would plead his Cause.

Occasionally the trumpet is hailed as a sound of joy. John Pomfret says:

Then Raphael, big with life, the trump: shall sound:
From falling spheres the joyful music shall rebound,
And seas and shores shall catch and propagate it round.

Then the poet likens it to the thunder which reverberated at Sinai:

Louder he'll blow, and it shall speak more shrill,
Than when from SINAI's hill,

In thunder thro' the horrid redd'ning smoke,
 The ALMIGHTY spoke.
 We'll shoot around with martial joy,
 And thrice the vaulted skies shall rend, and
 thrice our shouts reply.²⁹

Mary Chandler in a poem "To Mrs Moore," 1729, also writes cheerfully:

"...the last Trump's delightful Sound / Shall wake our sleeping Clay."

The more typical attitude, however, is one of fear. Addison speaks in the "Resurrection" of "dreadful Clangors [which] startle all mankind." Other poets like Isaac Watts and Edward Young labor with diligence to paint the horror of the blast in the most vivid colors. In "The Day of Judgment" while describing a storm at sea Watts compares "the hoarse thunder" to "a bloody trumpet," and adds:

Such the dire terror when the Archangel
 Shakes the creation;
 Tears the strong pillars of the vault of Heaven,
 Breaks up old marble,...
 Sees the graves open, and the bones arising
 Flames all around them.

Less "horrid," but quite as effective in its way, is a passage from Aaron Hill's "The Judgment Day."

The guardian angels hear the alarming blast,
 And, from their several stations, wing their way;
 Upward, in glittering crouds, they tower, in haste,
 And, looking back, sigh sad, and feel the day!
 Thin troops of naked ghosts, long stript of clay,
 That, wand'ring 'twixt the spheres, admiring gaz'd,
Start, in loose shoals, and glide, like mists, away.³⁰

John Norris uses the funeral motif throughout his description of the conflagration. The final destruction is the death of Nature, and the last

²⁹"Dies Novissima," 1699.

³⁰1721.

trumpet is "Nature's great passing bell."³¹ In quaint old English, Chatterton speaks of "...the Generall Byshoppes calle, / When Mychaels troupe shall sound to ynnest lande."³² At the very end of the century an anonymous author using the image of war to describe the end of the world, compares the last trumpet to a bugle.

Warriour! like thee, the ponderous ball shall know
The clanging trumpet sound its final doom.³³

Swift and Burns both draw the trumpet into their satire upon the judgment idea.

How will the Caitiff Wretch be scar'd
When first he finds himself awake
At the last Trumpet, unprepar'd,
And all his Grand Account to make?³⁴

But now the Lord's ain trumpet toots,
Till a' the hills are rairin.³⁵

Only one poet, however, rejects the idea of a last trumpet while dealing seriously with other phases of the final condition of the world. John Logan writes, as we have already seen, in Hymn vi of his paraphrases of the Psalms, 1781:

No trumpet-sound, at his approach
Shall strike the wondering ears;
But still and gentle breathe the voice
In which the God appears.

³¹"The Consummation."

³²"The Parlyaments of Sprytes," 1769.

³³"On the Death of Tippoo Saib," Jan. 1, 1800.

³⁴Swift, "The Run upon the Bankers."

³⁵Burns, "The Holy Fair."

This quiet approach of Christ ties in with Logan's general opinion that the new earth state will be brought in gradually as the culmination of human progress.

CHAPTER III

THE RESURRECTION

The resurrection has always been a matter of interest for Christians. Eighteenth-century preoccupation with the melancholy, however—with death, the charnel house, and kindred subjects—doubtless not only increased interest in a time when all those mouldering bones would gather together and stand again in new life, but also lent to resurrection poetry of the period certain of its distinguishing characteristics.

One of the chief of these characteristics is a prevailing tendency to describe the physical process of resurrection in detail. Almost all of those who discussed the subject at all—even such unconventional poets as William Blake—delighted in the spectacle of bone joining bone, of limbs rushing to meet fellow limbs, and of atoms swarming over sea and sky to link up with kindred atoms in order to form the very same body which had lain in the grave for thousands of years. Thomas Ken, John Pomfret, John Norris, Edward Young, Samuel Catherall, Aaron Hill, Mary Masters, contestants IV, IX, and XIII for the Gentleman's Magazine prize, 1735, Jane Brereton, Moses Browne, John Ogilvie, Michael Bruce, James Woodhouse, William Gilbank, and Richard Cumberland—all of these and others picture the resurrection thus and specifically call the assembling particles "atoms." At the very beginning of the century, for example, John Pomfret speaks of that

Stupendous Energy of sacred Pow'r,
 Which can collect wherever cast;
 The smallest Atoms, and that Shape restore,
 Which they had worn so many Years before
 Tho' thro' strange Accidents and numerous Changes past.¹

At the end of the century, in 1792, we find Richard Cumberland saying the same thing. After what he calls the first resurrection (at the death of Christ), the mother of Jesus is reminded of the second coming of her Son and meditates:

...If these can rise,
 If these, whose bones are moulder'd into dust,
 On whom the worm hath fed for ages, men
 As mortal as ourselves can re-ascend
 Out of the pit, do not these signs bespeak,
 His second coming, who is LORD AND CHRIST?²

Later, in Book VIII, the poet adds:

When the compelling Angel shall go forth
 To gather every atom of man's dust,
 Which the seas cover or the earth contains:
 Then shall all souls be judg'd.

Back at about 1700 again Bishop Ken speaks of guardian angels watching over the atoms of their dead wards. He pictures them as saying:

...the bless'd Spirit still keeps of his Temples Care.
 We once their Guardians, our Accounts still keep
 Of our Saints Atoms here asleep;
 That when just God shall human Race arraign,
 We may the Temples build again;
 And ev'ry Atom, when reviv'd, will hast,
 Just in its pristine Form, with Joy to be embrac'd;
 Hell disregards the Damnd, the Fiends well know,
 Their Dust must rise, whether they will, or no.³

¹"On the Day of Judgment," 1699.

²Calvary, Book V.

³Hymnotheo, or The Penitent, about 1700. Text of The Works of Thomas Ken, 1721, III, 118-119.

In 1706 John Norris writes in "The Consummation":

See how the elements resign
 Their numerous charge, the scatter'd atoms home repair,
 Some from the Earth, some from the sea, some from the air;
 They know the great alarm,
 And in confus'd mixt numbers swarm,
 Till rang'd and sever'd by the chymistry divine.
 The Father of mankind amaz'd to see
 The globe too narrow for his progeny.
 But 'tis the closing of the age,
 And all the actors now at once must grace the stage....

Edward Young's description in The Last Day, Book II, is probably the most familiar.

Now charnels rattle; scatter'd limbs and all
 The various bones, obsequious to the call,
 Self-mov'd, advance; the neck perhaps to meet
 The distant head; the distant legs, the feet.
 Dreadful to view, see thro' the dusky sky
 Fragments of bodies in confusion fly.

John Dryden's "Ode on Mrs. Anne Killigrew" includes a similar passage.

When in mid-air the golden trump shall sound,
 To raise the nations under ground;
 When in the Valley of Jehoshaphat,
 The judging God shall close the book of fate;
 And there the last assizes keep
 For those who wake and those who sleep,
 When rattling bones together fly
 From the four corners of the sky;
 When sinews o'er the skeletons are spread,
 Those cloth'd with flesh, and life inspires the dead;
 The sacred poets first shall hear the sound,
 And foremost from the tomb shall bound,
 For they are cover'd with the lightest ground;
 And straight, with inborn vigour, on the wing,
 Like mounting larks to the new morning sing.⁴

There is an important difference between Young and Dryden, however. Dryden in the seventeenth century mentions no atoms; Young in the eighteenth does.

⁴"To the pious Memory of...Mrs. Anne Killigrew...: an Ode." Text of The Works of John Dryden, ed. Sir Walter Scott and George Saintsbury, 1885, XI, 112-113.

The trumpet's sound each fragrant note shall hear,
 Or fix'd in earth, or if afloat in air,
 Obey the signal wafted in the wind,
 And not one sleeping atom lag behind.
 So swarming bees, that on a summer's day
 In airy rings, and wild meanders play,
 Charm'd with the brazen sound, their wand'rings end,
 And, gently circling, on a bough descend.

There is a similar difference between George Herbert's original "Doomsday" and the Wesleyan adaptation.⁵

Aaron Hill speaks of atoms, too, but his description differs from the general mode in the fact that they are not drawn from various places on earth but from the great lake of chaos into which this and all other worlds tumble after the conflagration.

The lake groans deep! the labour will begin!
 O'er its broad face, life-heaving billows curl;
 The burning bowels sep'rate, slow, within,
 And smoky clouds expire in pitchy whirl!
 Bodies of men, in ages, long since past,
 Whose wand'ring dust has chang'd a thousand forms,
 Purg'd, by the boiling fires, evaporate fast,
 And, steaming upward, rise, in misty swarms!
 Sexes, conjoin'd in shoaly atoms, swim,
 And, sallying loose, the firey surface skim!
 Kings, slaves, and patriots, undistinguish'd flow,
 And mount, entangled, from the gulph, below!
 In the mid-air, dispers'd, unnumber'd ways,
 Each in his fellow's search, instinctive, strays!
 Circling, like flaky show'rs of driving snow,
 Which whirlwinds, into mazy wav'rings, blow!
 In endless intricacies, winding thro',
 Atoms join atoms, and lost forms renew!
 With sympathetic cling, together fly,
 And limb'd, for life, in cumb'rous millions lie!⁶

⁵Compare John and Charles Wesley, The Poetical Works, I, 12 with George Herbert, The Complete Works in Verse and Prose, ed. Alexander B. Grosart, 1874, I, 216-217.

⁶"The Judgment Day," 1721. Text of The Works, III, 278-280.

Here Hill seems to be following, in general, Gilbert Burnet's comment upon Article IV of An Exposition of the Thirty-Nine Articles, 1699. Regarding the relationship of resurrection to conflagration Burnet says:

In conclusion, when all God's design with this world is accomplished, it shall be set on fire, and all the great parts of which it is composed, as of elements, shall be melted and burnt down; and then when by that fire probably the portions of matter, which was in the bodies of all who have lived upon earth, shall be so far refined and fixed, as to become both incorruptible and immortal, then they shall be made meet for the souls that formerly animated them, to re-enter every one into his own body, which shall be then so moulded as to be a habitation fit to give it everlasting joy or everlasting torment.

Joseph Trapp couples his description of the return of atoms with a similarly prevalent image of the resurrection.

<p>...The Trumpet's Sound Pierces the inmost Solid of the Ground, And echoes to the Centre. Strait the Earth Yields up its Dead to This new second Birth: The Sea too yields up Those from ev'ry Wave, Who in its Bosom sound a liquid Grave. From ev'ry Part of Earth, and Sea, and Air, The marshal'd Atoms orderly repair, To form the Bodies they at first compos'd; The kindred Souls re-enter. Undisclos'd Is the great Mystery <u>How</u> This is wrought;...</p>	<p>205 210</p>
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Moses Browne in 1735 and Robert Blair in 1743 also describe the concourse of atoms.

Then strait thro' air, thro' all this peopl'd bound
The trump of God, shall loud, the summons sound
Arise ye dead, th' approaching judge commands
From earth and main to call the sleeping lands;
At once assembling to the dread assize,
From earth and main th' awaken'd atoms rise,
Num'rous as sands by ocean's spreading floods

⁷Thoughts on the Four Last Things.

Or scatter'd leaves that strew th' autumnal woods;
 From farthest space, by time confus'dly thrown, 8
 Flesh swift rejoins his flesh, and bone his bone;....

Ev'n the lag flesh
 Rests too in hope of meeting once again
 Its better half, never to sunder more;
 Nor shall it hope in vain;—the time draws on
 When not a single spot of burial earth,
 Whether on land, or in the spacious sea,
 But must give back its long-committed dust
 Inviolatè:—and faithfully shall these
 Make up the full account; not the least atom
 Embezzl'd, or mislaid, of the whole tale.
 Each soul shall have a body ready furnish'd;
 And each shall have his own.—Hence ye profane!
 Ask not, how this can be?—Sure the same pow'r
 That rear'd the piece at first, and took it down,
 Can re-assemble the loose scatter'd parts,
 And put them as they were.—Almighty God
 Has done much more; nor is his arm impair'd
 Through length of days: and what he can, he will:
 His faithfulness stands bound to see it done.
 When the dread trumpet sounds, the slumb'ring dust,
 (Not unattentive to the call) shall wake: 9
 And ev'ry joint possess its proper place,...

John Ogilvie's description of the concourse of atoms is more than
 ordinarily elaborate.

Rous'd from their sleep unnumber'd myriads come,
 All wak'd at once, and burst the yielding tomb:
 O'er the broad deep the loosen'd members swim;
 Each sweeping whirlwind bore the flying limb: 385
 The living atoms, with peculiar care,
 Drawn from their cells, came speeding thro' the air
 Whether they lurk'd, thro' ages undecay'd,
 Deep in the rock, or cloth'd some smiling mead;
 Or in the lily's snowy bosom grew;
 Or ting'd the sapphire with its lovely blue; 390
 Or in some purling stream refresh'd the plains;
 Or form'd the mountain's adamantine veins;

8 "On Life, Death, Judgment."

9 "The Grave." Text of Chalmers XV.

Or, gaily sporting in the breathing Spring,
 Perfum'd the whisp'ring Zephyr's balmy wing:
 All heard; and now, in fairer prospect shown, 395
 Limb clung to limb, and bone rejoin'd its bone:
 Here stood, improv'd in strength, the graceful frame;
 There flow'd the circling blood, a purer stream:
 The beaming eye its dazzling light resumes;
 Soft on the lip the tinctur'd ruby blooms; 400
 The beating pulse a keener ardor warms,¹⁰
 And beauty triumphs in immortal charms.

In a footnote appended to line 402, Ogilvie quotes from Addison's "Resurrectio Delineato," the original Latin version of "On the Resurrection."

Jam pulvis varias terrae dispersa per oras,
 Sive inter venas teneri concreta metalli,
 Sensim dirigit, seu sese immiscuit herbis,
 Explicita est; moles rursus coalescit in unam
 Divisum funus, sparsos prior alligat artus
 Junctura, aptanturque iterum coeuntia membra.

It is interesting to note here that Addison does not mention atoms. He is more in the pre-eighteenth-century tradition on this point. In 1755 Elizabeth Tollett includes the atoms in an address to the Deity.

Thou sacred, plastic Pow'r! whose Book contains
 Our number'd Fibres, our minutest Veins!
 These Atoms, in successive Changes tost,
 Thro' ev'ry Element dispers'd and lost,
 Again from ev'ry Element shall come,
 When thy dread Summons calls them from the Tomb;
 Again the pristine Structure shall complete,
 And wait their Doom at thy decisive Seat.¹¹

Blake's description of the concourse of particles appears in "Vala."

...rattling bones
 To bones Join: shaking convuls'd, the shivering clay breathes;
 Each speck of dust to the Earth's center nestles round & round
 In pangs of an Eternal Birth....

¹⁰The Day of Judgment, Book I, 1753. Text of Poems on Several Subjects, 1762.

¹¹"My Own Epitaph," Text of Poems on Several Occasions..., 1755.

In the first book of Milton, however, he specifically mentions atoms; only Blake, of course, has to do something to the conventional idea, so his are atoms of intellect.

...Every scatter'd Atom
Of Human Intellect now is flocking to the sound of the Trumpet
All the Wisdom which was hidden in caves & dens from ancient
Time is now sought out from Animal & Vegetable & Mineral.
The Awakener is come outstretch'd over Europe: the Vision
of God is fulfilled.

Finally, James Woodhouse, writing in 1793, declares: "...every moulder'd bone in atoms lies, / Till Christ's loud clarion calls the Dead to rise."¹²

The question now arises: whence comes this eighteenth-century idea of the concourse of atoms on the day of resurrection? The concourse of particles is not a new concept. It is the tiny atom that makes the difference. In 1682 Thomas Creech translated the six books of Titus Lucretius Carus, De Rerum Natura, into English verse. This translation was so popular that the second and third editions were called out in the following year, the fourth in 1699, the fifth in 1714, and the sixth in 1722.¹³ This flurry of excitement concerning a book which dealt much with the Epicurean theory of atomism doubtless helped to focus the attention of people generally upon the atom. Almost everyone, of course, would be on guard against Lucretius' materialistic philosophy, which denied the immortality of the soul; but the plausibility of the atom theory and the undesirability of the conclusions Lucretius drew from it might very well cause orthodox thinkers to speculate

¹²The Lucubrations of Crispinus Scriblerus—cited hereafter as Lucubrations. Text of The Life and Works, 1896.

¹³Thomas Franklin Mayo, Epicurus in England, 1734, p. 226.

upon how the atom might be reconciled with Christian philosophy. It looks as though the eschatological poets thought that they had hit upon an answer, and it is little wonder that they should have been attracted to De Rerum Natura, for Book V definitely teaches that the world will some day come to an end.¹⁴

Another factor which may have contributed to the interest in the atom which we have seen displayed by eighteenth-century poets is Thomas Burnet's use of it in The Sacred Theory of the Earth, which was published just one year before the first edition of Creech's Lucretius.¹⁵ The Sacred Theory like De Rerum Natura has qualities which would make it popular with the literary set. It was a work of imagination and rhetorical excellence such as religious authors might press to yield up the stuff of poetry.

As a rule the poets describe the re-assembling of the body first with the idea that when every atom has finally settled into place, then the soul comes to join it. Hill, Blair, and Blake hold conventional opinions about the reunion of soul and body, but they use greater originality in the presentation of it than most other eighteenth-century writers. Hill is at his best when describing disembodied spirits.

Once more, sublime, th' enliv'ning voice I hear!
Souls, descend! your bodies join.
Sudden, thin clouds of hov'ring lives appear,
And leaning anxious, in soft squadrons, shine!
Loos'd, at th' Almighty's word, distinct they fly,

¹⁴See Chapter V, "The Conflagration," pp.108-109, for a discussion of Lucretius and the idea of the end of the world.

¹⁵Perry Miller, "The End of the World," The William and Mary Quarterly, VIII (April, 1951), 171-191.

Swift, as the sight-beams of a human eye!
 Ardent, with longing shoot, each strikes his own,
 And smiles, to fill his long-lost home again;
Bodies supine, by ent'ring breath new blown,
Flash sudden, into life, and start up men!
They wake! they pant! they try their limbs! they gaze!
 Lost, in short horror, and severe amaze!¹⁶

Blair has a happy image for the reunion.

...Nor shall the conscious soul
 Mistake its partner, but amidst the crowd,
 Singling its other half, into its arms
 Shall rush with all th' impatience of a man
 That's new come home, who, having long been absent
 With haste runs over ev'ry different room,
 In pain to see the whole. Thrice-happy meeting!
 Nor Time, nor Death, shall ever part them more.¹⁷

In the second book of Milton, Blake describes the resurrection of the great poet himself.

...then to their mouths the Four Angels
 Applied their Four Trumpets & sounded them to the Four winds.
 Terror struck in the Vale[.] I stood at that immortal sound.
 My bones trembled, I fell outstretch'd upon the path
 A moment, & my Soul return'd into its mortal state
 To Resurrection & Judgment in the Vegetable Body.

Although the age of propriety arose with one voice to affirm the poetic value of describing the renewal of human life as a spectacle of dismembered limbs hobbling over the ground or scattered ashes flying through the air to embrace one another, the period did offer other modes of picturing the resurrection process and a few appropriate images. Most of the latter were drawn either from the ideas of birth or of awakening out of sleep.

¹⁶"The Judgment Day," 1721, pp. 279-280.

¹⁷"The Grave," 1743.

Young uses both kinds in a single passage from Night Thoughts where he speaks of Time as calling "his sons / From their long slumber; from earth's heaving womb, / To second birth." About five years later Addison drew an analogy from conception and birth to illustrate the resurrection and reinforced it with a simile taken from classical mythology.

...the lab'ring Graves conceive,
And the swoln Clod in Picture seems to heave;
Ten thousand Worlds revive to better Skies,
And from their Tombs the thronging Coarses rise.
So when fam'd Cadmus sow'd the fruitful Field,
With pregnant Throws the quicken'd Furrow swell'd;
From the warm Soil sprung up a warlike train,
And Human Harvests cover'd all the Plain.¹⁸

Elsewhere in the same poem the event is described as "the awakening of a stream out of the frozen sleep of winter."

Here by Degrees infus'd, the vital Ray
Gives the first Motion to the panting Clay;
Slow to new life the thawing Fluids creep,
And the stiff Joints wake heavily from Sleep.

Mary Chandler says that "...the last Trump's delightful Sound / Shall wake our sleeping Clay."¹⁹ An anonymous poet of 1731 elaborates upon the idea slightly in the following fashion:

Each evening yields the sun to sable night,
But every morn returns again as bright.
Within earth's lap the yearly seed is thrown,
And nature's bounteous hand repays the loan:
But man within the grave for ages lies,
Till nature's death permitted not to rise:

¹⁸"On the Resurrection," 1718.

¹⁹"To Mrs. Moore, a Poem of Friendship written in 1729," Text of The Description of Bath, a Poem, humbly inscribed to her Royal Highness the Princess Amelia, with Several Other Poems, 7th ed., 1755.

Till then forbid the faintest glimpse of day,
 Or reascend the long forgotten way;
 No more indulg'd to see the chearful light,
 Or sweet vicissitudes of day and night.²⁰

Robert Blair's comparison of death and the renewal of life to night and morning in the life of a bird has evocative power.

'Tis but a night, a long and moonless night;
 We make the grave our bed, and then are gone.
 Thus at the shut of ev'n, the weary bird
 Leaves the wide air, and in some lonely brake
 Cows down, and dozes till the dawn of day,
 Then claps his well-fledg'd wings, and bears away.²¹

Moses Browne imagines that he sees "...the teeming earth / Pour all at once her millions at a birth;"²² Following the birth theme another anonymous poet in 1765 describes death as the conception of Mother Earth and the resurrection as the birth of her offspring.

But when I die, with the Sheep's Fleece array'd,
 Soft in the lap of Earth let me be laid;
 There mixt with Poor, the grateful Tribute pay
 Of Dust and Ashes to my native Clay;
 Quick'ning our general Mother to conceive
 Some happier Birth in future Times to live.
 There, still obedient to the Laws most wise
 Of Heav'n, by just Gradations I shall rise
 From Earth to vegetable Life again,
 From thence to Animal, from thence to Man,
 Till summon'd by the Trump of God away,
 I mount to live in everlasting Day.
 So may I walk here humbly in his Sight,
 That there my Day may not be turn'd to Night.²³

²⁰ An untitled poem from The Flower Piece, a Collection of Miscellany Poems by Several Hands, ed. Concanen, 1731, p. 203.

²¹ "The Grave."

²² "On Life, Death, Judgment," 1735.

²³ "The Last Wish of an humble Sinner." Text of The St. James Chronicle or the British Evening Post, Mar. 12, 1765.

A mighty Trident he sustain'd, whose Teeth
 Could Sepulchres uproot, and burst the Jaws
 Of Marble Tombs; No burnish'd Chariot gay,
 No heav'nly Courser bore his godlike Weight;
 But as a Giant to the Combat stalks,
 Baring his Arm, and his tremendous Sword
 Still feeling, so the Cherub trode the Void
 Preparing him for Deed so grand; Around
 Num'rous Attendants hover'd, who the Clouds²⁴
 Obvious repell'd and op'd the spacious Road.

The Resurrection Angel and his attendant squadrons come blazing towards earth like comets. Before them march a thundering guardian; after him strides the chief, who dispatches a cherub to each of the four corners of the earth, there to awaken the dead with three trumpet blasts.

...Thrice spoke the Brass,
 Thrice shook the World. The Spirits knew the Sound,
 And ev'ry Shade where wild it rov'd profuse

 ...whereso'ere dispers'd profuse
 The High-voic'd Trumpet heard: From Worlds
 Where reigns Infinity, All shape their Way
 To the little Ball hung floating in the Winds,
 Still'd Earth; To animate their dormant Limbs,
 Millions on Millions follow thro' the Clouds.

Then the Resurrection Angel stands on the top of Tenariff (a spot frequently mentioned in judgment-day poetry) and smites the earth with his trident. At the blow the earth opens and the dead arise. Later he steps to the sea and strikes the waves. The poet then presents a picture of spirits searching for the scattered parts of their former bodies.

Strait, rent the conscious Sea her watry Vest,
 Op'ning huge Chasmy Vacancies profound,
 Roads for the rising Dead; his scatter'd Limbs
 Each Ghost collects thro' Ocean's spacious Plains.

²⁴The Last Day, Book IX.

Christopher Smart, Moses Browne, and John Ogilvie give pictures of the resurrection which might have been penned by any number of poets of the day. In "The Eternity of the Supreme Being," Smart exclaims:

He comes! He comes! the awful trump I hear;
The flaming sword's intolerable blaze
I see; He comes! th' archangel from above.
"Arise, ye tenants of the silent grave,
Awake incorruptible and arise;
From east to west, from the antarctic pole
To regions hyperborean, all ye sons,
Ye sons of Adam, and ye heirs of Heav'n—
Arise, ye tenants of the silent grave."²⁵

Browne writes as follows in Sunday Thoughts:

How wondrous! when the awful trump of doom
Heard thro' earth's realms and hell, shall start, re-cloath'd,
(Swift as the motion of the twinkled eye)
Each form now chaos'd in this mingled mass;
Mark'd in these ranks of graves, and statelier tombs.
One common chamber, kept for fellow dust.
None deferenc'd there: dead! in the pomp of state!²⁶

In "The Day of Judgment" Ogilvie says:

WHAT scenes appear, where'er I turn my eyes!
How wide the throng! what forms immum'rous rise!
Methinks I still behold the teeming earth
Pour all at once her millions at a birth!
They start with terror thro' the opening ground,
Flames all beneath, and thunders all around.

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Two or three of Blake's descriptions, however, are more original. In addition to the concourse of atoms, he presents the following details in "Vala":

²⁵1750. Text of Chalmers XVI.

²⁶Part II, The Morning's Meditating Walk containing the Internal, Early, and Preparatory Duties, 1750, pp. 21-22.

Fathers & friends, Mothers & Infants, Kings & Warriors,
 Priests & chain'd Captives, met together in a horrible fear;
 And every one of the dead appears as he had liv'd before,
 And all the marks remain of the slave's scourge & tyrant's Crown,
 And of the Priest's o'ergorged Abdomen, & of the merchant's thin
 Sinevy deception, & of the warrior's ou[t] braving & thoughtlessness
 In lineaments too extended & in bones too strait & long.
 They shew their wounds: ...the Cold babe
 Who died in infancy rage furious.

In Milton, Book I, the author of Paradise Lost meditates upon the resurrection.

When will the Resurrection come to deliver the sleeping body
 From corruptibility? O when, Lord Jesus, wilt thou come?
 Tarry no longer, for my soul lies at the gates of death.
 I will arise and look forth for the morning of the grave:
 I will go down to the sepulcher to see if morning breaks:
 I will go down to self annihilation and eternal death,
 Lest the Last Judgment come & find me unannihilate
 And I be seiz'd & giv'n into the hands of my own Selfhood.
 The Lamb of God is seen thro' mists & shadows, hov'ring
 Over the sepulchers in clouds of Jehovah & winds of Elohim,
 A disk of blood distant, & heav'ns & earths roll dark between.

Horace Walpole brings up the rear in 1794 with a playful satire upon
 the resurrection of the body in an "Epitaph on Two Piping-Bullfinches of
 Lady Ossory."

But when the last shrill flageolet shall sound,
 And raise all dickybirds from holy ground,
 His little corpse again its wings shall plume,
 And sing eternally the self-same tune,
 From everlasting night to everlasting noon.²⁷

²⁷Text of The Works of Horatio Walpole, 1798.

CHAPTER IV
THE JUDGMENT

There is very little difference of opinion among the poets about the meaning and purpose of the last judgment. All seem to agree that such an event is necessary and desirable, first, to even up the inequities of this life, second, to show how these inequities eventually fall into a larger pattern of divine justice and beneficence, and, third, to settle all problems that call into question the wisdom and goodness of God. Occasionally we find a lengthy defense of the idea of a last judgment, but for the most part the poets either assume its propriety or explain its meaning somewhat as Elizabeth Rowe or Edward Young do in the following passages. Elizabeth Rowe declares that at the tribunal it becomes manifest to men and angels

Why vice was prosperous, virtue why distrest,
With all the deep writ sense,
The dark mysterious ways of providence.¹

Young calls the great day "the mighty Dramatist's last act," which takes place

To solve all knots; to strike the moral home;
To throw full day on darkest scenes of time;
To clear, commend, exalt, and crown the whole.²

¹"The Conflagration," 1739.

²Night Thoughts, about 1745.

With the significance of the judgment clear to all the poets, they are free to spend most of their time describing the various phases of the event. It is with these that the present chapter is concerned.

The Gathering of Subjects to Judgment

We have just seen how the poets treat the doctrine of resurrection. The purpose of the resurrection being judgment, it is necessary, of course, that all of those millions of men and women who have died since the beginning of the world should be gathered together from their many graves and arranged in some sort of orderly fashion appropriate to so august an occasion. This task is uniformly assigned to angels. Sometimes guardian angels³ are specified, but as a rule the description of this part of the action resembles that of Pomfret or Bruce.

See how the joyful Angels fly
From ev'ry Quarter of the Sky,
To gather, and to convoy all,
The pious Sons of human Race,
To one capacious Place
Above the Confines of this flaming Ball.⁴

³In 1734 Trapp says, in "Thoughts on the Four Last Things":

They, and the Saints who Then are found alive,
With Children white in spotless Innocence,
By Guardian Angels shall be snatch'd from hence,
Escape the gen'ral Fire, and never die,
Caught up to meet their Saviour in the Sky; 220
There stand before Him, in bright Order rang'd.

⁴"On the Day of Judgment," 1699. Pomfret is here paraphrasing Matt. xxiv:31: "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

The favorite image for this gathering process is that of reaping a harvest.

As when the Autumn, yellow on the fields,
Invites the sickle, forth the farmer sends
His servants to cut down and gather in
The bearded grain: so, by Jehovah sent,
His angels, from all corners of the world,
Led on the living and awaken'd dead
To judgment: as, in th' Apocalypse,
John, gather'd, saw the people of the earth,
And kings, to Armageddon.⁵

Edward Young devotes considerable attention to this part of the pageant in both The Last Day and Night Thoughts. In the earlier poem he writes:

Again the trumpet's intermitted sound
Rolls the wide circuit of creation round,
An universal concourse to prepare
Of all that ever breath'd the vital air:
In some wide field, which active whirlwinds sweep,
Drive cities, forests, mountains, to the deep,
To smooth and lengthen out th' unbounded space,
And spread an area for all human race.⁶

As he proceeds, Young is confronted with a problem which taxed the inventiveness of most eighteenth-century eschatological poets: where could one find a place large enough to hold all that vast assembly? Many imagine, with Pomfret, that a place is provided above the earth. Others, like Young, think that the globe will be extended somehow to make a sufficiently commodious plain.

⁵Bruce, "The Last Day," 1766.

⁶"On the Day of Judgment," 1699. Some of the poets arrange all men in a place above the earth; others, like Pomfret, put only the "pious" there, leaving the wicked upon earth. Usually these poets are the ones who feature the conflagration first, in which case the wicked are often tormented by this fire during the process of judgment in addition to being sent to hell afterwards.

Lo! the wide theatre, whose ample space
Must entertain the whole of human race,
At Heaven's all-powerful edict is prepar'd,
And fenc'd around with an immortal guard.
Tribes, provinces, dominions, worlds, o'erflow
The mighty plain, and deluge all below.⁷

Aaron Hill merely speaks of an "aetherial space,"⁸ but Bruce is more specific. Not only does he, like Young, put the plain upon an enlarged earth, but he even mentions the express geographical location of the site.

...Now, had not He,
The great Creator of the universe,
Enlarg'd the wide foundations of the world,
Room had been wanting to the mighty crowds
That pour'd from every quarter. At his word,
Obedient angels stretch'd an ample plain,
Where dwelt his people in the Holy Land,
Fit to contain the whole human race....⁹

Bulkeley's idea is the most original as well as the most ludicrous. He says that angels carry from heaven a great "bowl" into which mortals are placed.

Behind the Host inferiour Spirits strode
Unnumber'd; who, conjoyn'd, sublime sustain'd
Vehicle capacious, whose Content
Was like in Bulk Tartarean Cauldron big
With frantick Furies, or as if the Sky
Concave was upward turn'd, prodigious Bowl!
High on their Arms th' Attendant Spirits bore
This Void profuse cavernous: In the Dwelm
The Resurrection Angel Mortals plac'd
Astony'd, pale.

Within this receptacle men are arranged in tiers.

⁷The Last Day, Book II, 1713.

⁸"The Judgment Day," 1721.

⁹"The Last Day," 1766.

Man over Man they sit,
 As Waves of Ocean over Waves arise,
 Filling the huge Capacity of Main;
 Which, empty'd, like this Vehicle might seem,
 Yawning with vast Dimensions, vacant, black,
 Horrid Devoid.

In this condition the objects of judgment sit chatting cosily about the
 secret crimes for which they will soon be called to account.

The Cavern huge is fill'd; Imperial Heads,
Nobles and Lazars, undistinguish'd sit
 Conversing social. Each his secret Deed
 Now free discloses, Each his Hopes protests
 And whence his Fears.¹⁰

The Descent of the Judge

The second coming of Christ from heaven to judge the world at the last
 day is asserted in both Article IV and the various creeds, but the poets'
 descriptions of the descent, which almost unfailingly include the details
 of clouds, light, angels, trumpet, and lightning, seem to be inspired more
 directly by the following passages from the New Testament.

For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and
 shineth even unto the west; so shall also the
 coming of the Son of man be.¹¹

...while they beheld, he was taken up; and a
 cloud received him out of their sight....this
 same Jesus, which is taken up from you into
 heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have
 seen him go into heaven.¹²

¹⁰The Last Day, Book X.

¹¹Matt. xxiv:27.

¹²Acts 1:9, 11.

For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.¹³

Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him.¹⁴

Many brief descriptions are little more than fragmentary paraphrases of these verses. Bishop Ken says, for example: "When the last Trumpet sounds aloud, / In flaming Fire and Cloud, / He to the Judgment shall descend." William Hawkins writes similarly: "He comes; the Godhead comes; behold from far / He comes triumphant in his Cloud-wrapt Car."¹⁵

In longer works, however, the potential drama of the advent has caught the poetic fancy, and writers have frequently drawn heavily upon their imaginative resources to do it justice. John Pomfret's chronology places the descent of the Judge in a setting of burning worlds.

Whilst the world burns, and all the orbs below
In their viperous ruins glow,
.....
Then see the Almighty JUDGE sedate and bright,
Cloath'd in imperial robes of light!
His wings, the wind[,] rough storms the chariot bear:
And nimble harbingers before him fly,
And with officious rudeness brush the air:
Halt as he halts, then double in their flight,
In horrid sport with one another vie,
And leave behind quick winding tracks of light;
Then urging to their ranks they close,
And, shivering lest they start, a sailing caravan compose.

¹³1 Thess. iv:16, 17.

¹⁴Rev. i:7.

¹⁵"A Paraphrase on the Te Deum," Text of Dramatic and other Poems, 1758, II.

The mighty JUDGE rides in tempestuous state,
 Whilst mighty guards his orders wait;
 His waving vestments shine
 Bright as the sun, which lately did its beams resign,
 And burnish'd wreaths of light shall make his form divine.
 Strong beams of majesty around his temples play,
 And the transcendent gaiety of his face allay:
 His Father's reverend characters he'll wear,
 And both o'erwhelm with light, and over-awe with fear;
 Myriads of angels shall be there,
 And I, perhaps, close the tremendous rear;
 Angels, the first and fairest sons of day,
 Clad with eternal youth, and as their vestments, gay.¹⁶

Edward Young describes the second coming in both The Last Day and Night Thoughts, but the earlier version is more imaginative.

A sudden blush inflames the waving sky,
 And now the crimson curtains open fly;
 Lo! far within, and far above all height,
 Where heav'n's great Sov'reign reigns in worlds of light,
 ...[the judge appears].
 Thus glorious through the courts of heav'n, the source
 Of life and death eternal bends his course;
 Loud thunders round him roll, and lightnings play;
 Th' angelic host is rang'd in bright array:
 Some touch the string, some strike the sounding shell,
 And mingling voices in rich concert swell;...¹⁷

Bulkeley's description of the second coming, which in his case occurs before the millenium and therefore long before the day of judgment, is very sensuous.

Messiah now his flaming Chariot mounts,
 And shakes the golden Reins; Rejoyce Oh Earth!
 And Mountains rise to Gladness! Thro' the Gates
 Celestial rowls th' effulgent Vehicle,
 And Floats upon the Ether. Huge as Earth
 Two mighty Whirlwinds spirited with Fire
 Sustain'd th' important Car and high sublim'd
 Th' Almighty poiz'd aerial. In the midst,
 A Seat more soft than downy Couch, more sweet

¹⁶"Dies Novissima," 1699.

¹⁷Book II.

Than Bed of Roses, glist'ning shone; compos'd
 Of Plumes that dazle on the Fairy's Wings,
 And Gossamer that on a Summer Eve
 Flies in the Air and o're the Meadows hangs.
 Here sate the blest Messiah; Cherubim
 Twice sev'n aerial hov'ring round, sustain'd
 High o're his godlike Head a Silver Cloud,
 With varying Beautys pearl'd, and deckt in H [illeg.]
 That smile in Dew, and in the Rainbow blush.

By Jupiter swift rode th' exulting Host:
 Seiz'd with surprize and Joy, th' Inhabitants
 Triumphant rose; all shook their Orb around
 With Acclamations, and confest the God.¹⁸

The poets find almost no images suitable to describe the second coming of Christ. He is frequently conveyed by storms or winds as both Ogilvie (below) and Thomas Warton suggest;¹⁹ but Elizabeth Rowe is the only one who seems to have found a good simile for the entire pageant, and even she apologizes for suggesting a comparison.

And (if a muse might dare
 Things so extremely distant to compare;)
 Like Hesperus leading on the countless stars,
 The God before his radiant train appears.²⁰

Both Ogilvie and Bruce illustrate the tendency displayed in most longer descriptions to create a picture of celestial splendor out of sharp contrasts between dark and light.²¹

¹⁸Book VI.

¹⁹"Ode on the Passion," 1748. "Down rides Messiah on the Wings of Wind, / His fiery Sword of Justice blazing round." Compare Ps. xviii:10: "...yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind."

²⁰"The Conflagration," 1739.

²¹Ogilvie quotes Milton here: "Dark with excessive bright." For this and for the bowing-of-the-heavens idea, which he calls "sublime," he also cites Ps. xviii:9-11: "He bowed the heavens, and came down, and darkness was under his feet.... He made darkness his secret place: his pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies."

...from his great abode
 Full on a whirlwind²² came the dreadful GOD:
 The Tempest's rattling wings, the fiery car,
 Ten thousand hosts, his ministers of war,
 The flaming Cherubim attend his flight, 125
 And heav'n's foundations groan'd beneath their weight:
 Thro' all the skies his forky lightnings play'd,
 With radiant splendor glow'd his beamy head:
 From his bright eyes the trembling throng retire;
 He spoke in thunder, and he breath'd in fire; 130
 He stood, --o'er all the boundless glory shone,
 Then call'd, and darkness form'd his gloomy throne;
 Black clouds hung awful round the bursting ray,
 And veil'd from sight th' intolerable day.²³

Here, however, the poet does find an image for the splendor of the Lord.

So when (elate his glorious course to run) 135
 O'er heav'n's blue region flames the blazing sun;
 The lucid stream o'erpow'rs the orbs of sight,
 The slack nerve trembling in the flood of light.
 Should then some cloud his keener rays conceal,
 He glows less dazzling thro' the filmy veil; 140
 His beams absorb'd their piercing heat detain,
 And gentler radiance gilds the flow'ry plain.

Michael Bruce's description, which is similar in respect to the dark-light element, is largely a paraphrase of a vision described in Ezekial 1.²⁴

²²Compare Ezekial 1:4: "And I looked, and, behold, a whirlwind came out of the north, a great cloud, and a fire infolding itself, and a brightness was about it,..." Then follows the description of the four creatures and the wheels within wheels (See below under Bruce.).

²³Ogilvie, The Day of Judgment, Book II, 1753.

²⁴In this vision Ezekial saw four strange creatures which he seems to be at a loss for words to describe. In an attempt, however, he says in verses 13, 15, and 16: "As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, and like the appearance of lamps: it went up and down among the living creatures; and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning.... Now as I beheld the living creatures, behold one wheel upon the earth by the living creatures, with his four faces. The appearance of the wheels and their work was like unto the colour of a beryl; and they four had one likeness: and their appearance and their work was as it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel."

Now, down from th' opening firmament,
 Seated upon a sapphire throne, high rais'd
 Upon an azure ground, upheld by wheels
 Of emblematic structure, as a wheel
 Had been within a wheel, studded with eyes
 Of flaming fire, and by four cherubs led;
 I saw the Judge descend. Around Him came,
 By thousands and by millions, Heaven's bright host.
 About him blaz'd insufferable light,
 Invisible as darkness to the eye.
 His car above the mount of Clives stay'd,
 Where last with his disciples He convers'd,
 And left them gazing as He soar'd aloft.
 He darkness as a curtain drew around;
 On which the colour of the rainbow shone,
 Various and bright; and from within was heard
 A voice, as deep-mouth'd thunder....²⁵

Blake bases two of his descriptions of the second advent upon a vision
 in Revelation iv.²⁶ In "Vala" he writes:

...While he speaks the flames roll on,
 And after the flames appears the Cloud of the Son of Man
 Descending from Jerusalem with power and great Glory.
 All nations look up to the Cloud & behold him who was crucified.
 The cloud is Blood, dazling upon the heavens, & in the cloud,
 Above upon its volumes, is beheld ... a throne & ...
 Of precious stones surrounded by twenty-four venerable patriarchs,
 And these again surrounded by four Wonders of the Almighty,
 Incomprehensible, pervading all, amidst & around about,
 Fourfold, each in the other reflected; they are named Life's
 Four Starry Universes going forward from Eternity to Eternity.
 And the Fall'n Man who was arisen upon the Rock of Ages
 Beheld the Vision of God, & he arose up from the Rock,
 And Urisen arose up with him, walking thro' the flames
 To meet the Lord coming to Judgment; but the flames repell'd them

²⁵"The Last Day."

²⁶Verses 2-6: "And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald. And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold...and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind."

color is blue. The Wesleys speak of "an azure throne,"²⁹ and Bruce describes "a sapphire throne, high rais'd / Upon an azure ground,"³⁰ a detail which is evidently taken from Ezekiel I, whence the poet derives a number of other ideas for this particular passage.³¹ Verse 26 reads:

And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it.

Sometimes the poets say that the throne is formed of clouds or is driven by storms,³² while a few speak of a flying throne,³³ of a chariot,³⁴ or even of a flying cherub whereon the Judge is seated.³⁵

Other frequently mentioned details are banner, flag, or cross. Edward Young says in The Last Day, for example:

Now an archangel eminently bright,
From off his silver staff of wondrous height,
Unfurls the Christian flag, which waving flies,
And shuts and opens more than half the skies:
The cross so strong a red, it sheds a stain,
Where'er it floats, on earth, and air, and main;
Flushes the hill, and sets on fire the wood,
And turns the deep-dy'd ocean into blood.

²⁹Hymn xxv, Vol. VI, 1763.

³⁰The Last Day, 1766.

³¹See p. 68 above regarding the descent of the Judge.

³²Pomfret, Trapp, Elizabeth Rowe, and "Civis," 1799. Compare Ps. xviii:10 (last part): "Yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind."

³³Young, The Last Day, Book II.

³⁴Thomas Warton and others.

³⁵Samuel Catherall, An Essay on Conflagration, 1720: "Myriads of Saints attending, thus he bow'd / The Heavens, and on a flying Cherub rode." Compare Ps. xviii:10 (first part): "And he rode upon a cherub and did fly."

Trapp imagines:

The Crosse expanded reddens Half the Sky;
That Banner, from the silver Staff unfurl'd,
Floats, wav'd by Cherubs, o'er the trembling World.

Young's description of the position of the judgment retinue in the sky is pictorial and contains a feature which occurs in several other poems--the figure of Death personified and chained in some ignominious position below or behind the throne.

Now the descending triumph stops its flight
From earth full twice a planetary height.
There all the clouds condens'd, to columns raise,
Distinct with orient veins and golden blaze;
One fix'd on earth, and one in sea, and round
Its ample foot the swelling billows sound.
These an immeasurable arch support,
The grand tribunal of this awful court,
Sheets of bright azure, from the purest sky,
Stream from the crystal arch, and round the columns fly.
Death, wrapt in chains, low at the basis lies,
And on the point of his own arrow dies.

Here high enthron'd th' eternal Judge is plac'd,
With all the grandeur of his Godhead grac'd;
Stars on his robes in beauteous order meet,
And the sun burns beneath his awful feet.³⁶

Participants in Judgment

The most important parts of the judgment tableau, and those most frequently described, are, of course, the participants--the Judge, his assistants and attendants, and those who are the subjects of judgment--men and devils (or "fiends," as evil angels are usually called).

³⁶The Last Day, 1713.

The poets agree unanimously that the judge is Jesus Christ,³⁷ whom they speak of variously as "Messiah," "the Lord," "Jehovah," "God-man," or simply as "the Judge." Some also include associate judges. Bishop Ken, for example, suggests that the twelve apostles of Christ are destined to help sentence mankind, for

THAT Throne for Judas once design'd,
E're from his Duty he declin'd,
To bless'd Matthias was ensur'd,
Reward for Woes he had endur'd.

CURS'D Judas at last Day shall see
Matthias, who his Judge shall be,
And hear his Doom at that bright Throne,
Which once he might have styl'd his own.³⁸

Pomfret makes the following comment:

Nor for magnificence alone,
To brighten and enlarge the pageant scene,
Shall we encircle his more dazzling throne,
And swell the lustre of his pompous train;
The nimble ministers of bliss or woe
We shall attend, and save, or deal the blow,
As he admits to joy, or bids to pain.³⁹

Trapp speaks of "assessors" who sit on thrones around the judge at the last day, and Blake says in the second book of Milton: "I beheld the Twenty-four Cities of Albion / Arise upon their Thrones to Judge the Nations of the Earth." In view of the fact that saints are almost universally rewarded with thrones and crowns and are frequently bidden to assume them at the site of judgment, the general opinion would seem to be that they will help

³⁷Addison, for example, identifies him thus: "And now to View he bar'd his bleeding side, / And his pierc'd Hands and Feet, in Crimson dy'd." From "On the Resurrection," 1718.

³⁸About 1700. Text of The Works, 1721, I, 325.

³⁹"Dies Novissima."

the Judge determine the fate of the wicked.

The attitude of the Judge is generally one of mingled anger and benevolence—anger towards the wicked, benevolence towards the righteous—but for the most part his person remains shrouded in a veil of glory,⁴⁰ the splendor and terror of which is usually left for the reader to imagine through the effect it produces upon human beings. Some, however, either specify that Christ returns to earth in the flesh or give a few details about his face, voice, clothing, or accoutrements.⁴¹

John Pomfret says, for example, that "strong beams of majesty" play around his temples, allaying "the transcendent gaiety of his face."⁴²

Young gives the following vivid description in The Last Day, Book II:

Crown'd with that majesty which form'd the world,
And the grand rebel flaming downward hurl'd.
Virtue, dominion, praise, omnipotence,
Support the train of their triumphant Prince.
A zone, beyond the thought of angels bright,
Around him, like the zodiac, winds its light.
Night shades the solemn arches of his brows,
And in his cheek the purple morning glows.
Where'er serene he turns propitious eyes,
Or we expect, or find, a paradise:
But if resentment reddens their mild beams,
The Eden kindles, and the world's in flames.
On one hand, knowledge shines in purest light;
On one, the sword of justice fiercely bright.

⁴⁰ Trapp gives one of these general descriptions in characteristic fashion in Thoughts on the Four Last Things, 1734:

Full in their Front the great MESSIAH shines:
Yet so, that He in part his Glory shrouds
With thickest Darkness, and a Night of Clouds.
Insufferable Splendor, circling Beams
Dart from his Head, and shoot in pointed Streams.

⁴¹ Addison, "On the Resurrection," 1718, passage as quoted in note 37, p. 72 above. See also John and Charles Wesley, Hymns xxxv and xxxix, Vol. VI, and The Weekly Register, Jan. 23, 1799.

⁴² "Dies Novissima," 1699.

John Bulkeley resorts to the increase of physical size, among other things, to represent divinity:

...his lofty Front august
 Reach'd where the circling Stars revolving play'd,
 And rowl'd thro' vast Infinity's Domains;
 Each Stride the Sky supported, where he strode
 Flow'd rosy Sweetness, in a balmy Path
 Of Flow'rs ambrosial.⁴³

Catherall offers a prevalent idea when he says that the eternal Father's face shines fully expressed in the face of Christ as he sits upon the judgment throne,⁴⁴ and John Ogilvie catches the spirit of the moment in a pastoral image when he describes how the Judge looks to the righteous as he turns to pass sentence upon them.

Now, bright as heav'n, as mild Aurora fair,
 (Whose balmy breath perfumes the purer air,)
 He rose, with Mercy beaming from his sight,
 Then smil'd, and look'd ineffable delight.
 As when the nightingale's melodious love ⁴⁴⁵
 Charms the still gloom, and fills the vocal grove;
 The list'ning Zephyrs hovering while she sings,
 Catch ev'ry sound, and waft it on their wings;
 Th' attentive swains her moving accents hear,
 That melt the heart, and harmonize the ear; ⁴⁵⁰
 Such, (while each bosom felt unbounded joys,) ⁴⁵
 Such Music stream'd from his transporting voice:...

⁴³The Last Day, Book X.

⁴⁴An Essay on the Conflagration, Book II, 1720. Addison says much the same thing in his poem called "On the Resurrection," 1718:

Look! where thy Saviour fills the middle Space,
 The Son of God, true Image of his Face,
 Himself eternal God, e'er Time began her Race.

This idea is expressed in Gilbert Burnet's Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles, pp. 81-83, as follows:

Then shall Christ appear visibly in some very conspicuous place in the clouds of heaven, where every eye shall see him; ...he shall appear in the "glory of his angels," ...; above all, he shall appear in "his Father's glory;" that is, there shall be then a most wonderful manifestation of the eternal Godhead dwelling in him;..."

⁴⁵The Day of Judgment, 1753, Book II.

Bruce, too, dwells upon voice and eyes in order to suggest divine majesty.

Now from his lofty throne, with eyes that blaz'd
Intolerable day, th' Almighty Judge
Look'd down a-while upon the subject crowd.
...and from within was heard
A voice, as deep-mouth'd thunder....⁴⁶

Of the Judge's clothing Pomfret writes in "Dies Novissima": "His waving vestments shine / Bright as the sun; burnish'd wreaths of light shall make his form divine." Catherall says that intolerable light flashes from his garments,⁴⁷ while Jane Brereton, using popular terminology, speaks of

His Robe, than new-fall'n Snow, a purer White;
Behold, around his Breast, the golden Zone,
.....
And on his radiant Vesture, lo, the Words
Inscrib'd, the KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS,⁴⁸

Anne Steele mentions "dazzling robes of light,"⁴⁹ and Blake thinks that Christ is wrapped in clouds that have the appearance of blood.

...with one accord the Starry Eight become
One Man, Jesus the Saviour, wonderful! round his limbs
The Clouds of Ololon folded as a Garment dipped in blood,
Written within & without in woven letters, & the Writing
Is the Divine Revelation in the Litteral expression,
A Garment of War. I heard it nam'd the Woof of Six
Thousand Years.⁵⁰

⁴⁶The Last Day.

⁴⁷An Essay on the Conflagration, Book II, 1720.

⁴⁸"Thoughts on Life, Death, Judgment," 1735. Text of Poems on Several Occasions, 1744.

⁴⁹"Hymn to Jesus," 1760. Text of The Works of Anne Steele, 1808, II.

⁵⁰Milton, Book II, about 1785. Four years later Gilbank gave a somewhat similar description in The Day of Pentecost, Book XI. He said that Christ wears a garment dipped in blood and that upon "the cincture" is embossed a name known only to himself.

The crown is an important part of the Messiah's equipment. Bulkeley in 1716 and Gilbank⁵¹ later in the century speak of his wearing many crowns.

...high his Hand
In Majesty and Pow'r; a Diadem
Adorn'd his Brow, where num'rous Crowns were fixt
In Miniature, as many as the Globes
Pendant in huge Expanse, o're which presides
Loges, extending thro' the vast Domains
Aerial his Dominions; so he sate.⁵²

What the Judge carries is also a matter of interest to some. Norris observes that "In his right hand a palm He bears."⁵³ Bulkeley says that "In his Right-Hand an Olive Branch he bore, / And in his left a blazing Jav'lin swung."⁵⁴ Thomas Warton sees a "fiery Sword of Justice blazing round."⁵⁵ Gilbank also comments about a sword which, moving this way and that, declares his wrath.⁵⁶

The attendants of the judge are, of course, most prominent features of the tableau. The chief of these are angels, but many poets also include saints or the spirits of righteous dead men, as the anonymous J-l M-r-ce says in lines which speak of "the Judge / Of Heav'n and earth tremendous,

⁵¹The Day of Pentecost, Book XI.

⁵²Bulkeley, The Last Day, Book X.

⁵³"The Consummation," 1706.

⁵⁴The Last Day, Book X, 1716.

⁵⁵"Ode on the Passion," 1748.

⁵⁶The Day of Pentecost, Book XI.

circled round / With thousand thousand saints, and angels pure; / A host innumerable!"⁵⁷ Generally the angels are described as belonging to different orders or ranks. Hannah More, for example, speaks of "Angels, archangels, each degree / Of heaven's celestial hierarchy!"⁵⁸ All of them have duties to perform which vary in importance from merely swelling the procession to superintending the resurrection or the conflagration. They are almost inevitably musicians.⁵⁹ Otherwise, their chief activities are gathering men and devils to judgment, separating the good from the bad,⁶⁰

⁵⁷"The Day of Judgment." Text of the Gentleman's Magazine, Feb., 1734.

Others who include saints among those who attend the judge from heaven are Samuel Catherall (An Essay on the Conflagration, Book II), Martha Brewster ("On the Last Judgment"), Blake, who specifies in "Vala" that the throne is surrounded by twenty-four venerable patriarchs, and Hannah More (Bible Rhymes—"Jude"). In the following lines Hannah More suggests a source for her idea: "Jesus appears, as Enoch paints, / Surrounded by ten thousand saints." This idea could, however, be taken from I Thess. iv:14—"For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him..."--for immediately after this verse comes a description of the second coming of Christ.

⁵⁸Bible Rhymes—"Jude." Text of The Works of Hannah More, 1855, VII. These rhymes may have been written before 1800.

⁵⁹Young writes typically in The Last Day, Book II:
 The angelic host is rang'd in bright array;
 Some touch the string, some strike the sounding shell,
 And mingling voices in rich concert swell.
 See appendix for further information regarding the place of music in eschatological events.

⁶⁰James Woodhouse gives a common description of the work of angels at the judgment scene in The Lucubrations of Crispinus Scriblerus, 1798.

Then will the Angels reap the ripen'd Earth,
 And separate Weeds of Vice from virtuous Worth--
 Will all the tangling Tares, in bundles, bind,
 With chaff to burn, but leave the Wheat behind;
 No more to struggle thro' each earthly Clod,
 But gather'd in the garner of its God!

ministering to and rejoicing with the saints, and executing the various tasks associated with the tribunal.

Frequently the poets ornament their verses with word portraits of these great, beautiful beings. The one who comes in for the most attention is the trumpeting or resurrection angel. Norris describes him thus:

I see the mighty angel stand
Cloath'd with a cloud, and rain-bow round his head,
His right foot on the sea, his other on the land,
He lifted up his dreadful arm, and thus he said;
By the mysterious great Three-One
.....
I swear the fatal thred is spun,
Nature shall breath her last, and Time shall be no more.⁶¹

Bulkeley's angels appear at every turn in The Last Day and range in importance from celestial titans with Miltonic names like Zophiel and Hazazel, who can pick up the earth and lug it into the middle of the universe, to dainty beings with many-colored plumes who hover in swarms about the judgment seat. One of the more majestic angels he describes in the following words:

...the Angel who directs
The Thunder, lofty rear'd his mighty Bulk,
Shaking his black sulphureous Locks, and high
Rearing the sheeted Light'ning in his Hand,
Prepar'd to hurl.⁶²

Regarding the other kind he says:

...Round the God profuse
Myriads of Cherubs gaudy, cloath'd in Gold,
Hover'd Attendant; in the burnish'd Light
Wav'd Plumes enamel'd, and their beauteous Hues
Blithsome display'd upon the Face of Day.⁶³

⁶¹"The Consummation," 1706.

⁶²Book X.

⁶³Idem.

Trapp's description of the trumpeting angel somewhat resembles that of Norris.

A Mighty Seraph dread	175
Descends from Heav'n; a Rainbow round his Head;	
Pillars of Fire his Feet, his Face a Sun;	
Sev'n Thunders, e'er He speaks, his Voice forerun.	
This Foot on Sea he fixes, That on Land;	
And lifting high to Heav'n his ample Hand,	180
He swears that time shall end. ⁶⁴	

Ogilvie's description is more detailed. Note the emphasis upon the "sublime."

His eyes were lightning, and his robes of flame,	
O'er all his form the circling glories run,	
And his face lighten'd as the blazing sun;	305
His limbs with heav'n's aerial vesture glow,	
And o'er his head was hung the sweepy bow.	
As shines the brightning steel's refulgent gleam,	
When the smooth blade reflects the spangling beam,	
Its light with quicken'd glance the eye surveys,	310
Green, gold, and vermeil, trembling as it plays;	
So flam'd his wings along th' etherial road,	
And earth's long shores resounded as he trod.	
Sublime he towr'd! keen Terror arm'd his eyes,	
And grasp'd the redning bolt that rends the skies;	
One foot stood firmly on th' extended plain	316
Secure, and one repel'd the bounding main;	
He shook his arm;—the lightning burst away,	
Thro' heav'n's dark concave gleam'd the paly ray,	
Roar'd the loud bolt tremendous, thro' the gloom,	320
And peals on peals prepare th' impending doom.	
Then to his lips a mighty Trump apply'd,	
(The flames were ceas'd, the mutt'ring thunders dy'd)	
While all th' involving firmaments rebound	
He rais'd his voice, and labour'd in the sound:	325
These dreadful words he spoke—... ⁶⁵	

⁶⁴ Thoughts on the Four Last Things, 1734.

⁶⁵ The Day of Judgment, 1753.

Of all those ages, which their births disjoin.

How vast the concourse! not in number more
 The waves that break on the resounding shore,
 The leaves that tremble in the shady grove,
 The lamps that gild the spangled vaults above:
 Those overwhelming armies, whose command
 Said to one empire, Fall; another, Stand;
 Whose rear lay wrapt in night, while breaking dawn
 Rous'd the broad front, and call'd the battle on:
 Great XERXES' world in arms, proud Cannae's field,

This echoing voice now rends the yielding air,
 "For judgment, judgment, sons of men, prepare!"⁶⁹

Bulkeley and Hill also use the image of an army. Bulkeley says, for example:

Unnumber'd Armies march
 From Plains Gagoian, and the spicy Banks
 Of fair Hydaspes; Ev'ry Clime her Sons
 Dismisses; where fair Florida her Groves
 Displays, ... Swift they fly
 The Concave to compleat and rise thro' Air.⁷⁰

Ogilvie and Bruce compare the multitudes to swarms of insects.

Thick, as the burning sun's meridian rays,
 The hov'ring insects basking in the blaze;
 The swarms that flutter, when the day's withdrawn;
 The throng that rises with the rising dawn; ...⁷¹ 516

As when in Spring the sun's prolific beams
 Have wak'd to life the insect-tribes, that sport
 And wanton in his rays at evening mild,
 Proud of their new existence, up the air,
 In devious circles wheeling, they ascend,

⁶⁹The Last Day, Book II.

⁷⁰The Last Day, Book I.

⁷¹The Day of Judgment. This passage bears a slight resemblance to Milton's description of the multitudes of evil spirits crowding Pandemonium. In Paradise Lost, Book I, ll. 768-770, he says they swarm "As bees / In springtime, ... about the hive/ In clusters." Text of The Complete Poetical Works of John Milton, ed. Harris Francis Fletcher, 1941.

Innumerable: the whole air is dark:—
 So, by the trumpet rous'd, the sons of men,
 In countless numbers, cover'd all the ground,
 From frozen Greenland to the southern pole;
 All who e'er liv'd on earth....⁷²

Bulkeley differs from most other poets by having men separated before the sentence into groups according to professions.

Before each Person individual shares
 Sentence immutable; the Cherubs part
 Each Order and Profession, as on Earth
 Most beneficial to the State of Man.

...The Seat

Superiour, by Messiah's splendid Throne,
Theologists usurp; yet Many here,
 Alas! of tainted Life;...

Next, Those who over Justice and the Law
 Presided,...

Behind, a more impetuous Band appear'd,
 ...the Warriours...

Next, the Physicians...

Next, behind these, Professions num'rous stood,
 Num'rous as Ocean's Sands, or Shells that grace
Peruvian Shores, ...⁷³

Among the epic features so prevalent in eighteenth-century eschatological poetry is the Homeric category. It is used by Ogilvie to emphasize the size and variety of the assembly gathered to judgment.

In dreadful length th' innum'rous throng appear'd;
 Earth's noblest sons, the mighty wretched things,
 Call'd Heroes, Consuls, Cesars, Judges, Kings,
 Now swell'd the crowd, promiscuous and unknown,
 The meanest slave from him who fill'd a throne: 524
 Each tyrant now would bless the yawning tomb,
 And Pride stands shudd'ring at th' approaching doom. 74

⁷²"The Last Day," 1766.

⁷³The Last Day, Book X, 1716.

⁷⁴The Day of Judgment, 1753.

Blake finds a form of category useful too.

On rifted rocks, suspended in the air by inward fires,
 Many a woful company & many on clouds & waters,
 Fathers & friends, Mothers & Infants, Kings & Warriors,
 Priests & chain'd Captives, met together in a horrible fear;
 And every one of the dead appears as he had liv'd before,
 And all the marks remain of the slave's scourge & tyrant's Crown,
 And of the Priest's o'ergorged Abdomen, & of the merchant's thin
 Sinewy deception, & of the warrior's ou[t] braving & thoughtlessness. ⁷⁵

Blake's attention to the reunion of those who had known one another in mortal life is characteristic of many other judgment-day poems. Compare it with Aaron Hill's description below.

Armies, unnumber'd, throng th' aetherial space,
 Paternal Adam views, at once, his whole collected race,
 And, with big tears, for conscious woe, bedews his reverend face:
 Parents meet children, and, transported, cling,
 Long-parted friends, in mutual rapture, greet,
 Th' obliger and th' oblig'd, together spring,
 And trembling traitors injur'd sov'reigns meet!
 CAESAR on BRUTUS looks, serenely, down,
 And cloudy CATO stalks, with sullen will,
 Glares on him, envious, with inferior frown,
 And wonders, that in spite of death, he feels him conqu'ror still!
 Majestic, in the solemn front, of STUART'S injur'd race,
 The KINGLY MARTYR rears his awful brow!
 Pierc'd by the force of his forgiving face,
 A gloomy host of back'ning rebels bow! ⁷⁶

Ogilvie includes among those to be judged at the last day not only the inhabitants of this earth but also those of all other worlds.

The crowds that live in all th' unbounded skies, 509
 Now rais'd the trembling head with wild surprize:
 Stars with their num'rous sons augment the throng,
 Each world's majestic offspring tow'r'd along:...

⁷⁵Vala, about 1785.

⁷⁶"The Judgment-Day," 1721.

He even takes pains to defend the idea in a footnote:

I cannot see any reason for confining the general judgment to the inhabitants of our own world; unless we can bring ourselves to believe, that all those around us (which will share in the same destruction) are only a vast collection of uncultivated deserts: a supposition founded on nothing but this one argument, viz. that it cannot be confuted by ocular demonstration.

Glynn is the only other poet that specifically mentions the judgment of other worlds. He says that Messiah will traverse immeasurable realms of space in a flaming car "To that bright region, where enthroned he sits / First born of Heaven, to judge assembled worlds."⁷⁷

The poets are in greater agreement, however, upon the idea that devils as well as men will receive judgment at the last tribunal. Ken, Young, Bulkeley,⁷⁸ Moses Browne,⁷⁹ Glynn,⁸⁰ Bruce,⁸¹ and Thomas Gisborne, 1797—

⁷⁷"Day of Judgment," Seatonian prize for 1757. Text of The British Poets, ed. R. A. Davenport, 1822, LXVIII.

⁷⁸The Last Day, Book X.

Mean time the Daemons to the Throne august
Are forc'd by heav'nly Squadrons; Loud they [rage]
And move reluctant; but the flaming Spear
Of Zophiel urges them behind.

⁷⁹"On Life, Death, Judgment," 1735.

Then high advanc'd, before 'em strait arraign'd
(Dragg'd to the bar in captive fetters chain'd)
Th' apostate angel with his trait'rous band
Abash'd, in judgment shall be forc'd to stand.

⁸⁰"Day of Judgment," 1757.

But who are they, who, bound in tenfold chains,
Stand horribly aghast? This is that crew
Who strove to pull Jehovah from his throne,
And in the place of Heaven's eternal King
Set up the phantom Chance....

⁸¹"The Last Day," 1766.

But now the enemy of God and man,
Cursing his fate, comes forward, led in chains,

(Continued)

all give descriptions reminiscent of Paradise Lost, much like the following one from Young's Night Thoughts.

Nor man alone; the foe of GOD and man,
From his dark den, blaspheming, drags his chain,
And rears his brazen front, with thunder scarr'd;
Receives his sentence, and begins his hell.
All vengeance past, now, seems abundant grace:
Like meteors in a stormy sky, how roll
His baleful eyes! he curses whom he dreads;
And deems it the first moment of his fall.⁸²

The reactions of men at the day of judgment, as suggested, seem to be among the most fascinating of topics for poetic contemplation, probably because they make such an excellent excuse for moralizing. Poets divide their attention about evenly between the damned and the saved.

Pomfret and Young both think that the just will experience mingled emotions. "With mighty Transports, yet with awful Fears," says Pomfret, do the good behold the appearance of the Son of God.⁸³ Young illustrates the point by comparing the feelings of the just to those of a bridegroom just before the wedding.

To the Great Judge with holy pride they turn,
And dare behold th' Almighty's anger burn;

(Footnote 81, Continued)

Infrangible, of burning adamant,
Hewn from the rocks of Hell; now too the bands
Of rebel angels, who long time had walk'd
The world, and by their oracles deceiv'd
The blinded nations, or by secret guile
Wrought men to vice, came on, raging in vain,
And struggling with their fetters, which, as fate,
Compell'd them fast. They wait their dreadful doom.

⁸²Compare Paradise Lost, Book I, ll. 192-222.

⁸³The Last Day, Book III.

Its flash sustain, against its terror rise,
And on the dread tribunal fix their eyes.

Yet still some thin remains of fear and doubt,
Th' infected brightness of their joy pollute.

Thus the chaste bridegroom, when the priest draws nigh,
Beholds his blessing with a trembling eye,
Feels doubtful passions throb in ev'ry vein,
And in his cheeks are mingled joy and pain,
Lest still some intervening chance should rise,
Leap forth at once, and snatch the golden prize;...⁸⁴

Addison, Elizabeth Rowe,⁸⁵ Thomas Warton,⁸⁶ "Symposius,"⁸⁷ Ogilvie,
Helen Maria Williams,⁸⁸ Bruce,⁸⁹ and Blake⁹⁰ stress the joy and confidence
of the righteous. Addison says, for example:

⁸⁴The Last Day, Book III.

⁸⁵"The Conflagration."

⁸⁶"Ode on the Passion."

⁸⁷Text of The Bath Journal, July 23, 1750.
Happy the Man who stands unmov'd,
Whom Virtue's sacred Shield defends;
Resign'd, and calm, when the dire Shock
Convulsive Nature's Bosom rends.

⁸⁸A paraphrase of Isa. xlix:15. Text of Poems, 2nd ed., 1791, I.
Man shall alone the wreck of worlds survive,
Midst falling spheres, immortal man shall live!
The voice which bade the last dread thunders roll,
Shall whisper to the good, and cheer their soul.
God shall himself his favour'd creature guide
Where living waters pour their blissful tide,...

⁸⁹Now separate,
Upon the right appear'd a dauntless, firm,
Composed number; joyful at the thought
Of immortality, they forward look'd
With hope into the future; conscience, pleas'd,
Smiling, reflects upon a well-spent life;
Heaven dawns within their breasts.

⁹⁰Blake says in Vala that although the wicked are terrified, "Yet the
just man stands erect & looking up to Heav'n."

Each Bosom kindles with Seraphic Joy,
 And conscious Extacies the Soul employ.
 Not equal Raptures swell the Sybil's Breast,
 When by the inmate Deity possess'd;
 When Phoebus the Prophetic Maid inspires,
 And her Limbs tremble with convulsive Fires.⁹¹

Ogilvie elaborates upon the emotion of joy in Book II of The Day of Judgment.

How vast the prize each smiling saint survey'd! 35
 While heav'n's transcendent glories stood display'd!
 The brightning eye beheld each fair abode;
 The throbbing breast with more than transport glow'd;
 But oh! no words, no image can express,
 The fine delight, the flow of melting bliss, 40
 The soft emotions trilling thro' the whole,
 The secret springs that touch'd the feeling soul,
 When mid' the skies each blooming scene was view'd,
 Eternal day! a sun without a cloud!
 Surrounding pleasures, boundless as refin'd! 45
 'Twas Fancy's food, the music of the mind!

The horror and fright of wicked mortals at judgment day are described in typical fashion by Young.

How weak, how pale, how haggard, how obscene,
 What more than death in ev'ry face and mien!
 With what distress, and glarings of affright,
 They shock the heart, and turn away the sight!
 In gloomy orbs their trembling eye-balls roll,
 And tell the horrid secrets of the soul.
 Each gesture mourns, each look is black with care,
 And ev'ry groan is loaded with despair.⁹²

The first few lines of Addison's "On the Resurrection" dwell upon the misery of both fiends and men.

Hither in ghastly Crouds the Guilty haste,
 Obscene with Horror, and with Shame defac'd;
 With haggard Looks the gloomy Fiends appear,

⁹¹"On the Resurrection," 1718.

⁹²The Last Day, 1713.

They gnash their foamy Teeth, and frown severe.
 A stern Avenger with relentless Mind,
 Waving a flamy Faulchion, stalks behind;
 With which, as once from Paradise he drove,
 He drives the Sinner from the Joys above.

One very popular element which does not appear in either of these passages, however, is the terrified call of men for rocks and mountains to fall upon them.

In vain for Help shall then the Guilty call;
 "Hide us, Ye Hills, Ye Mountains, on us fall;"
 When with fierce fervent Heat, before ne'er felt, 15
 Like Wax the Everlasting Hills shall melt
 At Thy dread Presence; and the Mountains want,
 Themselves, That Refuge they are ask'd to grant.⁹³

Compare this with Swift's "The Run upon the Bankers," written fourteen years earlier. Apparently this clever parody was not much read by eschatological poets, for the idea Swift ridicules continues to be popular throughout the century.

As when a Conj'rur takes a Lease
 From Satan for a Term of Years,
 The Tenant's in a Dismal Case
 When e'er the bloody Bond appears.

A baited Banker thus desponds,
 From his own Hand foresees his Fall,
 They have his Soul who have his Bonds,
 'Tis like the Writing on the Wall.

How will the Caitiff Wretch be scar'd
 When first he finds himself awake
 At the last Trumpet, unprepar'd,
 And all his Grand Account to make?

For in that Universall Call
 Few Bankers will to Heav'n be Mounters:

⁹³Trapp, Thoughts on the Four Last Things, 1734.

They'll cry, Ye Shops, upon us fall
Conceal, and cover us, Ye Counters.

When Other Hands the Scales shall hold,
And They in Men and Angels Sight
Produc'd with all their Bills and Gold,
Weigh'd in the Ballance, and found Light.⁹⁴

Atheists and non-Christians frequently had the spotlight turned upon them in the manner of Thomas Warton's "Ode on the Passion."

Methinks I hear the Angel—"Come—
"This Trumpet calls ye to your Doom."—
The simple Indian starts amaz'd,
The Jew now dreads the Rod,
Curs'd is the Koran by the Turk,
The Atheist owns a God.

Ogilvie employs an image drawn from desert life to describe the horror experienced by wicked men at the day of judgment.

As when a caravan of merchants, led
By thirst of gain to travel the parch'd sands
Of waste Arabia, hears a lion roar,
The wicked trembled at his view: upon
The ground they roll'd, in pangs of wild despair
To hide their faces, which not blushes mark'd
But livid horror.⁹⁵

Similar emotions torment men in Blake's Vala.

And all the while the trumpet sounds, ["Awake, ye dead, & come
"To Judgment!" del.] from the clotted gore & from the hollow den
Start forth the trembling millions into flames of mental fire,
Bathing their limbs in the bright visions of Eternity.
Then, like the doves from pillars of Smoke, the trembling families
Of women & children throughout every nation under heaven
Cling round the men in bands of twenties & of fifties, pale

⁹⁴"The Run upon the Bankers. Written 1720." Text of The Poems of Jonathan Swift, 1937, I. The editor suggests that this poem probably had reference to the South Sea Bubble.

⁹⁵The Day of Judgment, Book II.

grace or the improvement of opportunities or talents, charity, virtue, or obedience to divine commands, and motives. These are, for the most part, found in combinations of two or more which conform to the orthodox Anglican insistence upon the necessity for both faith and works in the Christian. The twelfth and thirteenth of the Thirty-nine Articles offer the standard explanation of the relationship between faith and works from which the average Englishman's opinions would ultimately be drawn. Article XII reads:

Albeit that Good Works, which are the fruits of Faith, and follow after Justification, cannot put away our Sins, and endure the severity of God's Judgment; yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and do spring out necessarily of a true and lively Faith; insomuch that by them a lively Faith may be as evidently known, as a Tree discerned by the fruit.⁹⁸

From this one would gather that truly good works come as a result of faith, and that they are, in fact, a visible sign of an invisible condition. This inner condition is stressed by poets who dwell upon faith, piety, repentance, or proper motives for virtuous conduct as deciding factors in man's fate. Conversely, poets who dwell upon keeping the commandments of God and performing works of charity would be stressing the external manifestations of the same state of heart. There seems to be no unorthodoxy in either approach so long as the writer does not obviously eliminate either faith or works from the picture. Most seem to have been so thoroughly warned about the danger of either extreme that they take special pains somewhere in their poems to assure the reader that both are necessary. Edward Cobden

⁹⁸Gilbert Burnet, An Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles, 1699, p. 170, Article XII.

makes the point that virtue rises out of faith: "Vain mortals hence from Sin awake, / And wing'd by Faith in Virtue rise."⁹⁹ John Erskine uses the oft-repeated statement:

None could his great tribunal face,
Were faith itself their fairest dress:
Faith takes the robe, but never brags
Itself has ought but filthy rags.¹⁰⁰

It is thus, too, that Joseph Trapp's good man pleads his case successfully at the bar of God. He mentions a long list of virtues, but adds at the end that his hope of salvation is not dependent upon these, but upon the grace of God.

The insistence that works are, nevertheless, man's part in the plan of salvation is seen in many passages such as the following which deals with the importance of charitable acts. Those would be approved

...who of wealth and power possess,
Gave to the poor, & ne'er the poor oppress;
You who sincerely griev'd at others' woe,
And shed your tears in social sorrow's flow;
Who at another's welfare ne'er repin'd,
But acted for the good of all mankind;
Who lives of charity, and virtue, led;
Who cloath'd the naked; & the hungry fed;
Who to dejected merit gave relief;
And yielded comfort to the wretched's grief.¹⁰¹ 266

It is also seen in statements which imply the necessity of obedience to the decalogue.

⁹⁹Edward Cobden, "An Hymn for Easter Day," 1748. Text of Essays in Poetry or Poems on Several Occasions bound with Discourses and Essays in Prose and Verse, 1757.

¹⁰⁰The Believer's Principles, 1764, Chapter ii, section 4.

¹⁰¹Contestant I, 1735.

All who in Idols, or in Riches trust,
 The Sorcerer, the Lewd, and the Unjust;
 The Wretch who his Creator dares deny;
 And whosoe'er invents, or loves a Lie;
 Far from the holy Presence must retire.¹⁰²

Other poets make it clear that works are necessary by stressing the duty of cultivating human talents.

...be wise then, and attend;
 How we may best our nat'ral Pow'rs improve,
 And qualify ourselves for bliss above.¹⁰³

But even more important than doing these good works is the motive for which they are done, the poets think. Thomas Ken stresses love in both his poetry and prose. In a commentary upon Article IV of the Thirty-nine Articles, he captions his lengthy analysis of the decalogue, "The Fruits of Love,"¹⁰⁴ and repeats the idea many times that every form of virtue is to be a product of that motive. At the other end of the century, James Woodhouse stresses the intent of the heart as the deciding factor in final judgment. He warns men of

That striking Clarion, which, once more, must sound,
 To gather all Earth's reasoning Creatures round,
 Their works to weigh--their Heart's intentions trace--
 From Nature growing, or that Saviour's Grace!
 From kind affection, or weak wish for Fame;
 The good of Neighbours, or self-glorying Name!¹⁰⁵

¹⁰²Jane Brereton, "Thoughts on Life, Death, Judgment," 1735.

¹⁰³William Hawkins, "An Essay on Genius," Text of Dramatic and other Poems, 1758.

¹⁰⁴An Exposition of the Catechism. Text of The Prose Works of Thomas Ken, ed. W. Benham, n.d. Edmund, an Epic Poem, Book VIII, also stresses the motive of love. Text of The Works, 1721.

¹⁰⁵Lucubrations of Crispinus Scriblerus, 1798.

The thirteenth article seems to suggest that good works done by a non-Christian could not be acceptable because they would lack the proper motive of love to Christ.

Works done before the Grace of Christ, and the Inspiration of his Spirit, are not pleasant to God; forasmuch as they spring not of Faith in Jesus Christ, neither do they make men meet to receive Grace, or (as the School-Authors say) deserve Grace of Congruity: Yea rather, for that they are not done as God hath commanded and willed them to be done, we doubt not but that they have the nature of Sin.¹⁰⁶

Several of the poets disagree with this point of view. Cowper's argument in "Truth" is the most interesting of these. "Is virtue, then," he asks, "unless of Christian growth / Mere fallacy, or foolishness, or both?" How can it be that "ten thousand sages" will be "lost in endless woe, / For ignorance of what they could not know?" Such talk, he insists, "betrays at once the bigot's tongue." Charge not a God "with such outrageous wrong." "Truly, not I," adds the poet. His creed persuades him that the partial light accorded to all men if "well employed, may save." Conversely, greater light neglected will prove a curse. Cowper will not envy the place in heaven of worthies who knew not Christ. Nevertheless, even they will enjoy bliss by "virtue of a Saviour's plea," for

Their fortitude and wisdom were a flame
Celestial, though they knew not whence it came,
Derived from the same source of light and grace,
That guides the Christian in his swifter race.

Heathen who reverently follow the behest of conscience will gradually be

¹⁰⁶Gilbert Burnet, op. cit., p. 170.

led "however faltering, faint and slow, / From what they knew to what they wish'd to know."¹⁰⁷

Other unorthodox statements having to do with the criteria of judgment are very rare. Aside from Swift, Pope, and Burns who at times ridicule the idea of the last day or at least make it a subject for satire, only James Graeme and Blake are unconventional. Graeme, writing in 1773, denies the idea of punishment altogether, saying:

Father beneficent!
 Thou form'dst our souls susceptible of bliss,
 In spite of circumstance, of time, and place;
 A bliss internal, every way our own,
 Which none can forfeit, is denied to none;

 But, hail, Eternal Essence! ever hail!
 Though all should err, yet all are sure to find
 In thee a father! and in thee a friend!
 A friend, to overlook the mortal part,
 The crimes, the follies foreign to the heart.¹⁰⁸

The subject of Blake's antinomianism can only be touched upon in this study. It is important to note here that in spite of his denunciation of conventional codes of law, Blake does have two sides at his judgment like the rest of the poets--an approved and a rejected. There must, therefore, have been some sort of rule by which the two classes are distinguished. Intuition, as Beeching suggests,¹⁰⁹ probably has something to do with the

¹⁰⁷1785. Text of Life and Works, ed. T. S. Grimshaw, 1864, p. 534. John Wesley held the same opinion according to G. Earys, John Wesley, Christian Philosopher and Church Founder, 1926, pp. 169-170. His stress in the poetry upon the importance of improving one's talents and opportunities harmonizes with this statement. See a paraphrase of Matt. xxv:26-30.

¹⁰⁸"Hymn to the Eternal Mind, 1773." Text of The British Poets, ed. R. A. Davenport, 1822, Vol. LXXI.

¹⁰⁹H. C. Beeching says in "Blake's Religious Lyrics," Essays and Studies, III, 1912, p. 150:

matter, but intuition and imagination, even in the thought of the romantics, are only means, like reason, of arriving at the truth. Most of mankind have come to the conclusion that some such moral code as that outlined in the decalogue is about as good a criterion of judgment as anything. This conclusion has been the product of the consensus gentium. Blake, rejecting the consensus gentium, comes up with another criterion by means of his own private judgment, which he may call imagination or anything he pleases. What this criterion is we are left to surmise from the nature of the two sides. Blake's bête noir is "mystery," and mystery he associates repeatedly with the forces of religion. His criterion of judgment is exactly the reverse of the Christian, which always favors the religious. Blake's day of judgment is a time of deliverance not from impiety but from the conventionally religious--from the tyranny of mystery.¹¹⁰ Vala or the Four Zoas, Night the Ninth being the Last Judgment concludes with these words: "The dark Religions are departed & sweet Science reigns."

The Sentence

It is one thing to declare what the law is, another thing to prove that a prisoner has broken it. The poets are aware of this problem and are generally careful to see that adequate evidence is produced at judgment

(Footnote 109, continued)

To understand Blake's antinomian outbreaks we must recognize that they arose from his elementary principle that feeling and impulse, inspiration and imagination, were man's highest endowment, by which alone he attained to truth; and that when he began to generalize, whether in science or art or religion, he fell into error.

¹¹⁰Vala.

day to demonstrate to all the world that the divine verdict is just. The evidence, like the criteria of judgment, is twofold. One type is external, the record of conduct; the other is internal, conscience. In the agreement between these two regarding any one case the justice of God is made apparent to man. Edward Young brings "the book" into the picture with the blast of ten thousand trumpets.

Ten thousand trumpets now at once advance;
 Now deepest silence lulls the vast expanse:
 So deep the silence, and so strong the blast,
 As nature dy'd, when she had groan'd her last.
 Nor man nor angel moves; the Judge on high
 Looks round, and with his glory fills the sky:
 Then on the fatal book his hand he lays,
 Which high to view supporting seraphs raise;
 In solemn form the rituals are prepar'd,
 The seal is broken, and a groan is heard.¹¹¹

John Bulkeley's description is equally dramatic.

...behold, four Cherubs thro' the [sky]
 A mighty Volume bore, not less in Bulk
 Than Earth's revolving Globe, THE BOOK OF FATE
 In Heaven stil'd: Then shrill'd a Voice aloud
 'Whose Power can force the Seals? Whose Eye, when forc'd,
 'Gaze on th' effulgent Pages? Cherubs bright,
 Angelick Shapes, attempted to disclose
 The wond'rous Folio for Messiah's Gaze.
 Vain Efforts! Fruitless Aims! His mighty Palm
 The God expanded, quick the shatter'd Seals
 Fly; the dread Pages, wide display'd, unfold
 Eternal Destiny and Fate's Decree.¹¹²

Now the Caelestial Judge each Mortal's Life,
 Virtuous or Impious, in the Book reviews,

¹¹¹The Last Day, Book III.

¹¹²The Last Day, Book X.

While high Deliberation awful sate
 Upon his Brow divine. No secret Act,
 Tho' in the sev'nfold Shades of Night perform'd
 Remote from Motal [sic] Cognizance, but stood
 Reveal'd, confest.¹¹³

Moses Browne's, however, is a more typical statement.

Lo! in full glory, terribly array'd,
 Th' almighty judge in seated pomp display'd,¹¹⁴
 Heav'n's records of past life are wide expos'd.

A terse statement appears in the Earl of Roscommon's paraphrase of the
 "Dies Irae."

Then shall with Universal Dread,
 The sacred mystic book be read,¹¹⁵
 To try the living and the Dead.

Conscience, meanwhile, is busy ratifying the Book's record.

...Deputed conscience scales
 The dread tribunal, and forestalls our doom;¹¹⁶
 Forestalls; and, by forestalling, proves it sure.

Now rous'd to life th' assembled myriads trod,
 No tyrant o'er them shakes th' avenging rod;⁵⁶⁵
 'Tis Conscience speaks!—th' impartial mandate giv'n
 Consigns to Death, or opes the climes of heav'n.¹¹⁷

...Conscience, who asleep
 Long time had lain, now lifts her snaky head,
 And frights them into madness; while the list
 Of all their sins she offers to their view;

¹¹³The Last Day, Book X, pp. 313-317.

¹¹⁴"On Life, Death, Judgment," 1735.

¹¹⁵"On the Last Judgment," about 1700. Text of The Christian Poet, 1735.

¹¹⁶Young, Night Thoughts.

¹¹⁷Ogilvie, The Day of Judgment, 1753, Book I.

For she had power to hurt them, and her sting
Was as a scorpion's.¹¹⁸

It is usually during the dramatic pause before sentence is pronounced that the poets stop to describe the ravages of conscience.

Now thro' the crowd in dark suspense detain'd 15
An awful, deep, portentous Silence reign'd;
Pale Conscience lowering works a storm within.¹¹⁹

John Bulkeley uses this time, however, to introduce some of his cosmic paraphernalia. During the dread moment after the book has been opened he calls up a pair of stellar scales to weigh the evidence.

Now Myriads of effulgent Cherubs wing
Their rapid Way aloft, a mighty Pair
Of Balances sustaining, such in size
As could at once the Fate of Millions weigh.
To Saturn's Sphere (not visible to Man
To Angels solid) these ethereal Pow'rs
Connect the solemn Balance; high it hung,
One Cavern o're the Globe of Venus pois'd,
One over Luna's Orb its conq'ring Weight
Would rest. Thus hung they in the wild Expanse.

.....
Messiah then (Terrestrial Crimes review'd)
Majestick from his golden Throne, emblaz'd
With Jacynth Pearl and Jasper, mild arose,
And to the fatal Balances sublime
Poiz'd airy Step; his lofty Front august
Reach'd where the circling Stars revolving play'd,
And rowl'd thro' vast Infinity's Domains;
Each Stride the Sky supported; where he strode
Flow'd rosy Sweetness in a balmy Path
Of Flow'rs ambrosial.

Thus to the mighty Scales th' Imperial Judge
Step'd, not remote; The Fate of ev'ry Soul
He weigh'd, e're Sentence pass'd: One Scale contain'd
The Works of Virtue, One with Evil groan'd;
But in the first th' Almighty's Equal threw

¹¹⁸Bruce, "The Last Day," 1766.

¹¹⁹The Day of Judgment, Book II.

A Grain of Mercy, as each Mortal's Fate
 Advanc'd, that, weightier to oppress the Scale
 Than all his Acts of Piety and Love.
 But some (ah Pride, severest Foe to Man!)
 Restrain'd Messiah's Arm, and vaunting bad
 Their virtuous Deeds be weigh'd, without the Gain
 Of Mercy prevalent: While some, alone
Mercy demanded in the sacred Scale,
 From virtuous Actions separate; The Judge
 Wrath'd, at their fatal Obstinacy frown'd,
 That dar'd to interpose, or Arm divine
 Arrest: ...But anon,
 Compassion soften'd, to serenest Terms
Messiah, Thunder-arm'd, and gentlest Love

 The Place of Indignation mild usurpt.
 Now on the Throne Almighty Logos seats
 Again his ample Greatness.¹²⁰

At this point Bulkeley throws in a description of the angels separating the good from the bad—a detail which is very popular with eighteenth-century poets.

Mean time the Ministers caelestial rose,
 Each with his silver Wand, and sever'd quick
 The Vertuous from the Reprobate; The Right
 Those pleas'd usurp'd, and These the fatal Left.¹²¹

Swift also employs the image of weighing to describe the judgment act,

When Other Hands the Scales shall hold,
 And They in Men and Angels Sight
 Produc'd with all their Bills and Gold, ¹²²
 Weigh'd in the Ballance, and found Light.

Ogilvie not only uses the same metaphor but introduces an additional simile,

¹²⁰The Last Day, Book X, pp. 318-321.

¹²¹Bulkeley, The Last Day, Book X, p. 323.

¹²²Swift, "The Run upon the Bankers," 1720.

which he borrowed from Addison, to show how the Judge could weigh all of the evidence "in one prodigious thought."

Thus, (if the muse that dwells on heav'nly themes,
 May stoop to earth, and join two wide extremes,) 123
 When some great gen'ral, with preventive care, 231
 In vast idea plans the future war;
 Here swells a thought that sees whole squadrons slain,
 That plants the murd'ring cannon on the plain;
 Now in his mind the coming triumphs rise; 235
 He smiles, the pleasure sparkles in his eyes;
 He feels with joy his raptur'd bosom glow,
 Yet sighs with manly pity o'er the foe.

A prevalent mode of describing the judgment, one which includes both the gathering of men, which we have discussed elsewhere, and their separation into classes of just and unjust is the harvest image. A typical statement is given by Michael Bruce in "The Last Day."

Go, Raphael, and from these reprobate
 Divide my chosen saints; go separate
 My people from among them, as the wheat
 Is in the harvest sever'd from the tares:
 Set them upon the right, and on the left
 Leave these ungodly. Thou, Michael, choose,
 From forth th' angelic host, a chosen band,
 And Satan with his legions hither bring
 To judgment, from Hell's caverns.

123 Ogilvie gives his sources for this idea in the following footnote:
 This passage may possibly appear with more advantage, when compared with LUCAN'S description of CAESAR, at his approach to the Rubicon:

Jamque gelidas Caesar cursu superaverat Alpes,
 Ingentesque animo motus, bellumque futurum
 Ceperat, ut ventum est parvi Rubicones ad undas.

Phars. lib. iii.

Mr. ADDISON has made a noble use of this sentiment in his Campaign, and has the happiest translation of it I can think on:—
 Speaking of MARLBOROUGH, before he crossed the Moselle, he tells us,
 Our god-like leader, ere the stream he past,
 The mighty scheme of all his labours cast;
 Forming the wondrous year within his thought,
 His bosom glow'd with battles yet unfought.

Bruce now changes to an equally popular simile--the separating of sheep and goats.

Swift as conception, at his bidding flew
His ministers, obedient to his word.
And, as a shepherd, who all day hath fed
His sheep and goats promiscuous, but at eve,
Dividing, shuts them up in different folds:
So now the good were parted from the bad;
For ever parted; ... Now separate,
Upon the right appear'd a dauntless, firm,
Composed number:

...The other crew,
Pale and dejected, scarcely lift their heads
To view the hated light.

Woodhouse also uses these two images. He says there will come a time when "each blest Labourer" will "meet his wish'd reward!"

Then will the Angels reap the ripen'd Earth,
And separate Weeds of Vice from virtuous Worth--
Will all the tangling Tares, in bundles, bind,
With Chaff to burn, but leave the Wheat behind;
No more to struggle thro' each earthly Clod,
But gather'd in the garner of its God!
Sever the vast, ungrateful, goatish Herd,
Who spurn'd his Wisdom, and despised His Word,
From little flocks of loving, faithful Sheep,
Which learnt His kind commands, and strove to keep--
These will Messiah-Judge, most joyful own,
And call to sing new songs around His Throne!

.....
Be patient, O my Brethren! help will come--
The Lord will quickly call his labourers home!
Behold the Husbandman still waits the birth,
And ripening, fully; precious fruits of Earth;
With faith and patience waits, nor waits in vain,
But shares the early and the latter rain.¹²⁴

Robert Burns laughs slyly at the sheep and goats figure when, speaking of the Judge, he remarks: "His piercin words, like Highlan swords, / Divide the joints and marrow."¹²⁵

¹²⁴Lucubrations, 1798.

¹²⁵"The Holy Fair," about 1785. Text of The Complete Poems of Robert Burns, 1926, II.

Almost the whole of Blake's Vala is an allegory based upon the sowing, reaping, and threshing of a crop. It symbolizes much more than the mere separation of good from bad, however, for it includes the resurrection and the conflagration. Since these aspects of the metaphor are discussed elsewhere, only those dealing specifically with the judgment will be mentioned here. The sifting of the refuse out of the good is a terrible process which corresponds to one phase of the conflagration, the other being the plowing. It is described as the pressing of juice from grapes and the winnowing of chaff from grain. When these operations have been completed, Blake says: "They loaded all the waggons of heaven / And took away the wine of ages with solemn songs & joy...[and] Urthona made the Bread of Ages, & he [Tharmas] placed it, / In golden & in silver baskets, in heavens of precious stone / And then took his repose in Winter, in the night of Time."

Every event in the eschatological sequence, every phase of the judgment scene, and every person, human or divine, is concerned with one act—the pronouncement of the Judge's fateful decision. In many poems there is no more description of this event than that given in the following anonymous untitled lines from The Christian Poet.

'Tis not the painful Agonies of Death,

 But there's an After-day, 'tis that I fear;
 Oh, who shall hide me from that angry Brow?
 Already I the dreadful Accents hear,
 Depart from me, and that for ever too. 126

Other poets, however, elaborate upon the subject more fully, as John Pomfret does in the following passage.

XVI

Come now my Friends, he cries, ye Sons of Grace,
Partakers once of all my wrongs and shame,
.....
Ascend, and those bright Diadems possess,
For you by my eternal Father made,
.....

XVII

At this the Architects divine on high
Innumerable Thrones of Glory raise,
On which they, in appointed Order place
The human Co-heirs of Eternity;
And with united Hymns the God incarnate praise.

XVIII

Then the incarnate Godhead turns his Face
To those upon the Left, and cries,
(Almighty Vengeance flashing in his Eyes)
Ye impious, unbelieving Race,
To those eternal Torments go,
Prepar'd for those rebellious Sons of Light,
In burning Darkness, and flaming Night;
Which shall no limit or cessation know,
But always are extream, and always will be so.¹²⁷

Edward Young uses an impressive image to emphasize the finality of the Judge's sentence. Like Blake's it is part of a larger metaphor, one which has been mentioned before—the meeting of two great monarchs, Time and Eternity, at the border between their respective realms:

A neutral region! there to mark th' event
Of that great drama, whose preceding scenes
Detain'd them close spectators, through a length
Of ages, ripening to this grand result;
Ages, as yet unnumber'd, but by GOD;
Who now, pronouncing sentence, vindicates,
The rights of virtue, and his own renown.
Eternity, the various sentence past,
Assigns the sever'd throng distinct abodes,

¹²⁷"On the Day of Judgment," 1699.

Sulphureous, or ambrosial. What ensues?
 The deed predominant! the deed of deeds!
 Which makes a hell of hell, a heaven of heaven.
 The goddess, with determined aspect, turns
 Her adamant key's enormous size
 Through destiny's inextricable wards,
 Deep driving every bolt, on both their fates:
 Then, from the crystal battlements of heaven,
 Down, down, she hurls it through the dark profound,
 Ten thousand thousand fathom; there to rust,
 And ne'er unlock her resolution more.
 The deep resounds; and hell, through all her glooms,
 Returns, in groans, the melancholy roar.¹²⁸

Departure from Judgment

A number of the better passages of eschatological description deal with the removal of saints and damned from the scene of judgment. John Pomfret's is not distinguished, but it is typical.

The final sentence pass'd, a dreadful Cloud,
 Inclosing all the miserable Croud,
 A mighty Hurricane of Thunder rose,
 And hurl'd 'em all into a Lake of Fire,
 Which never, never, never can expire:
 The vast Abyss of endless Woes.
 Whilst with their God, the Righteous mount on high,
 In glorious Triumph passing thro' the sky,
 To Joys immense, and everlasting Extasy.¹²⁹

Contestant IX of the Gentleman's Magazine uses an effective Homeric simile to describe the departure of the redeemed for heaven. After telling how the Judge invites them to bliss and how angels welcome and congratulate them, the poet says that all unite in a mighty cavalcade to attend the Judge

¹²⁸ Night Thoughts, pp. 279-281.

¹²⁹ "On the Day of Judgment," 1699.

upward through "the starry way." Then he adds:

So when a peasant from the nest removes
Some young, unfeather'd songster of the groves;
Shut in a cage, of tedious life possest,
It sings, nor knows how happier birds are blest.
If from th' unfolding gate it chance to stray,
And hear the sylvan rovers tune their lay,
The long, long loss of liberty, it mourns,
Flies to the groves, and never more returns.

Employing another bird image, John Ogilvie compares the vanishing host to "some towering eagle" who, "Quick as a thought of the aerial mind, / To heav'n mounts, and leaves the stars behind."¹³⁰ Lightning, we shall find, provides an analogy for many phases of the consummation. Ogilvie uses it to show how speedily the damned vanish into the gulf of hell.

As when his vengeance heav'n's ALMIGHTY pours,
He speaks,—and lo! the forky thunder roars; 340
It bursts away, impetuous in its flight,
Till some vast cloud receives the glowing weight.

Then the poet closes the scene with the following words:

O'er the wide skies the rolling darkness spreads, 345
.....
O'er heav'n's blue arch the mounting flames aspire,
And all the wide horizon teems with fire.¹³¹ 350

Michael Bruce describes the upward flight of saints as a joyous homecoming.

And, behold! they rise,
And seek their native land; around them move
In radiant files, Heaven's host. Immortal wreaths
Of amaranth and roses crown their heads;
And each a branch of ever-blooming palm
Triumphant holds. In robes of dazzling white,
Fairer than that by wintry tempests shed 132
Upon the frozen ground, array'd, they shine.

¹³⁰The Day of Judgment, Book II, 1753.

¹³¹Idem.

¹³²"The Last Day," 1766.

But for straight description unadorned with imagery, Aaron Hill's is the most evocative.

'Tis spoke: and, lo! th' unroofing arch rends wide;
Swift, descends a radiant tide!
An opening breadth rolls down, of sparkling day;
And, like a scroll, unfolds huge length, of more than milky way!
They go! th' admitted saints tread light, as air,
They mount, with more than human eyes, and stem the
streamy glare!
Bright, as they move, th' encircling angels throng;
Heard Halleluja's shake th' inferior sky!
In distant thrills, expiring notes prolong,
And with transporting fall of sound, in gradual soft'nings die!
See! thro' the Portal how attracted day,
Like a swift current's spiral ebb, glides, after 'em away!
Now, all is dark, and dismal, as yon scene;
Ah! why does closing heaven, so soon, th' entrancing prospect skreen?
What does beyond those glitt'ring confines lie?
And why no room, 'till death makes way, for such a wretch as I? 133

CHAPTER V
THE CONFLAGRATION

Christian tradition has always associated its doctrine of a last judgment with the idea of the end of the world, but the idea of the end of the world has not always had theological implications. Lucretius, for example, tries to prove from natural philosophy that the earth is bound to be destroyed at some time or another. In Book V of De Rerum Natura Thomas Creech gives the following lines in translation:

Now since the MEMBERS of the WORLD we view,
Are chang'd, consum'd, and all produc'd anew:
It follows then, for which our Proofs contend,
That this VAST FRAME began, and so must end.¹

The world had a beginning; therefore it will have an ending. The constant process of birth, decay, and death in every part assures us that such will be the case. The world was not, however, created by God; for it is much too poorly contrived. It simply arose by

¹ll. 272-274

2 For were I ignorant how BEINGS rise,
How Things begin; yet Reasons from the Skies,
From ev'ry Thing deduc'd, will plainly prove,
This WORLD ne'er fram'd by the wise POW'RS ABOVE;
So foolish the Design, contriv'd so ill! ll. 216-220.

chance,³ and by chance it will pass away.⁴

Much of the language of eighteenth-century eschatological poetry makes one think of Lucretius. The explanation is not difficult. There are several points of similarity between Lucretius' account of the end and the Christian version; and the literary style of the Roman poet, as interpreted by Creech, was sufficiently attractive to the neo-classical mind⁵ to make imitation inevitable. For example, there is in both versions a close tie between beginning and end. The fact that important differences do exist would not necessarily diminish interest; it might even arouse it. Lucretius' denial of the immortality of the soul, of the rational structure of the world, and of the idea that God has anything to do with either the creation or destruction of the world strikes at the very heart of the eighteenth-century concept of the last day; and it is quite possible that De Rerum Natura is at least partially responsible for the amount of poetry devoted to these subjects in the period. Current deism and what passed for atheism would, of course, be additional provocatives.

³ For SEEDS of BODIES from eternal strove,
And us'd, by STROKE, or their own WEIGHT, to move,
All Sorts of UNION try'd, all Sorts of Blows,
To see if any way would Things compose:
And so, no Wonder, they at last were hurl'd
Into the decent ORDER of this WORLD. ll. 208-213

⁴ Perhaps thou soon shalt see the sinking WORLD
With strong Convulsions to Confusion hurl'd;
When ev'ry rebel ATOM breaks the Chain,
And all to prim'tive NIGHT return again:
But CHANCE avert it! ll. 113-117

⁵ See Chapter III, "The Resurrection,"

Other non-Christian ideas intrude slightly. Two poems show reflections of Scandinavian eschatology. In 1761 Thomas Gray wrote "The Descent of Odin," in which the following lines appear:

Pr. Hie thee hence, and boast at home,
That never shall Enquirer come
To break my iron-sleep again;
Till Lok has burst his tenfold chain.
Never, till substantial Night
Has reassum'd her ancient right;
Till wrap'd in flames, in ruin hurl'd,
Sinks the fabric of the world.

Gray gives Mallet's Introduction to the History of Denmark, 1755, quarto, as source for the ideas in his poem, to which he appends the following explanation:

Lok is the evil Being, who continues in chains till the Twilight of the Gods approaches, when he shall break his bonds; the human race, the stars and sun, shall disappear; the earth sink in the seas, and fire consume the skies: even Odin himself and his kindred-deities shall perish.

John Walters, in about 1786, refers to the same mythology in a portion of a poem called "An Ode on the Immortality of the Soul" when, in describing the courage of certain Scandinavian warriors, he makes the comment that not "Lok's last flame itself had power/ Their ardent spirits to devour."⁶

For the most part, of course, the poets who deal with the subject of final destruction draw their opinions from Christian sources. The Thirty-nine Articles, it is true, throw scant light upon the subject, but Anglican commentators hasten forward to supply the deficiency.

⁶Text of Poems with Notes, 1786.

In Chapter I we have already seen how the following passage from Gilbert Burnet's very orthodox exposition of the articles helps to explain some prevailing trends in ideas about the sequence of final events. In the next few paragraphs we shall see how the poets agree upon another detail of his account.

In conclusion, when all God's design with this world is accomplished, it shall be set on fire, and all the great parts of which it is composed, as of elements, shall be melted and burnt down; and then when by that fire probably the portions of matter, which was in the bodies of all who have lived upon earth, shall be so far refined and fixed, as to become both incorruptible and immortal, then they shall be made meet for the souls that formerly animated them, to re-enter every one into his own body, which shall be then so moulded as to be a habitation fit to give it everlasting joy or everlasting torment.⁷

The idea that the very elements will melt at the last day does not, of course, originate with Burnet or the Anglican church for it is expressly stated in II Peter:iii:10 "the elements shall melt with fervent heat;" nevertheless, the fact that so many poets seized upon this verse of Scripture is probably an indication that it was pretty often read in church services. Jabez Hughes, for one, speaks of a time "When the purg'd Elements, together hurl'd,/ Shall mix anew, and build a better world."⁸ Three of the poets describe the final destruction as an alliance between deity and the elements to subdue nature and punish man. John Hughes remarks:

⁷Gilbert Burnet, Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, 1699, pp. 81-83.

⁸"On the Death of a Young Lady," Text of Miscellaneous Works in Verse and Prose, 1787.

When, long provok'd, thy wrath awakes,
 And conscious Nature to her centre shakes

 ...all the elements conspire,
 The shatter'd Earth, the rushing sea
 Tempestuous Air, and raging Fire,
 To punish vile mankind, and fight for thee.⁹

Christopher Smart declares that

...all the armies of the elements
 Shall war against themselves, and mutual rage
 To make perdition triumph.¹⁰

Aaron Hill creates an appropriate note of dissonance by throwing fire, rain, and frost at once into the universal cauldron.

Wide from its center, see! th' escaping sun,
 With random dread, revolves his loos'ning spires;
 Cold orbs, which plac'd remote, his influence shun,
 Now feel th' attraction of his bordering fires.
 Seck'd to his burning breast, averse they flow,
 And icy regions roar, to meet his glow!

The elements are so confused, in fact, that "Plung'd in embracing frost, unquench'd, he lies! / And the thaw'd cline, round his hot convex fries!"¹¹ Others who mention turmoil among the elements are Trapp, Thomas Warton, Henry Brooke (in Redemption), Gilbank, and Cumberland.

Extent of the Conflagration

The extent of final destruction is a subject about which many of the eighteenth-century poets express opinions. All are sure that this world will be burnt, but there is some disagreement about whether

⁹"An Ode to the Creator," 1710.

¹⁰"The Eternity of the Supreme Being," 1750.

¹¹"The Judgment Day," 1721.

anything will be left of the ball afterwards. Roscommon, paraphrasing the "Dies Irae" affirms that at

The Day of Wrath, that dreadful Day,
Shall the whole World in ashes lay,
[as] David and the Sybils say.¹²

Young makes the comment in The Last Day that

...all must drop, as autumn's sickliest grain,
And earth and firmament be sought in vain:
The track forgot where constellations shone.¹³

Aaron Hill speaks of a "melted world" which is swept into a great molten lake of chaos by a torrent of tumbling planets. It is not until after everything is cleared away that Christ comes and draws the atoms out of the lake for resurrection.¹⁴ Mary Masters too says that "The Earth's consum'd, and in its Place/Nothing remains but empty Space";¹⁵ while Trapp concludes that "This fair Frame must burn,/ And Earth's vast Globe to Smoke and Ashes turn," adding that it will be so thoroughly charred that it will shrivel like a scroll of parchment.

Others like Thomas Warton¹⁶ decide that earth will leap from her orbit and fall into chaos. An anonymous poet exemplifies this shade of the idea in a poem called "On the Death of Tippeco Saib."

¹²"On the Last Judgment," about 1700.

¹³Book I.

¹⁴"The Judgment Day," 1721.

¹⁵"A Meditation upon these Words, Arise ye Dead, and come to Judgment." Text of Poems on Several Occasions, 1733.

¹⁶A paraphrase of Isaiah xlii, 1748. Text of Poems on Several Occasions, 1930, reproduced from the edition of 1748. Michael Bruce expresses a similar idea in The Last Day when he says that "planet-struck," "the peopled globe" "shall pass away." Moses Browne says that the frame of earth will crack, and Ogilvie mentions "earth's dissolving frame."

...the ball [will], by strength resistless hurl'd
 To bordering chaos, drag the fates of men,
 And dimly to the waste of hostile stars
 And hostile systems roll the stately scene
 Of thrones and powers and empires and their kings.¹⁷

A few think that although earth will be burned, there will be something--
 at least a frame--left. The chief of these are Bulkeley, Addison,
 Mary Chandler, and Cumberland. Bulkeley is emphatic about the matter.

Jehovah Glory-crown'd from lofty Heav'n
 Call'd to the Conflagration-Angel; He
 Attentive paus'd and own'd th' Almighty Voice.
 'O thou, to whose assiduous Care this Day
 'This mighty Day I've trusted, mar not Earth
 'The Solid leave substantial! 'Tis decreed
 'That New Jerusalem, in noblest Pomp
 'Array'd, must thither from th' Ethereal Gate
 'Descend; the Surface must with Fairer Charms
 'Smile lovely polish'd, than when Mortals rul'd
 'The floating Orb.'

Mary Chandler suggests that this was the idea set forth in
 Thomas Burnet's The Sacred Theory of the Earth.

Ingenious BURNET, thine's a pleasing Scheme,
 A gay Delusion, if it be a Dream.

For, as he says,

Wisdom immense contriv'd the wond'rous Ball,
 ...and bade the Planet run
 Her annual Race around the central Sun;
 Till the pent Fires, which at the Centre Burn,
 Shall the whole Globe to one huge Cinder turn.¹⁸

¹⁷Text of the Monthly Magazine, Jan. 1, 1800.

¹⁸"A Description of Bath," Text of The Description of Bath, A Poem,
 7th ed., 1755.

Did Burnet offer the assurance that there would, after all, be a cinder left? What does The Sacred Theory say?

Other Places of Scripture that foretel the Fate of this material World, represent it always as a Change, not as an Annihilation... The Form, Fashion, and Disposition of its Parts alter, but the Substance still remains: As a Body that is melted down and dissolv'd, the Form perishes, but the Matter is not destroyed.¹⁹

As authority for this idea Burnet cites I Corinthians vii: 31;²⁰ Ps.cii: 25-26;²¹ Romans vii:²² Then he adds:

...the Renovation of the World is a Doctrine generally receiv'd, both by ancient and modern Authors...Some Men are willing to throw all Things into a State of Nothing at the Conflagration, and bury them there, that they may not be oblig'd to give an Account of that State of things that is to succeed it.²³

Burnet did not suffer from such timidity. He would unravel the mysteries of heaven and earth in a single book and label it confidently the "Sacred" theory.

The earth is by no means, however, the only thing to be destroyed at the end of the world, the poets agree. The sun and moon are almost invariably co-subjects of the cataclysm. Contestant VIII, winner of the second prize offered by the Gentleman's Magazine, gives a very typical if undistinguished statement of this idea.

¹⁹II, p. 190.

²⁰"...the fashion of this world passeth away."

²¹"Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed."

²²"For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now."

²³Thomas Burnet, idem.

A sudden darkness shall the nations fright,
 The sun for ever shroud his glorious light;
 The moon no longer shine with silver beams,
 but from her sanguine disk pour baleful streams.

John Norris remarks in "The Consummation" that "The ancient stager of the day/ Has run his minutes out," and Ogilvie is sure that the "Sun must cease to gild the flow'ry plain."²⁴

John Hughes says that the moon "resigns her delegated light,/ Lost in the blaze of day,"²⁵ and Mary Masters exclaims: "Behold the Moon in Blood is set,/ The Heavens consume with fervent Heat."²⁶ In fact, wherever the sun is mentioned, the moon appears too.

But these larger bodies are not the only fellow sufferers of earth. The prevailing idea is that the entire creation will go up in a blaze.

This globe alone would but defraud the fire

 The sun, the moon, the stars, all melt away;
 All, all is lost; no monument, no sign,
 Where once so proudly blaz'd the gay machine.
 So bubbles on the foaming stream expire,
 So sparks that scatter from the kindling fire;
 The devastations of one dreadful hour
 The great Creator's six days' work devour.²⁷

Young is, of course, implying here that the "six days' work" includes all the stars and planets--the entire universe. This is the opinion of almost all the poets. In "Dies Novissima" Pomfret says that "all the

²⁴Ogilvie, The Day of Judgement, 1753

²⁵Hughes, "An Ode to the Creator."

²⁶Mary Masters, "A Meditation Upon These Words, Arise, Ye Dead, and Come to Judgement," 1733.

blazing orbs deny their light" when Jesus comes. Elizabeth Rowe talks about "the universal wreck" in "The Conflagration" and adds that

Each planet from its shatter'd axis reels,
And orbs immense on orbs immense drop down,
Like scattering leaves from off their branches blown.²⁷

Thomas Blacklock says that "ev'ry star forgets the long run way,"²⁸ and Henry Brooke reminds the deity in Redemption: "God! thou hast said, that Nature shall decay,/ And all yon starr'd expansion pass away."²⁹

John Bulkeley paints a delightfully extravagant panorama of the destruction of heavenly spheres. The great archangel Michael is dispatched by Jehovah to manage this cosmic business. At first he sets forth somewhat perplexed about how to accomplish such a task. Then he sees something that gives him an idea.

...an emblaz'nous Comet pompous rowl'd
Its fiery Vengeance, and on distant Worlds
Shook its effluvia horrible with Fire.
Michael the blaze effulgent spy'd, and chac'd
Thro' Heav'n's wide Champaign; swift the Tow'rer fled,
More rapid than a Vessel on the Sea
Impetuous severs the obsequious Flood,
And wrap'd in savage Foam from Borneo wins
The Cyclades remote...

.....
This flaming Mass intrepid Michael seiz'd,
Nerv'd with celestial Potence; On his Arm
He bore the sulphurous Burden, that enrag'd
Blaz'd with unusual Heat, and livid Sheets
Combustible ejected... The mighty Pow'r

²⁷1739.

²⁸"An Elegy on Mr. Pope," 1746.

²⁹1772.

Cherubial its horrendous fiery Rage
 Neglected, and aloft upon his Arm
 Bore it thro' heav'n's high waste; From Orb to Orb
 ...walk'd
Michael, and black Destruction on his Steps
 attended; the sulphureous Comet's Tail,
 (Fire vapry and assistant) smote the Globes,
 And kindled in th' Expanse. Th' Angelick Pow'r
 Vice travesties th' etherial Plains, and sweats
 Beneath the grand Affair.

But mighty though he is, heaven's greatest angel finds the job too much
 for him: "Unnumber'd Orbs/ Remain unlighted; Michael Aid requires."
 Inferior angels are first called in--so many that the bulwarks of heaven
 are left undefended. Still the task remains unfinished. Heaven issues
 commands, and obedient seraphs

...seize th' Inferiour Angels, from the Gulph
 Of boiling Sulphur dragging up to Light,
 ...
 The Forms Caelestial, numerous Legions, bear
 The Burdens thro' the Ether, and arrive
 Where potent Michael last'ring stood; his Nod
 They disobey'd not; All at once thro' Heav'n
 Various dispers'd, and fiery Havock spread
 O're ev'ry Constellation; Fire appear'd
 The Azure Champaign, like a fiery Plain,
 Blaze above Blaze ascending; In their Spheres
 The burning Masses rowl...

To th' solid Moon
Michael his Course directs, and on the Globe
 Stands vaunting Eminent; with nitrous Brands
 The Mounts he kindles, and the stormy Seas.

Finally every star is flaming, and the conflagration comes to an end.

Saturn and Venus, like an Ashy Load Mars,
 Of Cinders show'd, the blazing Fires extinct.
 Strait, a Battallion of caelestial Shapes
 Appear, and to Chaosian Lake profound
 Bear the rude Masses; Deep into the Gulph
 They dash them useless with tumultuous Plunge.

Now Heav'n's aerial Champain, clear and free,
 Its Breast uninterrupted wide dilates,
 Expanding spacious Vence: Earth alone
 Remains;...³⁰

Aaron Hill describes the universal conurbation vividly as a melange of melting, tumbling balls. First the sun is released from his orbit.

Then

Worlds, by his absence, from dependance freed,
 Scud, in loose liberty, along the sky;
 Wild, and licentious, drive, with headlong speed,
 Till 'gainst some shoaly coast, bulg'd, they lie;

What better image could he find for this entangled state of the universe than the medieval bog of anarchy! "So, rebel kingdoms struggling to be free,/ Shun regal power, and split on anarchy!"³¹

Clearly, then, there is nothing unconventional about William Blake's statement when he says in Vala that "riven link from link, the bursting universe explodes." The poets are almost entirely agreed that the conflagration will make a clean sweep of the whole works, to use a common expression. A very few poets do indeed seem to feel that the devastation will be focussed primarily upon the "sublunary" world—Michael Wodhull, writing in 1765, speaks of the day of judgment as "that crisis of all sublunary power,"³² but Samuel Catherall is the only one among the poets who, like Thomas Burnet,³³ is sure about the matter.

³⁰The Last Day, Book XI.

³¹"The Judgment Day," 1721.

³²"The Equality of Mankind," 1765. Text of Poems, 1504

³³Thomas Burnet (The Sacred Theory, II, 73-74) cites scripture for his opinion in this matter. "The Conflagration had nothing to do with the

(continued)

His angel--the one who favored him with a vision of the last day--has given him a truer insight into the matter and assures him that only the sublunary world will be affected by final destruction.³⁴

Causes of the Conflagration

The poets show quite as much interest in the causes of the conflagration as they do in its degree and extent. One of the most interesting features of eighteenth century eschatological poetry is the insistence of writers upon natural as well as supernatural, secondary as well as primary causes for the big blaze. This preoccupation with secondary causes which sets the eighteenth century apart from the conventional Christian eschatology of the previous sixteen hundred years results from the overthrow of the Ptolemaic cosmology, according to which the Christian doctrine of the end of the world had always been explained. The two ideas had become so intimately associated that the rejection of the one became a great threat to the survival of the other. Such being the case, it is no wonder that theologians searched desperately for some means of reconciling the religious teaching with current understanding of natural law. One of the most sensational attempts to reconcile science and eschatology is Thomas Burnet's The Sacred Theory of the Earth, 1681,

(Footnote 33 continued)

Stars, and Superior Heavens, but was wholly confin'd to this sublunary World. And this Deluge of Fire will have much what the same Bounds, that the Deluge of Water had formerly. 'II Pet.iii:5,6. The Heavens and the Earth which were then, perished in a Deluge of Water: ver.7. But the Heavens and the Earth that are now, are reserv'd to Fire.'"

which, as we have already seen, appears to have had some effect upon the thinking of our poets. Its most conspicuous influence, however, concerns the cause of the conflagration. Burnet says that final destruction will take place when the whirling atoms of which earth is composed become heated through long-sustained pressure from the inside and the action of the sun from the outside so that the crust of earth cracks through drought and the fiery atoms come boiling through the crevices to inundate the world. All of this happens by means of natural agencies, but, like the flood, it occurs at the exact moment when God desires to punish mankind for their wickedness.³⁵

No cause is given by eighteenth-century poets more frequently than the central fires. John Morris describes their part in the conflagration in "The Consummation."

The central fire which hitherto did burn
Dull like a lamp in a most clammy urn,
Fann'd by the breath divine begins to glow,

...
Breaks through its sacred fence, and plays more free
Than thou with all thy vast Pindaric liberty.

Nature does sick of a strong fever lye;
The fire the subterraneous vaults does spoil;

...
The fire in triumph marches on;
The Earth's girt round with flames, and seems another sun!³⁶

Samuel Cathernall takes advantage of the visit of his angel to enquire what the true source of the conflagration is. The celestial being does

³⁵II, Book III, "Concerning the Conflagration."

³⁶I 706

not tell him at once but pauses to laugh at certain old fables concerning the matter. He mentions the story of Phaeton, son of Phoebus, who tried to drive his father's chariot. According to mythology the horses ran away with the lad, plunged into the earth, and set it afire. Then Catherall adds soberly:

Not so fictitious that conspiring Cause
The Central Fire. What if the Earth contain
A flaming Mass deep in her Center lodg'd?
Such as by Nature chiefly was intended
T'invig'rate all her Parts, give Life, and Birth
To her Productions; till the Lord Supreme
Of Nature, summon all these latent Seeds
Forth from her pregnant Womb; whose solemn Call
Precipitant each Atom shall obey,
And issuing thro' Earth's Pores in baleful steams,
No longer warm her with a gentle Heat,
But in her Bosom kindle glowing Fires.

Thou may'st exclude the Central Heat, assign
These pow'rfull Causes in full strength combin'd,
Volcano's, Earthquakes loud, and Meteors dire.

.....
...Know, fond Enquirer, that the Earth
In form is round, and cavernous, replete
With fiery Vapours, which from Drought intense
Shall gender more, till with collected Strength,
Impatient of Confinement strict, they heave
The groaning Mass, and rend the hollow Ground.
Such Thunder Subterraneous shall Earth's Womb
Displode in dreadful Fire: A Prelude sure
To her tremendous Doom!³⁷

Catherall's source for the ideas set forth here becomes very apparent when we read the following explanation in The Sacred Theory: "From this external and internal Heat acting upon the Body of the Earth, all Minerals, that have the Seeds of Fire in them, will be open'd, and exhale their Effluvia

³⁷An Essay on the Conflagration, 1720.

more copiously." As spices when warmed are more odoriferous, and fill the air with their perfumes, "so the Particles of Fire that are shut up in several Bodies, will easily fly abroad, when, by a further degree of Relaxation, you shake off their Chains, and open the Prison Doors. We cannot doubt, but there are many Sorts of Minerals, and many Sorts of Fire stones, and of Trees and Vegetables of this Nature, which will sweat out their oily and sulphureous Atoms, when by a general Heat and Dryness their Parts are loosen'd and agitated."³⁸

Hill also follows Burnet fairly closely. He says that earthquakes break the earth open and underground seas gush out. Then the water seeps down into the central fires and ocean is turned into steam. Meanwhile earth is melting from within. The liquid fire dashes against earth's concave frame and at length bursts forth against struggling winds. Floods of fire invade the sea and drown it as it before had drowned the earth.³⁹ Mary Chandler specifically mentions Burnet as the author of the idea she mentions in A Description of Bath. "Ingenious BURNET, thine's a pleasing Scheme,/ A gay Delusion, if it be a Dream.../ [God] bade the Seasons Days, and Nights return,/ Till the pent Fires, which at the Centre burn, / Shall the whole Globe to one huge Cinder turn."⁴⁰ Elizabeth Rowe tells the same story when she says that

³⁸II, 94.

³⁹"The Judgment Day," 1721.

⁴⁰1729

The central fire within its prison raves,
 And all the globe with strong concussions shakes,
 As from its urn in sulph'rous waves
 The dreadful element breaks.⁴¹

Particularly reminiscent of Burnet are the following lines: "From vein to vein the active particles take fire,/ And towards the surface of the globe aspire."⁴² Joseph Trapp, Moses Browne, Contestant IX, and an anonymous poet who wrote "On the Resurrection" in The Christian Poet, 1735, give similar explanations.

John Ogilvie says that a whirlwind will burst from the vaults of earth destroying cities, woods, and hills. Then a burning comet will strike the earth and release the central fires which now swell "resistless o'er the plains." In a footnote he explains that it is "at least a probable supposition" "that the general conflagration will be effected by the near approach of a comet to the sun," "and probability, in a subject of this kind, is the utmost that can be expected." Then he goes on to explain how comet, sun, and central fires unite to produce the end of the world. The atmosphere of comets

(which the learned have been so much puzzled to account for), is by the observations of the most curious, thought to consist of a continual efflux of smok, rising at first to a determinate height from all parts of the comets themselves, and then making off to that which is opposite to the sun. It would seem reasonable from this to conclude, that the conflagration must necessarily be a consequence of supposing the earth involved in this atmosphere, if we take in the prodigious quantity of fire lodged in its own cavities.--But is not the account still more credible, when we add to these the action of the sun, which in this conjunction will be doubly intense?

⁴¹"The Conflagration," 1739.

⁴²Idem.

In this account Ogilvie seems to combine ideas from both Burnet and William Whiston. Whiston published in 1696 A New Theory of the Earth in which he announced that comets rather than central fires would initiate final destruction of the world. Like Burnet he uses a single cause to explain creation, deluge, and the conflagration. The prevalent discussion of Halley's comet at the time doubtless suggested the following trend of thought. Such a body could, thinks Whiston, by approaching primitive chaos, pull it into coherent form. Thus the earth was created. Whiston then compared Halley's schedule for the comet with a calculation of Biblical chronology and concluded that on the first day of the flood the comet will cut the plane of its "Ecliptick," as it descends toward its "Perihelion," and will come near enough to the earth to pull its waters upwards by the force of gravity and so drown all creatures except those in the ark. Whiston was very positive about all of his theories. He decided, in fact, that the comet pulled so hard on the earth that it drew the ball somewhat out of position, making the orbit of our planet slightly elliptical; wherefore it is now certain that some day comet and earth will meet again. Next time the result will be fire instead of flood because, whereas the comet was, previously, approaching the sun, and was therefore cold, next time it will be leaving the sun and will be accordingly hot--so hot that it will ignite the earth when it passes as close as it passed before at the time of the deluge.⁴³

"As we have given an Account of the Universal Deluge from the Approach

⁴³William Whiston, A New Theory of the Earth from its Original, to the Consummation of all Things, 2nd. ed., 1708, pp. 437-450 and elsewhere.

of a Comet in its descent towards the Sun; so will it not be difficult to account for the General Conflagration from the like Approach of a Comet in its ascent from the Sun."⁴⁴

Others besides Ogilvie who mention comets as causes or contributing factors to the conflagration are Young, Catherall, Trapp, Contestant VIII, Glynn, and "Givis," 1799. The latter's idea is not Whiston's, however. "Givis" says that "Eccentric comets clash with other spheres/ And spoil the order of six thousand years."⁴⁵

Edward Young mentions meteors as contributory causes to the conflagration. In The Last Day he says: "Sharp lightnings with the meteor's blaze conspire,/ And darted downward, set the world on fire."⁴⁶ Lightning is also mentioned as a partial cause by Catherall, Elizabeth Howe, Moses Browne, and Ogilvie. Young, Ogilvie, and Bruce include earthquakes too, and Trapp, Ogilvie, Glynn, and Maurice mention volcanoes.

We have seen that both Burnet and Whiston believe that the sun had some part in conflagration. Several of the poets think the same thing, although their explanations sometimes differ. In spite of the fact that Catherall's angel laughs at the Phaeton fable he tells the poet that the sun does play a part in final destruction, for its strength will be greater and its rays more direct. The anonymous author of "On the Resurrection" in The Christian Poet says that when "yon fair star"---

⁴⁴Ibid., P. 440.

⁴⁵"Sonnet," Text of The Weekly Register, April 17, 1799.

⁴⁶Book III.

the sun--is loosened, it rolls "down heaven's hill," and by its fall unhinges "the steady pole," and goes hissing into the abyss where ten thousand lesser suns lie scattered round. Mary Masters and Martha Brewster seem to be the only ones who think that the sun will fall upon the earth and so burn it up. Mary Masters says, for example:

The Lamp of Day, O horrid Sight!
Extinguish'd lies in Fatal Night.
Now spreading flames, from Pole to Pole,
O'er the wide Earth devouring roll;
Drink up her Seas, dissolve her Hills,
And Heav'n with Smoke and Tempest fills.⁴⁷

Bulkeley's idea regarding the cause of the conflagration is, however, the most imaginative combination of natural and supernatural causes in the century. Not even Blake surpasses him in fantasy here. Michael, Hazazel, and Zophiel are sent to obtain fire from the sun to ignite the earth. These

...o're the blazing Globe hang big with Aims
Tremendous. Michael with intrepid Palm
Grasp'd the huge Mass, his Arms in ragged Flame
Deep; from its Center the emblaz'ning Orb
Groan'd conscious: Then Jehovah's Agent tore
The mighty Globe in twain, th' Internal Parts
Glow'd with uncommon Fires, till then conceal'd
From Eyes created, blueish Streams of Flame
Sulphureous, might appall the stoutest Soul,
And Entrails horrid red with tenfold Heat.
Michael, with Mail ethereal arm'd august,
Breaks into num'rous Fragments, dire to fight,
This fiery Substance of the conquer'd Sun.

In their arms the archangels grasp the flaming fragments

⁴⁷"A Meditation upon these Words, Arise, ye Dead, and come to Judgment," 1733.

...and tow'rd the destin'd Earth
 March'd: Zophiel and Hazazel potent bore
 Superiour Burdens, high above their Heads
 Blazing remote.

Other angels joined the procession with lesser loads,

But Michael, warlike Cherub, huge in Pow'r,
 On his Right-Hand, expanded wide, sustain'd
 A Mass not less in Magnitude than Earth
 Bisected; O're the spacious Void he strode
 And made to distant Earth with dreadful Aim.⁴⁸

Conflagration Imagery and Description.

The eighteenth century fairly reveled in descriptions of the conflagration. The subject was so "sublime," and it gave the poets such a wonderful opportunity to roll out their Miltonian verse and display their "scientific" and classical lore that few could resist trying their hands at it. In no other phase of eschatology do the poets show as much resourcefulness in devising imagery as in their descriptions of the destruction of the world.

Stock metaphors for this event are the death of Nature and the death of Time. Almost every poet includes them somewhere in his poetry. John Norris speaks of the end as "Nature's great solemn funeral," and he develops the figure more fully than any of the others. "Nature," he says, "shall breathe her last," and "the

⁴⁸The Last Day, Book XI.

archangels trump" is "Nature's great passing bell." As the blaze encircles the globe he declares:

Nature does sick of a strong fever lye;
 The fire the subterraneous vaults does spoil;
 The mountains sweat, the sun does boil;
 The sea, her mighty pulse, beats high;
 The waves of fire more proudly rowl;
 The fiends in their deep caverns howl,
 And with the frightful trumpet mix their hideous cry.
 Now is the tragic scene begun;
 The fire in triumph marches on;
 The Earth's girt round with flames, and seems another sun.^{49,50}

In The Last Day, Book I, Young merely mentions that "Time shall be slain," but in Night Thoughts he develops the idea in an original and elaborate fashion. Time, he says, built for himself a habitation called the world. His lamp is the sun and his children are men. The house grows old, and at the last day it bursts over his head extinguishing his lamp and awakening his children. Time finds himself deposed by Eternity and is forced to turn all over to the new monarch.

Then (as a king deposed disdains to live),
 He falls on his own scythe; nor falls alone;
 His greatest foe falls with him: Time, and he
 Who murder'd all time's offspring, Death, expire.
 Time was! Eternity now reigns alone:
 Awful Eternity! Offended queen!

The parallel between art and nature so popular during the eighteenth century appears frequently in passages describing destruction in such

⁴⁹ "The Consummation," 1706.

⁵⁰ Some of the other poets who speak of the end of the world as the death of Nature are Aaron Hill, Contestant IV, Ogilvie, Martha Brewster, Glynn, Bruce, Brooke, and Maurice.

phrases as "When all of Art and all of Nature dies."⁵¹ Long passages and sometimes epic categories are devoted to detailing the ruin that befalls the works of man. Eighteenth-century denunciation of pride appears frequently when poets speak of the death of Pride or the death of Pomp at the end of the world.

Aside from the death-of-Nature image, storms provide the most popular analogies for the conflagration. The tempest in Isaac Watts's familiar "The Day of Judgment," 1706, includes some of the hymn-writer's best lines.

When the fierce North-wind with his airy forces
Rears up the Baltic to a foaming fury;
And the red lightning with a storm of hail comes
Rushing amain down,

How the poor sailors stand amazed and tremble!
While the hoarse thunder, like a bloody trumpet,
Roars a loud onset to the gaping waters
Quick to devour them.

Such shall the noise be, and the wild disorder
(If things eternal may be like these earthly),
Such the dire terror when the great Archangel
Shakes the creation;

Tears the strong pillars of the vault of Heaven,
Breaks up old marble, the repose of princes,
Sees the graves open, and the bones arising,
Flames all around them.

Roger Wolcott compares the troubles of the American settlers to a sudden storm and then adds intensity to both events by comparing them to the end of the world.

Thus from our Peace most suddenly we are
Wrapt up in the Calamities of War.
So have I sometimes in the Summer seen,

⁵¹"Friendship," an anonymous poem in The Gentleman's Magazine for 1741.

The Sun ascending and the Skie serene.
 Nor Wind nor Cloud in all the Hemisphere,
 All things in such a perfect Calmness were.
 At length a little Cloud doth up arise,
 To which the nitrous sulphiry[sic] Vapour flys.
 Soon a dark mantle over Heaven spread,
 With which the Lamp of day was darkened.
 And now the Clouds in tempest loud contend,
 And rain and dreadful Lightning downward send,
 With which such loud and mighty Thunder broke
 As made Earth tremble & the Mountains smoke,
 And the Convulsive world seem drawing on,
 Apace to her own Dissolution
 The awfulness of which amazing Sight,
 Greatly did Earths Inhabitants affright.
 Ev'n so those Halcyon days that were with us,
 Were soon turn'd into Times Tempestuous.⁵²

Elizabeth Carter describes the culmination of history in a poem called "Written at Midnight in a Thunderstorm. To Miss Lynch, 1743."⁵³

When thro' Creation's vast expanse,
 The last dread thunders roll,
 Untune the concord of the spheres,
 And shake the rising soul;
 Unmov'd mayst thou the final storm,
 Of Jarring worlds survey,
 That ushers in the glad serene
 Of everlasting day.

In the following poem by "Symposius" published in the Bath Journal of July 23, 1750, a simile is made between a man's reaction to a thunderstorm and his feelings at the day of judgment.

Lo! where in Fold on Fold condens'd,
 The dark conflicting Vapours rise!
 From every Side the Tempest moves,
 And quite obscures the spangled Skies.

⁵²"An Account of the Agency of the Honourable John Winthrop," 1725.

⁵³Text of Memoirs of the Life of Mrs. Elizabeth Carter with a new edition of her Poems, 3rd ed., 1816.

The distant Flash first strikes athwart,
 From far the murmuring Thunders roll;
 Creation waits the dread Approach,
 And solemn Silence rules the Whole.

At length redoubled Lightnings play,
 The blaze continual darts around,
 And loud, impending, thro' the Void
 Tremendous breaks the awful Sound.

Happy the Man who stands unmov'd,
 Whom Virtue's sacred Shield defends;
 Resign'd, and calm, when the dire Shock
 Convulsive Nature's Bosom rends.

Whilst he, whom conscious Guilt condemns,
 In dread Reflection sinks, distress'd;
 Whilst abject Fear, and wild Remorse
 Alternate Rack his tortur'd Breast.

Then, O great Source of Life and Grace,
 Thy all-conducting Aid to lend,
 That, when the final Trumpet calls,
 I may with raptur'd Soul attend.

Trapp uses the image of a windstorm whipping the flames across a field of stubble to describe the progress of the conflagration around the earth.

Woods of immense Extent, of tall, tough Oke,
 Which nor of Time, nor Light'ning, fear'd the Stroke,
 Solid, as if they never could decay,
 Burnt like dry Shrubs, or Stubble, shrink away:
 Less sudden disappears a Field of Corn,
 When by the Wind the flying Flames are born.⁵⁴

Ogilvie turns to the earthquake for a suitable image for the destruction of Britain in particular at the last day.

To aid the fire BRITANNIA'S domes combin'd,
 Nor left one trace of all their pomp behind. 220
 So when Old Earthquake bursting from the Pole,

⁵⁴ "Thoughts on the Four Last Things," 1734.

Heaves the high mound, or shakes the tumbling mole;
 His island-arm disturbs the deeps around,
 His voice like thunder rocks the labouring ground;
 Then stands proud Teneriff's majestic brow, 225
 And looks superior o'er the wrecks below;
 Bursts the broad field!--in wild confusion spread
 Hills, cities, rocks, fall thund'ring in the shade;
 He bows! and tott'ring o'er the verging gloam,
 Marks the stupendous waste, and seeks the tomb. 230⁵⁵

The tumult of war provides a number of analogies. Samuel Catherall
 speaks of "Earth's whole artill'ry now display'd, / And turned to her own
 Ruin!"⁵⁶ Trapp and Young go into a little more detail.

The yawning Caves their fuel'd Stores disclose;
 Exploded Thunders thro' the Welkin roll, 275
 And forky Lightnings flash from Pole to Pole:
 Pillars of ruddy Smoke obscure the Sun;
 And now the Wreck of Nature is begun.

All this is worse than

The hideous Burst of Cannon heard so far,
 And all the loud-mouth'd Engin'ry of War, 57 280
 When fierce Bellona swells her brazen Voice.

...At the destined hour,
 By the loud trumpet summon'd to the charge,
 See, all the formidable sons of fire,
 Eruptions, earthquakes, comets, lightnings,
 Their various engines; all at once disgorge
 Their blazing magazines; and take, by storm,
 This poor terrestrial citadel of man.⁵⁸

Ogilvie introduces elements borrowed frankly from Milton's battle of
 the angels in Paradise Lost, Book VI.

⁵⁵ The Day of Judgment, Book I, 1753.

⁵⁶ An Essay on the Conflagration, 1720.

⁵⁷ Thoughts on the Four Last Things, 1734.

⁵⁸ Night Thoughts.

Thus, when Olympus shook with loud alarms,
 When all th' angelick hosts appear'd in arms,⁵⁹
 Each adverse legion stood unmov'd with fear,
 Each God-like Cherub wav'd a flaming spear;
 Hills, forests, rocks their mutual rage supply, 145
 They flung th' enormous mountains thro' the sky,
 From the deep earth th' exalted cedars tore,
 And buried Nature in the wild uproar.

An anonymous poem "On the Death of Tippoo Saib" by one who signs himself "J.P." in the Monthly Magazine of January 1, 1800, concludes with an analogy between the death of Tippoo Saib, a famous warrior of Marathen, and the destruction of the world at the last day.

Warriour! like thee, the ponderous ball shall know
 The clanging trumpet sound its final doom,
 'Till Darkness o'er the storm of ages rears
 His iron sceptre, and the nations die;
 Like thee, the ball, by strength resistless hurl'd
 To bordering chaos, drag the fates of men,
 And dimly to the waste of hostile stars
 And hostile systems roll the stately scene
 Of thrones and powers and empires and their kings.

Edward Young introduces a plowing image which Blake elaborates nearly half a century later as part of his harvest allegory of the last judgment. "Final ruin," writes Young in Night Thoughts, "fiercely drives her plough-share o'er creation!" Blake's metaphor begins thus:

Then seiz'd the sons of Urizen the Plow; they polish'd it
 From rust of ages; all its ornaments of gold & silver & ivory
 Reshone across the field immense...

 The Sons of Urizen shout. Their father rose. The Eternal horses
 Harness'd, They call'd to Urizen; the heavens moved at their call.
 ...He [Urizen] laid his hand on the Plow,
 Thro' dismal darkness drove the Plow of ages over Cities

⁵⁹Ogilvie comments in a footnote: "See MILTON's battle of the angels. Book VI."

And all their Villages; over Mountains & all their Vallies;
 Over the graves & caverns of the dead; Over the Planets
 And over the void spaces; over sun & moon & star & constellation.⁶⁰

Elizabeth Rowe becomes a little technical in one description of the conflagration. She speaks of nature as a wheeled vehicle.

And now begins the universal wreck;
 The wheels of nature stand, or change their course,
 And backward hurrying with disorder'd force,⁶¹
 The long establish'd laws of motion break.

Other poets consider a furnace analogous to a burning world.

And when the solemn hour prefix'd shall come,
 At which thou [Nature] must receive thy final doom;
 When wasteful flames thy massy spheres shall burn,
 And to rude chaos all again return,
 As Chemists purged by fire the bullion ore,
 He'll raise thy ruin'd frame more beauteous than before.⁶²

For tho' destruction is reveal'd,
 The birth of joy on earth is seal'd.
 The world beholds a sea of fire,
 By fevers lo! the proud expire.
 The Lord upon the wicked blows,
 The furnace like an oven glows.⁶³

Several poets, no doubt following the suggestion of Thomas Burnet or William Whiston, compare the destruction of the world by fire to the devastation of the flood described in the Old Testament. Both, says Young, are instruments of God's wrath.

How must it [creation] groan, in a new deluge whelm'd,
 But not of waters!

⁶⁰Vala.

⁶¹"The Conflagration."

⁶²From an anonymous poem out of Lloyd's Evening Post, April, 1762.

⁶³From another anonymous poem called "Ode for New Year's Day, 1799," published in The Weekly Register for January 23, 1799.

.
 ...Of one departed world
 I see the mighty shadow: oozy wreath
 And dismal sea-weed crown her; o'er her urn
 Reclined, she weeps her desolated realms,
 And bloated sons; and, weeping, prophesies
 Another's dissolution, soon, in flames.⁶⁴
 But, like CASSANDRA, prophesies in vain.

Ogilvie is another who uses the flood analogy.

So, when tempestuous at th' ETERNAL'S word
 The teeming skies a wat'ry deluge pour'd;
 The vast Abyss its mighty deep display'd,
 And the flood rose o'er ATLAS' towering head;
 Some nation fell, in each augmented wave²⁷⁰
 Dissolv'd, and earth was one prodigious grave.⁶⁵

Less terrible are the images which compare the conflagration (and subsequent renovation of earth) to the untuning and tuning of a musical instrument. After describing the departure of the saints for heaven following judgment, John Norris writes: "Slack here my Muse thy roving wing, / And now the world's untun'd, let down thy high set string."⁶⁶ Speaking of the last trumpet, Contestant IX for the Gentleman's Magazine prize observes: "All nature sickens as the notes she hears / The dreadful notes untune the rolling spheres."

Besides imagery there are, of course, a number of other modes of describing the conflagration common to many of the poets. Certain phases are dwelt upon more than others. The spectacle of melting or crashing mountains, for example, is a favorite. Earthquakes are another. Both

⁶⁴Night Thoughts.

⁶⁵The Day of Judgment, Book I.

⁶⁶"The Consummation," 1706.

of these become the objects of Robert Burns's sly ridicule in "The Holy Fair": "But now the Lord's ain trumpet touts, / Till a' the hills are rairin." Disturbances in the sea are introduced frequently. Pomfret offers a typical description in "The Day of Judgment," 1699.

...the ebbing Ocean...
 ...with a strange unusual Roar,
 Forsakes those antient Bounds it would have pass'd before,
 And to the monstrous Deep in vain retires;
 For ev'n the Deep itself is not secure,
 But belching subterraneous Fire,
 Increases still the scalding Calenture.

One of the most memorable is Hill's picture of boiling oceans in which the lion rides on floating oaks, the elephant plunges about, and the whale spouts hot water in disgust towards heaven.⁶⁷

Natural Phenomena as Stage Effects

One of the most striking features of eighteenth-century descriptions of the second coming of Christ and the day of judgment is the combination of natural phenomena with supernatural to enhance the terror and the "sublimity" of the spectacle. We have already found that the poets usually think that destruction will occur while the other events are going on. The conflagration is, therefore, the greatest of the natural phenomena attendant upon the events of the last day. When one realizes how many of the poets look upon it as a universal catastrophe involving all of the heavenly bodies, one is led to wonder whether there could be any natural manifestations apart from the idea of destruction. The poets think so,

⁶⁷"The Judgment Day," 1721.

however, for many employ thunder and lightning, comets, meteors, earthquakes, and the like, not as part of the conflagration, but purely as decorative fireworks or sound effects.

John Norris, for instance, says that immediately after the great archangel swears that time shall be no more, "Fate writ the sentence with her iron pen, / And mighty thundrings sayd, Amen!" Young gives the following description of the Judge's throne:

Thus glorious through the courts of heav'n, the source
Of life and death eternal bends his course;
Loud thunders round him roll, and lightnings play;
.....
Here high enthron'd th' eternal Judge is plac'd,
With all the grandeur of his Godhead grac'd;
Stars on his robes in beauteous order meet,
And the sun burns beneath his awful feet.⁶⁸

John Bulkeley's epic is full of such stage effects. In Book I, for example, he describes the throne of the Judge much as Young does.

Upon the Throne was form'd
A vast Devoid, capacious as the Gulph
Of Euxine Ocean of it's stormy Waves
Scop'd; this Concavity, with fiery arms
And Bolts of Thunder loaded, might defy
An hostile World....

⁶⁸The Last Day, 1713.

CHAPTER VI

REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS

The day of judgment is indeed the climax of earthly history in the opinion of eighteenth-century poets, and it is regularly called "the last day"; but only in certain ways is it the last day. It is, of course, the end of the world as we know it for all agree that the earth is at least burnt over. Because the forces of evil are finally vanquished it is also the end of sin and misery, but it is not the end of men or angels. For them there is no true "last day." The well-nigh universally accepted doctrine of the immortality of the soul makes out of the day of judgment only a dividing line, a dramatic one, to be sure, but still no more than a sharp ridge between the valley of time and the endless plains of eternity.

This doctrine is an important corollary of eighteenth-century eschatological thought, not merely because the poets constantly draw it into their discussions of the end of the world, but because it actually does direct and color many aspects of their thinking upon this subject. It enters into their descriptions of the resurrection, particularly in the little episode of soul rejoining body, so frequently described. More often it has something to do with the question of divine justice. Some poets consider the doctrine of the immortality of the soul necessary to a belief that the inequities of this present life will eventually be evened up. Bishop Ken says, for example:

This Life is our Probationary State,
 We till the next for our Awards must wait;
 And Souls shall be Immortal, that they may
 Feel the last Sentence of that righteous Day.¹

Glynn and many others say the same thing. Bruce inverts the argument and uses the day of judgment idea to prove the doctrine of immortality. Another poet goes into raptures over it because it is an assurance that he will not be destroyed at the conflagration.² A good many show the relationship in their thinking between the day of judgment and the immortality of the soul by expressing belief in the eternity of hell torments.

None of the poets deny belief in some sort of perpetuation of man's spirit. Two, however, appear to doubt that all souls will persist through the interim between death and the resurrection of the body. In 1731 an anonymous poet writes the following lines in which he says that man

. . . . for ages lies,
 Till nature's death permitted not to rise:
 Till then forbid the faintest glimpse of day,
 Or reascend the long forgotten way:
 No more indulg'd to see the chearful light,
 Or sweet vicissitudes of day and night.
 His mem'ry too shall die, and in the grave,
 In length of time, its thin existence leave.³

¹Hymnotheo, about 1700.

²The anonymous author of "Verses Wrote by a Gentleman in an Epileptic Fit," published in The Christian Poet, 1735.

³An untitled poem in The Flower Piece, ed. M. Concanen, 1731, p. 203.

The only other poet who thinks that souls can lose consciousness at death is Cumberland, and only part of the dead do so in his opinion. The spirits of the wicked are in conventional torment, for he says that at the day of judgment following the general resurrection the judge will

. . . decree
Their present pains perpetual.⁴

The righteous, however, have no consciousness apart from their bodies. Far from the dismal abode of dead sinners there is a place

. . . of night and silence, where the souls
Of righteous men in their oblivious caves
Sleep out the time till their Deliverer comes
To wake them from their trance.⁵

Most of the dead stay here. For the favored few, however, who were resurrected at the crucifixion of Christ a special paradise is prepared within the realms of death where they dwell in happiness until the general resurrection.

Much the commonest idea, however, is expressed in the following words:

But ah! death is not life's extremest goal,
It kills the body, but it spares the soul;⁶

yet among those who speak thus there is some difference of opinion about where dead souls dwell. The conventional idea is that the good are in heaven and the wicked in hell, but Aaron Hill reflects another view in

⁴Calvary, Book VII.

⁵Idem.

⁶The Middlesex Journal, Mar. 27, 1770.

a passage describing the reaction of disembodied spirits to the blast of the archangel's trumpet. He thinks they can wander from world to world.

Thin troops of naked ghosts, long stript of clay,
That, wand'ring 'twixt the spheres, admiring gaz'd,
Start, in loose shoals, and glide, like mists, away.⁷

Bulkeley not only thinks they travel to other places in the universe but puts the stamp of his approval upon the notion that they can sometimes be seen by human beings.

The Spirits knew the Sound,
Some hover'd sportive in the glitt'ring Air,
Their Hearts in Hymns melodious rais'd to Heav'n:
Soft in the Moonlight, or the Morning Rays
They bask'd their airy Shapes; upon the Bow
Of humid Colours loll'd, or soft display'd
Their Features on a blushing Cloud serene.
Others, on Earth more pensive, thro' the Air
Shot, like a Fire Delusive which the Swain
Sees Melancholy o're the Desert glide,
Or from a Wood soft wand'ring skim the Pools.
Some wild expatiate in the Realms of Night,
Beyond the Sphere Crystalline, to discourse
With Socrates and Cato, where retir'd
Nature's Machin'ry they explore, and hunt
For hidden Worlds.⁸

Other poets express uncertainty about where the dead are. In The Last Day Young wonders what the soul does between the time the conflagration begins and the resurrection takes place. Has she, he queries,

⁷"The Judgment Day," 1721.

⁸The Last Day, Book IX.

. . . been flutt'ring near the pole,
 Or midst the burning planets wond'ring stray'd
 Or hover'd o'er where her pale corpse was laid;
 Or rather coasted on her final state?⁹

Contestant XII is interested in the faculties of souls:

Whether they, conscious, intuition know,
 Or social, in seraphick converse glow;
 Whether their state is fixed, or whether free.

He even dares to ask if some souls might be careless and commit offenses over there.

No poet seems to have made out a case for the death of souls after the day of judgment. Of those who deny the doctrine of hell torment none suggests that the wicked will be annihilated.¹⁰

All go on living, it is therefore agreed, yet an alteration takes place in the mode of life. For this change, particularly for the transition between the sorrow of the present life and the bliss of eternity, the poets like to find analogies. Here again the storm is a faithful servant to the muse. Smart, Ogilvie, and Crabbe all use storm images to contrast the turmoil of conflagration with the calm of the hereafter. Smart compares the mind of man to the ark coming to rest after the flood.

'Tis then, nor sooner, that the restless mind
 Shall find itself at home; and like the ark
 Fix'd on the mountain-top, shall look aleft
 O'er the vague passage of precarious life;
 And, winds and waves and rocks and tempests past,
 Enjoy the everlasting calm of Heav'n.¹¹

⁹Book II.

¹⁰Ken, Catherall, contestant X, and a few others do, however, make the concession that not all will be punished alike. There will probably be different degrees and kinds of suffering, they think, to suit various types of offenders.

¹¹Smart, "The Eternity of the Supreme Being," 1750.

Ogilvie is reminded of the great change by a tempest.

But lo! my soul, the clouds at length are o'er;
The storms are calm'd, the thunders cease to roar:
See! blooming Love, as cloudless skies serene, 395
Smiles heav'nly sweet, and brightens all the scene!

So some loud whirlwind, with resistless sweep,
Heaves the wild waves, and blackens on the deep;
The fainting mariners, with pale despair,
Behold the ocean's boiling bosom bare: 400
When lo! at once the raving winds subside,
A gentle breeze plays smoothly o'er the tide;
Now each, enraptur'd, views th' emerging ray,
Now breathes delighted in the blaze of day;
Groves, mountains, woods appear, a charming train!
The ship glides lightly thro' the liquid plain; 406
The liquid plain reflects the waving beam,
And heav'n's fine azure glitters in the stream.¹²

The subsiding of winter winds makes Crabbe think of the end of the world.

The wintry winds have ceased to blow,
And trembling leaves appear;
And fairest flowers succeed the snow,
And hail the infant year.

So, when the world and all its woes
Are vanish'd far away,
Fair scenes and wonderful repose
Shall bless the new-born day,--

When, from the confines of the grave,
The body too shall rise;
No more precarious passion's slave,
Nor error's sacrifice.

'Tis but a sleep--and Sion's king
Will call the many dead:
'Tis but a sleep--and then we sing,
O'er dreams of sorrow fled.

¹² Ogilvie, "The Day of Judgment," Book II, 1753.

Yes!--wintry winds have ceased to blow,
 And trembling leaves appear,
 And Nature has her types to show
 Throughout the varying year.¹³

Charlotte Gray uses another figure for the same thing--a kind of cross between the death-of-nature image and the phoenix metaphor when, addressing "Hope," she says:

Thou, undismay'd, shalt o'er the ruin smile,
 And light thy torch at Nature's funeral pile!¹⁴

When so many agree that life continues after the end of the world, it becomes pertinent to enquire what kind of life the judgment introduces--that is, what kind of life besides just bliss or misery.

Heaven, of course, is the conventional term for the reward of the saints. All agree that it is a place of unimaginable joy, but not all are agreed upon its location in the universe. The age-old idea is that heaven is some undetermined place up above the stars where God and angels dwell, but many eighteenth-century poets hold the opinion with John and Charles Wesley that "earth renewed is heaven below."¹⁵ Among others who suggest that the recreated globe will become the home of the redeemed are Lady Mary Chudleigh, John Norris, Jabez Hughes, Lady Winchelsea, Bulkeley, James Thomson, Mary Chandler, Contestant XI, Elizabeth Rowe, Cowper, Blake, Anna Maria Williams, the anonymous authors of poems

¹³George Crabbe, "The Resurrection," 1778. Text of The Poetical Works, ed. A. J. Carlyle and R. M. Carlyle, 1932.

¹⁴This poem called "The Pleasures of Hope" was written by Charlotte Gray but it appears in a collection called The Pleasures of Hope with other Poems by Thomas Campbell, 1804.

¹⁵A paraphrase of Mal. 4:2-6.

in the Dorchester and Sherborne Journal for January and November, 1794, and "A Missionary Hymn" by "The Christian Spectator," in the Weekly Register, Nov., 1798. Besides these, Moses Browne and Michael Bruce think there may be a recreation, but they are pretty sure that the saints will not live on the earth, although they may visit it.

Favorite images for the recreation process are the blooming of spring after winter, the dawning of day after night, and the phoenix. The first of these is used appropriately in James Thomson's The Seasons as a didactic climax for "Winter,"

. . . Behold, fond man!
 See here thy pictur'd life; pass some few years,
 Thy flowering Spring, thy Summer's ardent strength,
 And pale concluding Winter comes at last,
 And shuts the scene. Ah! whither now are fled,
 Those dreams of greatness? . . .
 . . . Virtue sole survives,
 Immortal never-failing friend of man,
 His guide to happiness on high. And see!
 'Tis come, the glorious morn! the second birth
 Of Heaven and Earth! awakening Nature hears
 The new-creating word, and starts to life,
 In every heighten'd form, from pain and death
 For ever free.¹⁶

William Blake concludes the harvest allegory of Vala by combining the winter-spring image with the night-morning figure which we have seen used frequently for the resurrection. He says that after the labor of reaping (the conflagration and judgment) Tharmas "took his repose in Winter, in the night of Time." The next morning dawns fresher and life begins to spring up all over the earth.

¹⁶Text of Chalmers XII.

. . .
 The Sun arises from his dewy bed, & the fresh airs
 Play in his smiling beams giving the seeds of life to grow,
 And the fresh Earth beams forth ten thousand thousand springs of life.

The night-morning motif is repeated in "The Little Girl Lost," a picture of the earth made new in which animals befriend human beings. The poem begins:

In futurity
 I prophesy
 That the earth from sleep
 (Grave the sentence deep)

Shall arise, and seek
 For her maker meek;
 And the desert wild
 Become a garden mild.¹⁷

In "An Essay on the Conflagration" Samuel Catherall sees in vision:
 "Earth devote/ To Flames, consum'd to be renew'd, and rise/ A Phenix
 brighter than the First!" Similarly Mary Chandler describes the conflagration and afterwards adds: "Then, like a Phoenix, she again shall rise,/ And the New World be peopled from the Skies."¹⁸ Moses Browne uses the same metaphor, although the earth for him does not become the home of the saints but another sun. "Earth, scorch'd, with purifying Flames, shall burn;/ Perhaps consum'd, but [she is destined] (Phoenix like) to rise,/ Herself a Sun, in renovated Skies."¹⁹

Mention has already been made of the refining image used by an

¹⁷Text of The Poems of William Blake, 1929.

¹⁸A Description of Bath, 1729.

¹⁹An Essay on the Universe, Book III, Text of Poems on Various Subjects, 1739.

anonymous poet of Lloyd's Evening Post, April, 1762, in which the poet compares the conflagration to a chemist's fire, and the new earth to the purified metal. We have also seen how Lady Winchilsea compares the recreation to the tuning of a musical instrument.

Lady Winchilsea is able to include several physical details in her pastoral tableau of the earth made new.

The fruitful autumn, and the gaudy spring
Shall sure returns of sweets and plenty bring;
And thorough every grove the holy swains shall sing
.
.
.
The lamb his side by the tam'd wolf shall lay,
And o'er the asp's den the child shall play.²⁰

Elizabeth Rowe adds the information that in "paradise renewed" "the changing moon/ Restores her nightly round,/ . . . [and] from his orb the radiant sun/ Darts undiminish'd light."²¹ Bruce speculates happily upon the possibility of a recreated earth, sun, and body of worlds.

. . . perhaps,
Creative energy again shall wake,
And into being call a brighter sun,
And fairer worlds; which, for delightful change,
The saints, descending from the happy seats
Of bliss, shall visit.²²

The description of Logan's new earth condition, which, it will be recalled, is brought into being gradually by the efforts of man without judgment or conflagration, is typical of many in the century.

²⁰"A Pastoral between Menalcus and Damon on the Appearance of the Angels to the Shepherds on our Saviour's Birthday," 1713.

²¹A paraphrase of Psalm LXXII. Text of Miscellaneous Works in Prose and Verse, I, 1739.

²²"The Last Day," 1766.

The hidden fountains, at thy call,
 Their sacred stores unlock;
 Loud in the desert, sudden streams
 Burst living from the rock.

The incense of the spring ascends
 Upon the morning gale;
 Red o'er the hill the roses bloom,
 The lilies in the vale.

Renew'd, the Earth a robe of light,
 A robe of beauty wears;
 And in new Heavens a brighter Sun
 Leads on the promis'd years.

The kingdom of Messiah come
 Appointed times disclose;
 And fairer in Emmanuel's land
 The new creation glows.²³

One of the most enthusiastic descriptions appears in Cowper's "The Task." He emphasizes the physical nature of the new earth. Like Lady Winchilsea he thinks of it as a place where agriculture is carried on.

. . . . The fruitful field
 Laughs with abundance; and the land, once lean,
 Or fertile only in its own disgrace,
 Exults to see its thistly curse repeal'd.

Like many other poets he says that the climate of the new earth will be one long spring and that there will be no savage animals there. The lion, the leopard, and the bear will graze in peace beside the flocks, and children will play in safety with "the crested worm."

Blake includes most of these details in his description of the restoration of life to a burnt world. Notice how closely the recreation is associated with the resurrection in the following passage.

²³Hymn VII of paraphrases from the Psalms, 1781.

And when Morning began to dawn upon the distant hills,
 [Then del.] a whirlwind rose up in the Center, & in the rattling
 of bones

A dolorous groan, & from the dolorous groan in tears
 Rose Enion like a gentle light; & Enion spoke

. . .
 . . .

She speaks to her infant race; her milk
 Descends down on the sand; the thirsty sand drinks & rejoices
 Wondering to behold the Emmet, the Grasshopper, the jointed worm.
 The roots shoot thick thro' the solid rocks, bursting their way
 They cry out in joys of existence; the broad stems
 Rear on the mountains stem after stem; the scaly newt creeps
 From the stone, & the armed fly springs from the rocky crevice,
 The spider, The bat burst from the harden'd slime, crying
 To one another: "What are we, & whence is our joy & delight?
 "Lo, the little moss begins to spring, & the tender weed
 "Creeps round our secret nest." Flocks brighten the Mountains,
 Herds throng up the Valley, wild beasts fill the forests.²⁴

The idea that the earth on which men now live will some day experience a renovation was by no means a novelty to Christian thought at the time when our poets wrote, for it appears in both the Old and New Testaments. In the book of Isaiah, for example, the prophet speaking for God says: ". . . behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind."²⁵ Again in Revelation we read: "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away."²⁶ Actually, however, the doctrine of recreation has not been greatly stressed by the Christian church, and it does not appear in the Thirty-nine Articles. Probably the anti-materialistic nature of Platonic thought, which was so influential during the middle ages, tended to push it into the

²⁴Vala.

²⁵Isa. lx:17.

²⁶Rev. xxi:1.

background. Probably too the impact of the "new science" upon western civilization provided more favorable conditions for its growth. It is interesting to note, at any rate, that Thomas Burnet devoted the entire fourth book of his quasi-scientific The Sacred Theory to a discussion of the new earth.

Thus far we have seen that the world which men are to inhabit after the conflagration is much like that which we now know, the chief differences being its greater beauty and its freedom from the blemishes and dangers that characterize the present globe; but what about those who are to live there? Do the poets think of them as physical beings, or are they to be bodiless spirits whose existence will be entirely other than what is now known? No, not bodiless, the poets all say, for as we have seen, the souls of the dead will return to their former habitations at the resurrection; and these bodies are, atom for atom, identical with the mortal frame. How then does it happen that several of those who described the resurrection as a concourse of physical particles give such pictures as the following of the bodies of saints hereafter? Ken says that they are "Impassible, have more capacious Sphere; Immortal, and as Vests Angelic clear."²⁷ Norris declares that the glory of judgment day

Kindles the brighter life that dormant lay within,
Th' awaken'd virtue does its strength display
Melts and refines their drossy clay;
New-cast into a pure aetherial frame,
They fly and mount aloft in vehicles of flame.²⁸

²⁷Hymnotheo: or the Penitent, about 1700.

²⁸"The Consummation," 1706.

What makes the difference between Aaron Hill's disembodied souls when he says: "Thin troops of naked ghosts, long stript of clay,/ That, wand'ring 'twixt the spheres, admiring gaz'd,/ Start, in loose shoals, and glide, like mists, away"--and his resurrected saints who "tread light, as air,/ mount, with more than human eyes, and stem the streamy glare"?²⁹

These descriptions are the most perplexing ones in the period--those which seem more than any to reflect a spiritual rather than a physical idea of the human state hereafter--but if we examine even these it becomes apparent that the poets are not doing away with corporeality but are merely struggling with an admittedly difficult problem, the task of describing a kind of body which has never been seen; for as Bishop Ken himself says in a prose commentary upon the Apostles' Creed: "the bodies of the saints [will be] changed in quality, and made glorified bodies, fitted for heaven, and eternally to love and enjoy" God.³⁰ When Ken speaks in his poem of the saints as "Impassible" "and as Vests Angelic clear," he cannot mean, therefore, that they are wholly spiritual. They are simply different. They differ from disembodied souls by having bodies of some kind. They differ from present bodies in being immortal and glorious in some incomprehensible way, but not in a way that would destroy their atom-for-atom resemblance to mortal beings.

²⁹"The Judgment Day," 1721.

³⁰Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles, 1699.

Norris is trying to explain this difference, this "change," as so many of the poets call it, by means of a refining image in the same way that we have found other poets describing the destruction and regeneration of the earth.³¹ "The awaken'd virtue" "Melts and refines their drossy clay." The whole picture is one of reconversion. The vessel is melted, purified, improved, but it is not destroyed and replaced by something wholly other. Gilbert Burnet explains the change thus in his Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles:

It seems probable from what St. Paul says, ('that flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God,' which relates to our glorified bodies, when 'we shall bear the image of the second and the heavenly Adam,') that Christ's body has no more the modifications of flesh and blood in it; and that the glory of the celestial body is of another nature and texture than that of the terrestrial. It is easily imagined how this may be, and yet the body to be numerically the same: for, all matter being uniform, and capable of all sort of motion, and by consequence of being either much grosser or much purer, the same portion of matter that made a thick and heavy body here on earth, may be put into that

³¹Jabez Hughes, Nicholas Rowe and William Gilbank do the same thing. Gilbert Burnet associates this refining process with that of the earth at the conflagration in a passage which, as we have seen, may have influenced a number of poets in other ways. (Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles, pp. 81-83).

In conclusion, when all God's design with this world is accomplished, it shall be set on fire, and all the great parts of which it is composed, as of elements, shall be melted and burnt down; and then when by that fire probably the portions of matter, which was in the bodies of all who have lived upon earth, shall be so far refined and fixed, as to become both incorruptible and immortal, then they shall be made meet for the souls that formerly animated them, to re-enter every one into his own body, which shall be then so moulded as to be a habitation fit to give it everlasting joy or everlasting torment.

purity and fineness as to be no longer a fit inhabitant of this earth, or to breathe this air, but to be meet to be transplanted into ethereal regions.

This is apparently an explanation of I Cor. xv:40-54³² in terms of the atomic theory that matter is composed of particles and air spaces. Out of this theory would seem to spring such prevalent details in the poetry of the time as increased size and lightness in weight so that bodies can float in the air. Thus we have seen that Ken describes the resurrected frame as "more capacious," and "clear." Thus Watts tells how

Our airy feet with unknown flight,
Swift as the motions of desire,
Run up the hills of heavenly light,
And leave the weltering world in fire.³³

The Wesleys disagree with I Cor. xv:50 by asserting that the body hereafter will be fleshly. "God . . . shall our glorious flesh restore,/ His many sons to heaven receive,/ Where time and death shall be no more."³⁴ Most of the poets, however, play safe with such general statements as the following by Jabez Hughes:

³²v. 40: "There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another." V. 50: "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." V. 51: "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, v. 52: In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. V. 53 . . . this mortal shall put on immortality."

³³"Come, Lord Jesus," 1706. Text of Chalmers XIII.

³⁴A translation from Zinzendorf in The Poetical Works, I, 348.

The Body which the deathless Soul inclos'd,
 . . .
 Wak'd from the faithful Grave, again shall rise,
 Made pure and capable of endless Joys.
 That which was laid in much Dishonour down,
 In Pain and Weakness and Corruption sown,
 Reviv'd in Grace and Energy divine,
 Shall with thy Savior's Heav'nly Image shine.³⁵

The most effective analogy for "the change" is probably John Norris's refining image, but Young has an apt one for the difference between present and future bodies.

Thus a frail model of the work design'd
 First takes a copy of the builder's mind,
 Before the structure firm with lasting oak,
 And marble bowels of the solid rock,
 Turns the strong arch, and bids the columns rise,
 And bear the lofty palace to the skies;
 The wrongs of time enabled to surpass,
 With bars of adamant, and ribs of brass.³⁶

Physical details are, of course, not the only aspects of life in the hereafter mentioned by the poets, but they are the most frequent. The joys of social life, of love and friendship, also inspire many lines.³⁷ Of course, there will never be any war or political friction. Order and harmony will be assured by obedience to law through love to God and man. From the frequent mention of thrones, crowns, and kingdoms, it would seem that the political regime of heaven or the new earth will not be democratic. Every once in a while one also hears

³⁵"On the Death of a Young Lady," about 1710. Text of Miscellanies in Verse and Prose, 1737.

³⁶The Last Day, Book II.

³⁷Lady Mary Chudleigh, Lady Winchilsea, Nicholas Rowe, Mary Chandler, the anonymous author of "Friendship: an Ode," 1741, Moses Browne, Ogilvie, Bruce, Woodhouse, and Anna Maria Williams.

something about the highest and lowest places in heaven, and angels are nearly always described as belonging to ranks and orders. Edward Young and Elizabeth Rowe suggest that the redeemed will fit right into an existing hierarchy. They will replace the rebel angels once expelled from heaven. Moses Browne does something else to the idea that heaven is a hierarchical society. He conceives of man's condition there as susceptible to change and progress when he says that the saints will be "For ever rising in some new degree."³⁸ With this point of view Elizabeth Rowe is not in sympathy, for she describes the hereafter as a static condition in which no change is possible. In *Hymn iii* she writes:

For ever permanent and fix'd,
From agitation free,
Unchang'd in everlasting years,
Shall thy existence be.³⁹

Quite possibly such ideas as this are the objects of Horace Walpole's light satire in his "Epitaph on two Piping Bullfinches" in which he speaks of "dickybirds" after the resurrection singing "the self-same tune" "From everlasting Night to everlasting Noon."

The intellectual capacities of the saved are likewise subjects for speculation. Moses Browne is of the opinion that we shall have "purer passions . . . faculties, and pow'rs compleatly bright"; and yet these powers will go on developing throughout eternity. Furthermore

³⁸"On Life, Death, Judgment, Heaven, & Hell," section on heaven, 1735.

³⁹Text of Miscellaneous Works in Prose and Verse," 1739.

knowledge will come "by intuitive perception" so that the use of every object will be fully comprehended as soon as it is beheld.⁴⁰

Blake thinks that political war will be replaced by intellectual war in the hereafter.

. . . Urthona rises from the ruinous Walls
In all his ancient strength to form the golden armour of science
For intellectual War. The war of swords departed now,
The dark Religions are departed & sweet Science reigns.

"The Expanding Eyes of Man behold the depths of wondrous worlds," he writes in another place. Man "walks upon the Eternal Mountains, raising his heavenly voice,/ Conversing with the Animal forms of wisdom night & day,/ That, risen from the Sea of fire, renew'd walk o'er the Earth."⁴¹ James Woodhouse expects to attain a higher form of knowledge than is possible even to the divinely inspired in this life.⁴²

Descriptions of hell are just as materialistic as those of the new earth. Poets are generally agreed that there will be two kinds of suffering--physical and mental. Generally the place is spoken of as being very hot--a lake of fire, but sometimes extreme cold is introduced together with chains and various instruments of torture applied by "fiends" who always have charge of tormenting the damned.

⁴⁰"On Life, Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell," 1735. Section on heaven.

⁴¹Vala.

⁴²Lucubrations.

A few poets rebel against the idea that a God of benevolence would prepare such a fate for the creatures he has made. Swift banishes the notion with a scornful laugh in his well-known poem, "The Day of Judgment." He presents a picture of sinners gathered before the bar of God trembling for themselves yet longing to see their neighbors damned. The verdict is passed. Jove speaks:

The world's mad business now is o'er,
And I resent these pranks no more.
I to such blockheads set my wit.
I damn such fools!--Go, go, you're bit.

Evan Lloyd rails as furiously but less effectively at those who teach the doctrine of hell fire. In much the same spirit as those he condemns he beseeches the Lord to "sweep away such rotten saints" who make God out to be a cruel tyrant.

As if Thy right hand did contain
Only a Universe of pain
Hell and damnation in Thy left,
Of every gracious gift bereft.

The Methodist preacher, he says, makes of his sermons "a Map of Hell,
An Ollie made of Conflagration,
Of Gulphs of Brimstone, and Damnation,
Eternal Torments, Furnace, Worm,
Hell-Fire, a Whirlwind, and a Storm,
With Mammon, Satan, and Perdition,
And Beelzebub to help the Dish on."⁴³

Blake also seems to repudiate the doctrine. In his poetry he makes no mention of the subject, but in a prose passage called "The Voice of the Devil" he declares that all Bibles or sacred codes have been the cause of certain errors, among which is the idea "that God will torment man in eternity for following his energies."⁴⁴

⁴³Text of The Methodist, 1766.

⁴⁴The Poems of William Blake, ed. William Butler Yeats, 1929, pp. 177-178.

Aside from these nearly everyone who writes eschatological poetry of any appreciable size casts his vote for hell fire. Some insist strongly that it is an indispensable corollary of the judgment idea. The chief of these are Isaac Thompson, Trapp, Cowper, and Perronet. Trapp's argument, however, is the most complete. He uses the doctrine of hell fire as part of his demonstration of the inevitability of the day of judgment. The moral sense and conscience assure man, he says, that rewards and punishments are due certain actions. These faculties are so universal that they must point to a time of retribution, for it is ridiculous to suppose that God would fool man by placing within him such ideas if they were false. Furthermore, as a capable legislator, God would realize that laws become ineffective if punishment is threatened only. Because equitable rewards are not meted out in this life it follows that they must be hereafter.⁴⁵

The doctrine of the eternity of hell torments comes in for even more attention. The problem of how such a teaching can accord with the insistence by the church upon the justice and benevolence of God does not wholly escape the poets. Every so often one comes up with an argument to reconcile the unfriendly ideas, but these are generally of a piece with Bishop Ken's statement in verse that no punishment is too much for those who reject the loving solicitations of divinity.⁴⁶ Moses Browne gives the only more original answer. He says that the

⁴⁵Thoughts on Life, Death, Judgment, 1734.

⁴⁶About 1700. The Works, II, p. 86.

damned are so wicked that they would go on sinning in hell if they could. Therefore, since desire to sin is sin, they are forever committing offences in one moment that deserve punishment in the next.⁴⁷

Another problem associated with justice of rewards and punishments meted out at the last tribunal is the old argument about predestination and the freedom of the will. Most of the judgment-day poets lean heavily in the direction of the Arminian position. Bishop Ken, a staunch and conservative clergyman of the Church of England writes lines that illustrate the kind of arguments which appear in the eschatological poems of many others, particularly Catherall, Trapp, Samuel Boyse (1740), Samuel Wesley the Younger (1736), John and Charles Wesley, Edward Perronet (1785), Cowper, and Ralph Erskine. In Hymnotheo Ken writes: "God here free Option will to none refuse,/ And justly gives to Sinners what they choose."⁴⁸ In another place he says that on judgment day when the wicked "into Hell are thrown," they "Their cursed Option own." At that time "'Twill be their tort'ring Woe,/ That to themselves they their Damnation owe." Then the poet comments:

To none, just God thou partial art,
Thy Fav'rite is the Heart;
All who to thee whole Hearts direct,
Thou wilt pronounce Elect;
They'll urge no dark Decree,
But plead Pray'rs, Tears, and Jesus on the Tree.⁴⁹

⁴⁷"On Life, Death, Judgment," 1735.

⁴⁸About 1700. Text of The Works, III.

⁴⁹"Justice." Text of The Works, II, pp. 78-79.

Elsewhere he adds:

Sin to permit, is God's just Will:
 For were not Mortals free to Ill,
 None could be free to Good, no Trial then,
 By Vice, and Virtue, God would have of Men;
 God could not be belov'd, since Love is free,
 God-man had never suffer'd on the Tree;
 No need was of a Judgment Day,
 If Man was fated to obey;
 Providence gives the Choice of Bliss, or Woe,
 To Men who in Probation live below.⁵⁰

The only ones who express Calvinistic ideas in their eschatological poetry are Isaac Watts, his American admirer, Martha Brewster,⁵¹ and Michael Bruce. Isaac Watts's views appear in the following lines:

. . .
 His honor is engag'd to save
 The meanest of his Sheep:
 All that his heav'nly FATHER gave,
 His hands securely keep.

Nor death nor hell shall e'er remove
 His fav'rites from his breast:
 . . .

GOD hath laid up in heav'n, for me,
 A crown which cannot fade:
 The righteous Judge, at that great day,
 Shall place it on my head.⁵²

⁵⁰"God's Attributes or Perfections--Providence." Text of The Works, II, 125.

⁵¹On pages 23-25 of Martha Brewster's Poems on Divers Subjects is "A Funeral Poem on the Death of the Reverend Isaac Watts, D.D." which expresses strong admiration for the dissenting hymn writer. Apparently the sentiments of the poetess were well known for we find the following note prefixed to some of her verses: "It being falsely reported that the Author borrowed her Poetry from Watts and others; the following Scripture was presented to her to Translate into Verse, in a few Minutes Extempore, as a Vindication from that Aspersion which was accordingly performed as follows." p. 22.

⁵²Text of Psalms and Hymns for Public and Private Worship, collected (for the most part), and published, by Augustus M. Toplady, 1776, p. 344.

Martha Brewster indicates her theological opinions by using such favorite Calvinistic terms as "God's Sovereign Power," and his "free pardoning Grace,"⁵³ while Bruce pictures the Judge looking mildly upon those at his right hand and bidding them come to bliss because "for you I died." Bruce, it will be recalled, came from a Scottish dissenting family.

⁵³"To the Subjects of the Special Grace of God and its Opposers."
Text of Poems on Divers Subjects, 1757.

CHAPTER VII

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY IN RETROSPECT

Probably the most general observation made possible by the present study is that the eighteenth-century poets assumed almost without exception that the earth had a beginning and will have an ending. One might say that such a discovery is not surprising because the idea was imbedded in two philosophies with which the age was familiar--Christianity and Epicurean materialism--and, because after all, the theory of evolution was still in its embryonic stages even towards the end of the period. Yet there were forces at work which might have made a little more dent in the poetry than we have found. The deistic conception of the universe as a machine which the creator made in the best possible way does not, for example, take kindly to the idea that the garment of nature is waxing old and will soon disintegrate. Nor does the companion idea of an absentee God agree with the Christian belief in a solicitous Providence who would be willing to interrupt the progress of a machine which he once set in motion in order to free it from some obstruction. Pope seems to be the only one who brings the deistic argument to bear in poetry directly upon the Christian doctrine of the end of the world. It takes him only two lines to do so, however, for in The Essay on Man, after describing the wreck of worlds according to the prevailing fashion he comments acidly: "All this dread ORDER break--fer whom? for thee?/
Vile worm!--oh Madness! Pride! Impiety!" How he kept out of trouble as a result of such a bold statement is a problem, but somehow he as well

as Swift and Burns, manage to have their fun without enraging the orthodox public too far. Perhaps it is because Swift hid behind the skirts of Jove and Burns behind his hypocrites, while Pope overpowered his readers with such righteous concern for their sin of pride that they missed the shockingly unconventional tenor of his remark.

Aside from these three there is not only no dissent from the general Christian position, but there is none from the Anglican dogma set forth in the Thirty-nine Articles. Even Blake, from whom we might expect something different, is so secure with the church that one almost forgets his tinge of antinomianism. More than that, his opinions from conflagration to recreation follow the most well-worn trails of popular verse. Like the majority of poets he begins with universal destruction and concludes with a pastoral vision of the earth made new; like them too his resurrection is a concourse of atoms drawn from all parts of the world. His saints and sinners conduct themselves in the most approved fashion before the bar of God, and only hell is wanting to complete the orthodox picture. Blake's very images of night and morning, fertility, birth, and harvest are the most prevalent in the whole century. The chief difference, in fact, between Vala and any other poem of the century is merely the obscure symbolism which veils and ornaments the conventional substance of his thought.

Even John Bulkeley keeps pretty well within the bounds of the fourth article, which, after all, does not deny that Elijah may descend to the Lybian desert in a flaming chariot before the last day, that there will be a millennium of bliss before the judgment, or that Michael will set the universe afire with a torch made of comet's hair. Neither does it

forbid the faithful to believe that there will be several literal wars before the end between heavenly and infernal beings nor that the final conquest of hell will be achieved under the command of a human being, Augustus Wallia. Because the Anglican dogma is so general Bulkeley escapes ecclesiastical censure, but he takes more liberty with the traditional story than any other poet, much more liberty than Blake; and he makes no apology for his strange notions as Ogilvie does for his slight deviations. Although the church did not penalize the young poet for his unconventionality, posterity did; yet The Last Day for all its Miltonianism and wild improbability certainly deserves something better in the realm of eschatological poetry than the stony silence with which it has been greeted.

Since the English church belongs to the protestant segment of Christianity it is not surprising that the greatest single source of ideas for her poetry is the Bible, the most frequently quoted portions of which are the Psalms, Isaiah, Matthew xxiv, the Pauline epistles, and the Revelation.

No exhaustive effort has been made to track down specific sources for all the variant shades of ideas within the Anglican pattern, but certain probable or possible influences have been noted from time to time for the more popular veins of thought. Accordingly, we have found that Gilbert Burnet's officially approved explanation of Article IV tallies closely at several points with the most prevailing concepts among the poets. He places the conflagration first, thinks of it as a reduction of all things to "elements," and describes resurrected bodies as composed of their original substance only purified and immortalized.

Thomas Burnet also shows several points of similarity with the more popular modes of thought. He certainly did not originate the idea of an earth made new, to which he devoted the fourth book of The Sacred Theory, but he identifies the millennium with the renovated world like all the eighteenth-century poets who mention a millennium with the exception of Bulkeley, the later John Wesley, and his followers. Furthermore the idea which several poets have that the world will last but six thousand years also appears in The Sacred Theory together with supporting arguments from Scripture based upon an analogy with the cycle of seven found in the creation week and in Mosaic laws. Then, again, the cause which he gives for the conflagration--the bursting forth of the central fires--is the most frequently mentioned of any among the poets, although comets, named by Whiston, run second.

Responsibility for the century-long habit of describing the resurrection as a concourse of atoms should probably be split between Burnet and Lucretius who both associated the atom with the end of the world.

The millennialism of Bulkeley and the more prevalent doctrine of the return of the Jews before the consummation is possibly a result of Daniel Whitby's influence, while the millennialism of John Wesley is definitely traceable to the German theologian, Johann Albrecht Bengel.

The very widespread idea that the end of the world is near and the tendency on the part of the poets to see about them signs of coming judgment were merely reflections of a great deal of prose writing upon the end of the world which entered into popular discourses upon the evidences of Christianity through the argument from prophecy. Such discussions

of prophecy were made by William Baxter in the seventeenth century,¹ and by at least twelve replies early in the eighteenth century to Anthony Collins' Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion. The most important of these were by Richard Bentley, Edward Chandler, Samuel Clarke, Thomas Sherlock (to whom the poets occasionally referred), and Samuel Chandler.² In 1754 Bishop Thomas Newton published his Dissertations on the Prophecies, which William Cowper read and approved, and from which he may have derived his idea that the world will last only six milleniums. The idea that Christ is coming soon is no less frequent in the latter half of the century than in the first, and interest in the subject was doubtless encouraged, among other things, by several Warburtonian and Bampton lectures upon prophecy.³

Eighteenth-century poetic descriptions of the last day are also characterized by a definitely materialistic conception of God, heaven, and the life of men hereafter. Many poets forsake the conventional notion that the redeemed will dwell "up above the stars" following the judgment and decide that they will enjoy a physical existence upon an earth made new when the conflagration has purified the globe from sin, which they all believe, has affected both man and nature. The concourse-of-atoms description of the resurrection and the pictures which the poets

¹John Hunt, Religious Thought in England, I, 275-281. In part II of The Saints' Everlasting Rest prophecy is listed as the third argument for belief in the Scriptures. Hunt says that Baxter was the first English writer on the evidences of Christianity.

²Ibid., II, 380-400.

³Richard Hurd, Samuel Hallifax, and Althorp East were Warburtonian lecturers on prophecy for 1768, 1776, and 1786 respectively. The Bampton lecturers on the subject were James Bandinell, 1780, Timothy Neve, 1781, Robert Holmes, 1782, and Ralph Churton, 1785. See Hunt, op. cit., III.

give of the human body afterwards also show their belief that the future life of saints will not be, as Walpole expresses it, merely a "beatified sitting on golden thrones, and chanting eternal hallelujahs to golden harps."⁴ Rather it will be a life in which the physical and spiritual elements of man's nature will cooperate harmoniously because the germ of evil has once and for all been eradicated from the universe. Furthermore, the Judge himself seems to have a body not altogether unlike that of human beings; and his descent is, without exception, described as a physical invasion of the sublunary world by a celestial force from another part of the universe.

This materialistic concept, as suggested before, has always had a place in Christian philosophy, but during the time when Platonic idealism occupied a more important position in the thought of Western Europe than it held in the eighteenth century its growth would not be encouraged. When, however, the experimental science of the seventeenth century took over, conditions would be more favorable and Christians more apt to turn to those passages of Scripture which tell about an earth made new where men will "build houses, and inhabit them, and . . . plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them."⁵

From a literary standpoint the two greatest influences upon eighteenth century eschatological poetry are Milton for style and the Bible

⁴Horace Walpole writes thus in a letter "To Mrs. Mason" in defence of his "Epitaph on two Piping-bullfinches" on the grounds that he is not ridiculing the doctrine of the immortality of the soul but merely the notion quoted above. See bibliography under Walpole for the complete letter.

⁵Isa. lxxv.

for imagery. Over and again one hears the lamentation that the great epic writer did not devote more attention to the last day; however, the poets are determined not to leave posterity to imagine without their assistance what such a work would have been like had it been written. John Bulkeley is one of the first to step into the breach. He is not interested in Milton's ideas except in a few minor details, but he is very much interested in his descriptions of angels, and the phraseology of Paradise Lost fairly drips from his pen. Nevertheless, the flourishes are so unmistakably Bulkeley's own, and there is so much originality in the ideas and pattern of The Last Day that his zestful mimicry is much more entertaining than most other such attempts, which as a rule are ponderous and dull.

John Ogilvie's sentence structure is also like Milton's in many places, but he is more apt to borrow imagery than Bulkeley and his adoration leads him to call the reader's attention frequently to the source of his "beauties."

One of the most successful and most influential of all the writers in the century was, of course, Edward Young whose work certainly reflects Milton but not as crudely as some. Other notable imitators are Woodward, Catherall, Addison, and Bruce.

The enthusiasm about Milton and the epic in judgment-day poetry is, however, part of a more prevalent admiration for the "sublime." The poets are all agreed--those that have anything to say about the subject--that if there is any topic that is susceptible of sublime treatment in poetry it is the last day. Ogilvie reminds us of this many times in The Day of Judgment, but the term is apt to appear in almost any poem

throughout the century. Sublimity is undoubtedly the prime literary objective of eighteenth century eschatological poetry, but it appears as part of a larger purpose--the desire to please while instructing.

In their attempts to suggest the magnitude of their subjects the poets frequently stop abruptly at some point or other in their description, usually heaven, hell, or the appearance of the Judge, and declare they can go no further. Occasionally an angel comes to their rescue and whisks them off to some star or mountain peak whence they can watch, with the benefit of a celestial commentator, a rapid preview of the last great drama.

Another eighteenth-century poetic fad which entered into eschatological poetry is the delight in melancholy. In fact, just as there is nothing so sublime as the spectacle of descending deity and a burning universe, so there is nothing more melancholy than the destruction of this great world which God has made and man has adorned with his art. It is interesting to note, however, that throughout the period there is very little sympathy wasted upon the victims of the cataclysm, for the poets are all pretty well agreed that the lost bring this dire fate upon themselves by being too stupid to realize their own best interest.

This study has been confined largely to a descriptive survey of dominant eschatological concepts in the poetry of the age. A considerable field, therefore, yet remains for further research in tracing to their sources many shades of these ideas. It would be interesting, for example, to find out where Bulkeley got his fantastic notions about the end of the world, about how many of them were borrowed and how many originated within his own youthful brain. Another matter of curiosity

is Logan's progress theory which made its way into the Scottish hymnal. Was it in the original paraphrase or is it an innovation of his own? Since almost the whole body of eighteenth century judgment-day poetry otherwise belongs to the primitivistic school of thought, and the idea of progress began to be noticed fairly early in nineteenth-century poetry in general, it would be worth finding out whether there were any more eschatological progress poems written in the interim. Something more might be done too with the imagery, but the most interesting project of all would probably be an examination of the relationship between Blake's symbolism and his eschatological thought.

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY POETRY

In the following bibliography certain secondary sources and collections of poems will be cited in connection with the annotations. These are listed immediately below.

Secondary Sources

Bradner, Leicester, "The composition and publication of Addison's Latin poems," Modern Philology, XXXV (1935), pp. 359-367.

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Fairchild, Hoxie Neal, Religious Trends in English Poetry (New York: Columbia University Press), 1939, 3 vols., Vol. I. All the Execution of Dr. W. Dodd in 1717 (Amsterdam: Drukkery M. J. Portielje), MCMXXXIII.

Sherburn, George, The Restoration and Eighteenth Century (1660-1789) (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts), 1948. This is Vol. III of A Literary History of England, ed. Albert C. Baugh.

Reed, Amy, The Background of Gray's Elegy: A Study in the Taste for Melancholy Poetry (1700-1751) (New York: Columbia University Press), 1924.

Collections

The Christian Poet or Divine Poems on the Four Last Things, London, 1735.

Works of the English Poets, ed. Robert Anderson, 13 vols., London, 1795.

Works of the English Poets, ed. T. Park, London, 1833.

Works of the English Poets, from Chaucer to Cowper, ed. A. Chalmers, 21 vols., London, 1810.

Primary Sources

1699

Pomfret, John, "Dies Novissima; or, the Last Epiphany. A Pindaric Ode, on Christ's second Appearance to judge the World," pp. 41-48. Text of A Collection of Poems on Religious and Moral Subjects Extracted from the most celebrated Authors (Elizabeth Town: Printed for Shepard Kollock), MDCCXCVII.

This collection was discovered by accident towards the end of the present research. It is interesting because it gathers together a number of the more important eschatological poems of the century. The contents are as follows:

The Last Day, by Young
The Last Epiphany, by Pomfret
On the general Conflagration, and ensuing Judgment, by Pomfret
The Day of Judgment, by Watts
The Grave, by Blair
An Elegy in a Country Church-Yard, by Gray
The Hermit, by Parnall
The Hermit, by Beattie
On the Shortness of Human Life
The Day of Judgment, by Glynn
Death, by Porteus

-----, "On the Day of Judgment," pp. 4-16.

-----, "A Prospect of Death," Sections VIII and IX, pp. 160-161. Text of The Christian Poet or Divine Poems on the Four Last Things. (viz) Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell. Written by the Rev. Mr. Pomfret, the Earl of Roscommon, Mr. Norris, Mr. Wesley, Daniel DeFoe, and others. To which is added a Poem on the Resurrection by the late Joseph Addison, etc. (London: Printed and sold by the Book Sellers in Town and Country), 1735.

Johannes Harder gives the date of first publication for "On the Day of Judgment" as 1699 and provides information which suggests that "Dies Novissima" appeared at about the same time (Harder, p. 108). These poems have been included because they belong in thought and manner to the eighteenth century.

1700

Ken, Thomas, Bishop of Bath and Wells, "A Morning Hymn" and "An Evening Hymn." Text of Morning, Evening, Midnight—Three Hymns (New York: P. and K. Oliver), MCMXXVII.

Ken, Thomas (continued)

- "The Introduction," I, 10-11.
- "On the Circumcision," I, 40.
- "On the Life of Jesus till his Baptism," I, 71.
- "On John the Baptist," I, 79.
- "The Sermon on the Mount," I, 104.
- "On the Eucharist," I, 126.
- "On the Paschal Discourse," I, 136.
- "On the Arraignment of Jesus," I, 147-148.
- "On the Passion," I, 159-160.
- "On the Resurrection," I, 171.
- "On Holy Thursday," I, 256.
- "On Ash Wednesday," I, 321.
- "On St. Matthias," I, 325.
- "On St. Bartholomew," I, 378.
- "On St. Luke," I, 391-392.
- "Jesus Present," I, 424.
- "All Blessings by Jesus," I, 455.
- "Christophil: or Songs on Jesus," I, 464.
- "Attributes or Perfections of God--Eternity," II, 12.
- "Attributes or Perfections of God--Immensity," II, 20.
- "The Attributes or Perfections of God--Justice," II, 81.
- "The Attributes or Perfections of God--Goodness," II, 86.
- "The Attributes or Perfections of God--Providence," II, 117-145.
- "Edmond, an Epic Poem," II, Book III, 81-83 and Book VIII.
- "Hymnotheo: or the Penitent," III, 84-92, 115, 116, 297, 301, 411.
- "Anodynes, or the Alleviations of Pain," III, 411. Text of The Works
(London: Printed for John Wyat), 1721.

"He [Bishop Ken] was elected fellow of Winchester College in 1666, and for a short time held the living of Brighthelm, in the Isle of Wight. His fame as a preacher had by this time risen to a supreme height; we know from Pepys, that when he was announced to preach in London, the church was crowded. But apparently he preached extempore, for very few of his sermons have survived."--
From the biographical introduction of The Prose Works of the Right Reverend Thomas Ken, sometime Bishop of Bath and Wells now first Collected and Edited with a Biographical Notice by the Rev. W. Benham (London: Griffith, Farran, Okefen & Welsh [Successors to Newberry and Harris] West Corner St. Paul's Churchyard and Sydney, N.S.W.). No date is printed, but there is an ink notation on one page with the date May, 1909, which is probably the date of possession only.

When Queen Anne was Princess of Denmark in the reign of James II she once requested a place in church from which to listen to Bishop Ken preach (Ken, op. cit., 112). Ken seems to have been regarded as a man of saintly character. When James II published his "Declaration" regarding his Catholicism, Ken was one of the five bishops who remonstrated with him and were for that reason brought to trial on the charge of misdemeanor. "This trial, one of the most memorable in

Ken, Thomas (continued)

history, resulted in the acquittal of the bishops, and in the Revolution which deposed the King and placed William and Mary on the throne. The great majority of the nation acquiesced in the change, but there were those...who could not reconcile it to their consciences to play fast and loose with their loyalty, and who refused to swear allegiance to the new king and queen. Among them was Ken, who consequently was turned out of his See...[but] he by no means ceased to exercise great influence. ...much of his time in his last years was spent in writing poetry. The greater portion of it has never been reprinted.... He died Mar. 19, 1709." Ibid., the biographical introduction.

1700

Roscommon, The Earl of, "On the Last Judgment," pp. 45-48. Text of The Christian Poet.

"The Day of Judgment [is] a free and vigorous translation of the Dies Irae," says Amy Reed in The Background of Gray's Elegy, p. 60. This poem must have been published before 1700, probably in Miscellany Poems of 1684-1694, but there has been no opportunity to examine these. The work is included because it appeared in The Christian Poet, 1735.

1700

Wesley, Samuel the Elder, An Epistle to a Friend concerning Poetry. Text of An Epistle to a Friend concerning Poetry (London: Printed for Charles Harper), 1700.

Amy Reed thinks that Young in his Last Day was at one point imitating Samuel Wesley "whose epic version of the Bible story had now reached gigantic proportions in The History of the Old and New Testament in Verse (London: 1703), 3 vols." (Reed, The Background of Gray's Elegy.) There has unfortunately not been time to investigate this work. It doubtless contains a good deal of eschatological poetry.

1703

Chudleigh, Lady Mary, "The Ladies Defense: or, a Dialogue between Sir John Brute, Sir William Lovall, Melissa, and a Parson," I, 225-226. Text of Poems by Eminent Ladies (London: Printed for R. Baldwin), MDCCCLV.

-----, "Of Justice." Text of Essays upon Several Subjects (London: Printed by T. H.), MDCCX.

-----, "The Song of the Three Children Paraphrased," pp. 23-44. Text of Poems, 1703.

1706

Norris, John, "The Consummation: A Pindaric Ode," p. 195. Text of Miscellanies of the Fuller Worthies Library containing Norris of Bemerton's Complete Poems, ed. Rev. Alexander B. Grosart (St. George's, Blackburn, Lancashire), 1872.

"The Consummation" was also published in A Collection of Miscellanies in 1706.

1706

Watts, Isaac, "The Day of Judgment."

"Pardon and Sanctification," p. 37.

"A Prospect of the Resurrection," pp. 38-39.

"A Sight of Christ," pp. 43-44.

"Long for his Return," pp. 46-47.

"Come, Lord Jesus," p. 47.

"Divine Songs for Children--'Praise to God for our Redemption,'" p. 87.
Text of Chalmers XIII.

Psalm xvii:14,15 paraphrased, p. 155.

"Mystery of the Cross," p. 171. Text of Psalms and Hymns for Public and Private Worship collected (for the most Part) and Published by Augustus M. Toplady (London: E. & C. Dilly), 1776.

1706 is the date of publication for the Horae Lyricae.

1710

Broome, William, "A Poem on the Seat of War in Flanders, chiefly with relation to the Sieges: with the Praise of Peace and Retirement, written in 1710," p. 21. Text of Chalmers XII.

-----, "To Mr. Pope on his Works, 1726," p. 23. Text of Chalmers XII.

1710

Hughes, Jabez, "On our Saviour's Incarnation, Section XV," p. 110. Text of Miscellanies in Verse and Prose (London: Printed by John Watts), MDCCLXXVII.

"On the Death of a Young Lady," pp. 151-152.

"Of Avarice" (An Essay), pp. 222-231.

"Of Solitude," pp. 239-240.

This is a long poem on the second coming of Christ which has not been examined. It was published in 1710.

1710

Hughes, John, "An Ode to the Creator of the World occasioned by the Fragments of Orpheus," pp. 45-46. Text of Chalmers X.

In The Life of John Hughes, Samuel Johnson says this "Ode" was composed in 1710.

1713

Winchilsea, Anne Finch, Countess of, "A Pastoral between Menalcus and Damon on the Appearance of the Angels to the Shepherds on our Saviour's Birthday," pp. 99-100. Text of Minor Poets of the Eighteenth Century, ed. Hugh I'A. Fausset (London: Published by J. M. Dent), 1930.

Fausset says that the text used in his edition is based partly upon the original edition of 1713, and partly on the MSS now in the possession of the Earl of Winchilsea and Mr. Philip Gosse. There is no indication which is the source of the "Pastoral."

1713

Young, Edward, Night Thoughts,--Night IX, I; The Last Day, II, 9-45. Text of The Works of Edward Young, Author of Night Thoughts, Revised and Corrected by Himself in Three Volumes (London: Printed for F.C. and J. Rivington), 1813.

The Last Day was published in 1713, Night Thoughts between 1742-1745 (Sherburn, pp. 945, 947).

1714

Rowe, N., "On the Last Judgment and the Happiness of the Saints in Heaven. Done from the Latin of J. Gerhard," p. 474. Text of Chalmers IX. "The Golden Verses of Pythagoras," p. 21. Text of The Judgment of Hercules, by a Student of Oxford, A Poem to which is subjoined the Golden Verses of Pythagoras translated from the Greek by Mr. Rowe.

No date is given, but "On the Last Judgment" first appeared in 1714.

1716

Bulkeley, J., The Last Day, A Poem in XII Books (London: Printed for J. Peele), MDCCXX.

The preface says that Bulkeley died in 1718 "in the 24th Year of his Age," leaving the epic in the unfinished condition in which it was later published. "... a Man of Penetration," the editor explains, "will be pleas'd with exploring the wild Paths and irregular distant Views of a rough and undisguised Genius: corrected by the insipid Exactness of Another 'twould afford a less manly Delight." Later he defends the poem in terms of the epic tradition thus:

"I May observe, that the Poem is call'd the Last-Day, as the usual and general Name for the Consummation, and not as if the Action included one single Day; that would be against the Rules of Epic Poetry; which, as it comprizes a series of various Events, it requires a suitable and probable space of Time; and the less violent is the Action, the longer may the Time be extended....

Bulkeley, J. (continued)

"As for the Length of the Reign of Messiah, from Scripture we learn no Exactness: The Same of Elijah's Continuance on Earth. However, if the Action of the following Poem be allowed to be longer than That of the Iliad, (27 Days) it is certainly shorter than That of the Eneid (8 Years and a Half).

"Those Christian Countries, who admit not the Revelations as Writings Inspir'd, would except to the Truth of some things in the Poem; as, The Angel of the Bottomless-Pit, and the New Hierusalem: We are dubious too of Elijah's Descent, and the Reign of Messiah; But as they appear to be hinted in Scripture, and Opinions are various, Probability justifies the Poet; since Poetry differs from History, as one describes what may, the other what does happen."

1717

Pope, Alexander, "Messiah a Sacred Eclogue, in Imitation of Virgil's Pollio," Vol. I, p. 86. Written in about 1717.

"The Essay on Man," Epistle I, 1734, III 29-30, and Epistle II, III 46. Text of The Works of Alexander Pope in Nine Volumes (London: Printed for J. & P. Knapton; H. Lintot; J. & R. Tonson), 1751.

1718

Addison, Joseph, "On the Resurrection," pp. 38-43.

This poem is a translation by Nicholas Amhurst of the "Resurrectio Delineata," which Addison wrote in Latin and first published in 1718, says Leicester Bradner in "The Composition and Publication of Addison's Poems," Modern Philology (1938), pp. 365, 367.

"Hymn, When Rising from the Bed of Death," pp. 205-206.

"Song for St. Cecilia," p. 209. Text of The Works of Joseph Addison, ed. Greene, 1891, Vol. I.

1720

Catherall, Samuel, An Essay on the Conflagration (Oxford: Printed for Anthony Peisley), MDCCLXX.

Catherall gives Thomas Burnet as the source of his ideas regarding the conflagration. He also mentions Dr. Sherlock--doubtless Thomas Sherlock who wrote The Use and Intent of Prophecy. From Scripture he tries to borrow sublimity. "No one," he writes in the preface, "will blame me for endeavouring to support the Weakness of my own Sentiment, and Style by the Strength, and Sublimity of Scripture Phrase." His definition of the sublime is "majesty in every Thought, and inimitable Thunder in every Word." The poem, like Bulkeley's The Last Day, is an imitation of Milton's blank verse.

1720

The London Journal, February 4, "Elegy."

This poem imagines the resurrection of a noted Irish miser, Patrick Grogan, and is written by "a Person who has furnished the world lately with several ingenious Pieces."

1720

Swift, Jonathan, "The Day of Judgment," Text of Chalmers XI.

"The Run upon the Bankers, Written 1720," pp. 240-241. Text of
The Poems of Jonathan Swift (Oxford: Clarendon Press), 1937,
Vol. I.

1721

Hill, Aaron, "The Judgment Day: A Poem," pp. 263-285.

(London: 1754), 4 vols., Vol. III.

"Epitaph, on Sir Isaac Newton," pp. 44-45.

"St. Matthew V."

"St. Matthew VII." Text of Works.

Amy Reed says that "The Judgment Day" was written in 1721, (Reed, p. 100).

Hill was influential upon several later eschatological writers, notably Isaac Watts, James Thomson, and Joseph Mitchell. Hoxie Neale Fairchild says that Watts and Thomson recommended a revival of Aaron Hill (Fairchild, I, p. 517). Joseph Mitchell wrote the following lines from "The Muse's Original" (See Mitchell) as a tribute to him.

Sure in thy Breast, the ancient Hebrew Fire
Reviv'd, glows hot, and blazes forth!
How strong, how fierce, the Flames aspire,
Of thy interior Worth,
When burning Worlds thou set'st before our Eyes,
And draws't tremendous Judgment from the Skies!

1721

The London Mercury, October 28.

The occasion for this untitled poem is England's fear of the plague.

1722

The Post-Boy, December 18-20, "To the Rev. Dr. S. John, on his Preaching at S. Paul's before the Sons of the Clergy; Dec. 13, 1722. By an unknown lady."

This is a panegyric in which the audience response produced by this clergyman is compared to that which will be produced by the last trumpet.

1725

Wolcott, Roger, "A Paraphrase of Proverbs XVI:18, Pride goeth before Destruction."

"An Account of the Agency of the Honourable John Winthrop." Text of Poetical Meditations being the Improvement of some Vacant Hours (New London: Printed and Sold by T. Graen), 1725.

1726

Mallet, David, "William and Margaret," p. 48. Text of Chalmers XIV.

1726 is an approximate date for this poem.

1726

Thomson, James, "Winter." Text of Chalmers XII.

Amy Reed says that "Winter" was written in 1726 (Reed, p. 167).

1727

Pitt, Christopher, "Psalm xlii Paraphrased," pp. 383-384. Text of Chalmers XII.

1729

Chandler, Mary, "A Description of Bath," pp. 7-8.

"To Mrs. Moore, a poem of Friendship written in 1729," p. 62. Text of The Description of Bath, A Poem, Humbly Inscribed to Her Royal Highness the Princess Amelia, with several other Poems, 7th ed. (London: Printed for James Leake), MDCCCLV.

1729

Mitchell, Joseph, "Ode on the Power of Musick Inscribed to Mr. Alexander Malcolm," Sec. XII, Vol. I.

"An Ode on Buchanan Inscribed to Mr. Thomas Gordon," pp. 43-44.

"Isaiah xlii Paraphrased," Vol. I, 166-169.

"The Muse's Original."

Text of Poems on Several Occasions (London: Printed for the author), 1729.

1730

Berkeley, George (Bishop), "Verses on the Prospect of Planting Arts and Learning in America." Text of Works, 1901, 4 vols., Vol. IV.

Bishop Berkeley uses the traditional Scriptural idea (from Daniel and the Revelation) that history will culminate in a fifth world empire to introduce his very unconventional theory that humanity is progressing and that this progress will find consummation in an ideal American civilization. One of these eschatological lines—"Westward the course of empire takes its way"—is written across the Rocky Mountain mural in the United States capitol. The poem resulted from the enthusiasm which was generated by a visit to the American colonies around 1728. The Oxford Companion to English Literature fixes the date of composition between 1728 and 1731.

1730

Woodward, John, "Hymn to the Creatour. In Imitation of Milton's Style." Text of Poems on Several Occasions (Oxford: Printed at Clarendon Printing House), 1730.

1731

An untitled poem from The Flower-Piece. A Collection of Miscellany Poems, by several hands (London: J. Walthoe), MDCCXXXI.

1731

"A Winter's Thought," by Mr. E., p. 73, from The Gentleman's Magazine, February 1731.

1731

Thompson, Isaac, "The Complaint."

"The Letter. 'Pastoral VI,' p. 34.

Text of A Collection of Poems Occasionally Written on Several Subjects (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: printed by John White), 1731.

1732

Whaley, John, "An Essay on Painting," pp. 16-20.

"Job 20: 5, 6, 7, 8 Imitated," p. 20

Text of A Collection of Poems (London: Printed for the Author), MDCCXXXII.

1733

Masters, Mary, "A Meditation upon these Words, Arise ye Dead, and come to Judgment," pp. 186-192. Text of Poems on Several Occasions (London: Printed by T. Browne), MDCCXXXIII.

1734

"The Day of Judgment," by J-l M-r-ce, from The Gentleman's Magazine, February, 1734.

1734

Trapp, Joseph, "Thoughts on the Four Last Things, Death, Judgment, Heaven, Hell. A Poem in Four Parts," Part II, "Judgment." (London: Printed by F. Wright), MDCCXXXIV.

1735

Browne, Moses, "On Life, Death, Judgment, Heaven and Hell." Text of The Gentleman's Magazine Extraordinary, 1735.

"An Essay on the Universe," Books I and III. Text of Poems on Various Subjects Many Never Printed Before (London: Printed by and for Edward Cave), MDCCXXXIX.

"Sunday Thoughts." Text of Sunday Thoughts containing the Publick, Family, and Solitary Duties in which, Particularly, the Article of Gospel-Predaching is freely and largely Considered (London: Printed for J. Payne and J. Bouquet), MDCCL.

(Continued)

Browne, Moses (continued)

This poet was awarded the fifty-pound prize for his verses "On Life, Death, Judgment, Heaven and Hell." See the entry under The Gentleman's Magazine Extraordinary for comments about this poem.

1735

Gay, J., "On Eternity," p. 44. Text of The Christian Poet.

In six lines, Gay describes the conflagration, when "the subterraneous flame shall burst its prison."

1735

An untitled anonymous poem in The Christian Poet (see Pomfret), pp. 2-3.

1735

"Verses," an anonymous poem in The Christian Poet.

1735

"On the Resurrection," an anonymous poem in The Christian Poet.

1735

The Gentleman's Magazine Extraordinary is devoted to a contest for the best poem on the subject of "Life, Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell." Thirteen entries have been used in the present study. Since almost all of the poems have the above title, they are distinguished by Roman numerals and will be referred to throughout this study as Contestant I, II, etc. The decision was given in February, 1736, and reads as follows:

- "Number VII. Best, Entitled to 50 l.
- Number VIII. Second, Entitled to 5 l.
- Number I. Third, Entitled to Large Paper Magazines.
- Number VI. Fourth, to a Small Paper Set."

No names were divulged for either contestants or judges, but during the course of the present research the authors of numbers V and VII were identified as Jane Brereton and Moses Browne respectively. No reasons were given by the judges for their choices, but The Gentleman's Magazine published a non-authoritative article of criticism by "Z.A." immediately after the decision which probably reflects the attitude of the judges accurately enough.

"I concluded long ago, that No. VII. and No. VIII. would be reckon'd the best Poems,...and I think also No. I. and VI. justly entitled to the other Prizes;...with Submission to better Critics, I will venture to guess at the Causes, why the Judges esteem'd 'em all inferior to the 4 abovemention'd.

"No. II. is a pretty allegorical Essay, but is too short, and seems to want that Solemnity which the Subjects required, and which perhaps chiefly gave No. VII the Preference to No. VIII.

(Continued)

The Gentleman's Magazine (continued)

"No. III. is written with a Spirit of Piety, but the Author has not taken due Care to elevate his Style, 'tis too plain, too low, for the Importance of the Subjects and the Spirit of Poetry is wanting.

"No. IV. is in the opposite extreme: In aiming at Sublimity, the Poet becomes incomprehensible; I confess 'tis the most Pompous and Sounding, but with all the most unintelligible Rhapsody I ever read; a great Part of it seems necessary to be translated into a Language better understood.... I have met with several Persons who admire it. This, no doubt, is owing to the Spirit with which it is Written, indeed a very warm one, and which may perhaps, under proper Regulations, hereafter carry off a first Prize....

"No. V [by Jane Brereton] is a good Piece, I have read it often, and always with Pleasure, I'm sorry it is so short that it but just touches on the Subjects, and where it alludes to Scripture is too Scrupulous in keeping almost to the very Letter of it. Milton indeed has often done the like; but always to the Disadvantage of his Poetry;...

"No. IX. would certainly have been one of the four successful Poems, had it taken in all the Subjects, but Heaven and Hell, are scarcely mentioned...."

These comments are sufficient to show the kind of poetry which probably seemed most acceptable to the period for an eschatological subject.

1736

Carter, Elizabeth, "Epitaph on a Young Lady, 1735.

"Translated, 1736," p. 16. This is the only title given.

The preceding poem is called Anacreon Ode XXX. 1734. It begins: "When fate has once consigned thee to the tomb."

"Thoughts at Midnight, 1739," pp. 38-39.

"Written at Midnight in a Thunder Storm. To Miss Lynch, 1743."

"To Mrs. Vesey, 1766."

"Inscription, in the Cloisters of Canterbury Cathedral, to the Memory of 'Stephen, Son of Crisp Stephen Hall, Esq. who died an infant, 1792,'" pp. 119-120. Text of Memoirs of the Life of Mrs. Elizabeth Carter with a new Edition of her Poems; to which are added, some Miscellaneous Essays in Prose, together with notes on the Bible, and Answers to objections concerning the Christian religion, ed. the Rev. Montagu Pennington, 3rd ed. (London: Printed for F. C. and J. Rivington), 1816, Vol. II.

1736

The Gentleman's Magazine, "The Christian Hero," pp. 346-347.

This poem includes only a small eschatological passage—one in which virginity is mentioned as a criterion of judgment at the last day because Christ was a virgin.

1736

Wesley, Samuel, the Younger, "An Hymn to God the Father," p. 2.

"Epitaph on an Infant," p. 12.

"An Hymn to God the Son," p. 186.

"On the Death of a Friend, 1736."

Text of Poems on Several Occasions (London: Printed for the Author by E. Say), MDCCXXXVI.

This Samuel Wesley was a high churchman, says Fairchild (I, 295).

1737

Read's Weekly Journal or British Gazetteer, January 1, "Epitaph on Mr. Hasell Cradock, Senior Surgeon to Guy's Hospital."

1739

Howe, Elizabeth, "The Conflagration: an Ode." Text of The History of Joseph. A Poem, in Ten Books with Miscellaneous Poems (Boston: Printed and sold by J. T. Buckingham), 1815.

"Hymn III," Vol. I, pp. 33-34.

"A Description of Hell," Vol. I, pp. 49-52.

"On Heaven," Vol. I, p. 53.

"Revelation Chapt. XVI," Vol. I, pp. 78-80.

"Psalm LXXII," pp. 126 and 127.

"Soliloquy XVII," Vol. I, p. 211.

"Soliloquy XX," Vol. I, p. 213.

"Soliloquy XXIV," Vol. I, pp. 219-220.

"Soliloquy XXIX," Vol. I, p. 226.

"Soliloquy XXXVIII," Vol. I, pp. 237-238.

"Soliloquy XXXIX," Vol. I, p. 239.

"Soliloquy XLI," Vol. I, pp. 243-244.

Text of Miscellaneous Works in Prose and Verse (London: Printed for R. Hett), MDCCXXXIX.

"The Conflagration: an Ode" was also published in Miscellaneous Works.

1740

Boyse, Samuel, "The Deity."

"Goodness."

"Providence," p. 550.

"Rectitude," p. 551.

"Friendship An Ode," p. 532. Text of Chalmers XIV.

R. A. Davenport dates "The Deity" at 1740 in his life of the poet, in Vol. LIX.

1740

Travers, H., "A Paraphrase upon the Ninth Chapter of the Revelation,"
p. 46. Text of Miscellaneous Poems and Translations by H. Travers
(York: C. Ward and R. Chandler), MDCCXL.

1740-1762

Wesley, John and Charles

The following poems are taken from the Osborn edition given at the end of the entire list. References to volume and page of this text follow the name of each poem. References to original publications appear at the end of each group of poems which appeared in a specific hymnal.

Isaiah 55 paraphrased, I, 208.

Isaiah 35 paraphrased, I, 291.

"Hymn to Christ the Prophet," I, 319.

"Blessed are they that mourn," I, 331.

Isaiah 44:22 paraphrased, I, 338.

"Complete Salvation," trans. from Zinzendorff, I, 348.

"The Believer's Triumph," I, 348.

"The Communion of Saints," I, 359-366.

Isaiah 64 paraphrased, I, 366.

From Hymns and Sacred Poems, 1740.

Hymn LXIV, II, 182.

Job XIX, "I know that my Redeemer lives," II, 182-183.

"A Funeral Hymn," I Thess. 4:13, &c, II, 186-187.

"A Midnight Hymn," II, 191-193.

"A Thanksgiving," II, 269.

Revelation I:7 paraphrased, II, 339.

From Hymns and Sacred Poems, 1742.

Hymn XI, "The Cry of a Reprobate," III, 24.

Hymn XVII, "The Horrible Decree," III, 34.

From Hymns on God's Everlasting Love, 1741.

Hymn III, Zephania 1:12, &c; 2:1, 2, IV, 60.

Hymn VIII, "Rejoice Evermore," IV, 141.

"The Mission of the Spirit," IV, 169.

From Hymns for our Lord's Resurrection, 1748.

Hymn XXI, IV, 190.

Hymn XXII, IV, 190.

From Hymns of Petition & Thanksgiving for the Promise of the Father, IV, 1746.

Hymn XXXV, "For the Arians, Socinians, Deists, Pelagians, etc.," VI, 139.

"Thy Kingdom Come," VI, 140.

"The Signs of the Times," VI, 144.

Hymn XXXVIII, "Thy Kingdom Come," VI, 142-143.

Hymn XXXIX, "Thy Kingdom Come," VI, 143-144.

Hymn XL, "Thy Kingdom Come," VI, 144-145.

From Hymns of Intercession for all Mankind, 1758.

(Continued)

Wesley, John and Charles (continued)

Hymn XXXV, "A Thought on Judgment," VI, 401-402.

Hymn XCVII, VI, 459.

From Hymns for Children, 1763.

Isaiah 2:17, 19 paraphrased, "They shall go into the holes of the rocks," IX, 375.

Isaiah 11:6, 7, "The Wolf shall dwell with the lamb," IX, 385-386.

Isaiah 11:8, "The sucking Child shall play on the Hole of the Asp," IX, 386.

Isaiah 11:9, "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy, &c," IX, 386.

Isaiah 64:17, 18: "Behold I create new Heavens," IX, 461.

Isaiah 66:15, 16, "For Behold, the Lord will come with Fire," IX, 467-468.

From Short Hymns on Select Passages of the Holy Scriptures, 1762.

Daniel 2:35 paraphrased, "The Stone that smote the Image became, &c," X.

Daniel 12:13, X, 72.

Joel, 2, 3, X, 86-89.

Malachi 4:5, X, 135.

Matthew 24 paraphrased, X, 366-381.

Matthew 25:26-46, X, 390-396.

From Short Hymns on Select Passages of the Holy Scriptures, 1762.

Revelation 5:22 paraphrased, XIII, 231-241.

Text of The Poetical Works of John and Charles Wesley, ed. G. Osborn (London), 1868-72, 13 vols.

The editor tells us in volume V that John Wesley supervised the publication of all the publications from which the poems listed above are taken.

1741

The Gentleman's Magazine, "Friendship: An Ode."

This poem discusses the idea that friendship will continue in the hereafter.

1742

Haywood, Eliza, "To Diana on her Asking me how I liked a fine Poem of Mr. Hills," pp. 285-286. Text of Secret Histories, Novels, and Poems Written by Mrs. Eliza Haywood, 4th ed. (London: Printed for R. Ware), 1742, Vol. II.

1743

Blair, Robert, "The Grave," p. 68. Text of Chalmers XV.

The Oxford Companion places the date of "The Grave" at 1743.

1744

Brereton, Jane, "Thoughts on Life, Death, Judgment, Heaven and Hell," pp. 1-9. Text of Poems on Several Occasions by Mrs. Jane Brereton, Letters to her Friends, and an Account of her Life (London: Printed by Edward Cave at St. Johns Gate), 1744.

This poem appeared in 1735 as No. V of the Gentleman's Magazine contest. The following comment was made about it in an article which followed a report of the decisions:

"No. V is a good Piece, I have read it often, and always with Pleasure, I'm sorry it is so short that it but just touches on the Subjects, and where it alludes to Scripture is too Scrupulous in keeping almost to the very Letter of it. Milton indeed has often done the like; but always to the Disadvantage of his Poetry;..." From The Gentleman's Magazine, February, 1736.

1745

Leapor, Mary, "Job's Curse and his Appeal. Taken out of Job, Chap. I, XXXI."

"A Prayer for the Year, 1745," p. 69. Text of Poems upon Several Occasions (London: Printed and sold by F. Roberts in Warwick-Lane), MDCCXLVIII.

1746

Blacklock, Thomas, "An Elegy on Mr. Pope," p. 82. Text of Poems on Several Occasions (Glasgow: Printed for the author), 1746.

"Psalm I Imitated," p. 184. Text of Chalmers XVIII.

1748

Cobden, Edward, "An Hymn for Easter Day," pp. 4-5.

[The above poem is one of a collection called Christian Hymns on the Great Festivals to be Sung in Parochial Churches.]

"An Hymn on Ascension Day," pp. 5-6.

"To the Honourable Lady Betty Spellman upon her showing a Lock of King Charles the First's Hair which he sent to her Great Grand-mother, the Countess of Monmouth, who had been his Governess, in a letter Written at Seven Years Old, which is still Preserved under his own Hand." Text of Discourses and Essays in Prose and Verse (London), MDCCLVII.

The poetical part of this work is in the second half of the book, is paged separately, and is entitled Essays in Poetry or Poems on Several Occasions.

1748

Warton, Jane, "Ode on the Death of the Author. By a Lady." [Daughter.] Text of Poems on Several Occasions by Thomas Warton, the Elder, reproduced from the edition of 1748, The Facsimile Text Society (New York), 1930.

1748

Warton, Thomas, the Elder, "Ode on the Passion."

"The Song of Judith Paraphrased from the Apocrypha."

"A Paraphrase on the Thirteenth Chapter of Isaiah."

"An Epistle to Dr. Young, upon his Poem on the Last Day." Text of Poems on Several Occasions reproduced from the edition of 1748, The Facsimile Text Society (New York), 1930.

1750

The Bath Journal, July 23, an untitled poem by an anonymous author who calls himself "Symposius."

1750

Smart, Christopher, "The Eternity of the Supreme Being," [Seaton Prize for 1750], pp. 28-29.

"The Power of the Supreme Being," p. 34.

"A Story of a Cock and a Bull," p. 66.

Text of Chalmers XVI.

Psalms CXXVI as translated by Mr. Smart.

Text of the St. James Chronicle, June 7, 1764.

1753

Ogilvie, John, "The Day of Judgment." Text of Poems on Several Subjects to which is Prefix'd an Essay on the Lyric Poetry of the Ancients in two letters inscribed to the Right Honourable James Lord Deskford (London: Printed for G. Keith), MDCCLXII.

The first edition of the poem was in 1753, but the poet says in the preface that it was finished before he was seventeen years old.

1755

Barber, Mary, "Occasion'd by Reading the Memoirs of Anne of Austria Written by Madame de Motteville, inscrib'd to the Right Honourable the Countess of Hertford."

"Occasion'd by Seeing Some Verses Written by Mrs. Constantia Grierson upon the Death of her Son," pp. 40-41.

"Written for my Son, in a Bible which was Presented to Him," p. 82.

Text of Poems on Several Occasions (London: C. Rivington), MDCCLXXV.

"Widow Gordon's Petition to the Right Honourable the Lady Carteret," pp. 15-16. Text of Poems by Eminent Ladies (London: Printed for R. Baldwin), MDCCLV.

The identifying date has been placed at the year in which the last of these poems was published.

1755

Tollett, Elizabeth, "My Own Epitaph," pp. 41-42.

"Anne Boleyn to King Henry VIII, An Epistle," p. 94.

"The Microcosm, Asserting the Dignity of Man," p. 108. Text of Poems on Several Occasions with Anne Boleyn to King Henry VIII. An Epistle (London: Printed for John Clarke), MDCCLV.

1757

Arnold, Cornelius, "The Forty-Sixth Psalm," pp. 225-226. Text of Poems on Several Occasions (London), MDCCLVII.

1757

Brewster, Martha, "An Essay on the Four Ages of Man Resembling the Four Seasons of the Year," p. 6.

"On the Last Judgment," pp. 7-9.

"God's Judgments are our Monitors," pp. 16-17.

"The Twenty-Fourth Psalm Paraphras'd," p. 13.

"A Farewell to some of my Christian Friends at Goshen, in Lebanon, April fifth, 1745," p. 13.

"Translated into Verse, in a few Minutes Extempore, as a Vindication from that Aspersions; which was accordingly performed as follows," p. 22.

"To the Subjects of the Special Grace of God and its Opposers Composed August 1741," p. 20.

"A Funeral Poem on the Death of the Rev. Isaac Watts, D.D.," pp. 23-25. Text of Poems on Divers Subjects (New-London, printed: Boston, reprinted), 1757.

Martha Brewster was an American poet who admired Isaac Watts with whose Calvinistic theology she was in sympathy. Her ideas about the end of the world are conventional with an American slant. She looks upon the current wars with the Indians as indications of soon-coming judgment.

1757

Glynn, Richard or Robert, "Day of Judgment" [Seaton prize for religious poetry, 1757], pp. 249-258. Text of The British Poems Including Translations in 100 Volumes. LVIII: Falconer, Day, Blair, Glynn, Porteus, ed. R. A. Davenport (Chiswick: Printed by C. Whittingham), 1822.

1758

Hawkins, William, "An Essay on Genius," p. 240.

"A Paraphrase on the Te Deum," pp. 256-258.

Text of Dramatic and Other Poems, Letters, Essays &c (Oxford: Printed by W. Jackson), MDCCLVIII, Vol. II.

1760

Steele, Anne, "Victory over Death through Christ: I Cor. xv. 57," I, 151.

"Psalm I paraphrased," II, 11.

"Hymn to Jesus," II, 228.

Text of The Works of Anne Steele (1808), 2 vols.

1761

Mickle, Julius, "A Night Piece," p. 516. Text of Chalmers XVII.

Chalmers gives the date 1761 as the first for this poem.

1762

Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle, April 19-21, "On the Miracles which attended our Blessed Saviour's Crucifixion."

1762

Meditations on the Incomprehensibility of God in His Works of Creation, Providence, and Redemption: As Also, on the General Judgment (Boston: Printed and sold by Fowle and Draper), MDCCLXII.

This poem is bound with Martha Brewster's Poems on Divers Subjects, and is ascribed to an anonymous author, "J.W.," who was probably an American.

1762

Redmond, William, M.D., "Ode." Text of Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle, June 4, 1762.

1764

Erskine, Ralph, "The Believer's Principles, part VI," Sec. 3 (last stanza) & 4, pp. 266, 267. Text of Gospel Sonnets; or Spiritual Songs in Six Parts (Aberdeen: George Robert King), 1844.

The Believer's Principles was first published in 1764.

1765

Browne, Isaac Hawkins, "On the Immortality of the Soul," Book II, ll. 298-405. Text of Poems upon Various Subjects, Latin and English (London: Printed for J. Nourse), MDCCLXVIII.

This poem was published in 1765 in an English translation by J. Cranwell. Soame Jenyns rendered the translation used here.

1765

The St. James Chronicle or the British Evening Post, March 12, "The Last Wish of an Humble Sinner."

1765

Wodhull, Michael, "The Equality of Mankind," p. 71. Text of Poems, a revised edition (London: Printed by Nichols and Son), 1804.

The Library of Congress card catalogue lists a 1765 edition of this poem.

1766

Bruce, Michael, "The Last Day," pp. 27-45.

"Ode—to a Fountain," p. 47. Text of Park, 1828 edition, Vol. 33.

"Coming of the Messiah," p. 260. (This is the same as Logan's Hymn No. 7.)

"Paraphrase of First Thessalonians IV:13-18, 1751 Version," pp. 268-269.

"In latter days the mount of God..." [Note: The paraphrase entitled "Sorrow Not Without Hope" is a revised version.] Text of The Life (Continued)

Bruce, Michael (continued)

and Complete Works of Michael Bruce, ed. John Guthrie Barnett. The College Edition (London: Charles J. Thynne and Jarvis), 1927.

The paraphrase of Isaiah 2:2-6 (18th paraphrase) is Bruce's improvement on what was published as Paraphrase No. 28. The paraphrase of First Thessalonians 4:13-18: "In latter days, the mount of God" of the 1751 edition was adapted in 1781. It begins "Behold! the mountain of the Lord in latter days shall rise," pp. 267-268. This poem is identical with John Logan's Hymn No. V.

Michael Bruce grew up in a seceding Scottish family. His father was influenced by Ebenezer Erskine. He was a friend to John Logan who was accused of pilfering some of his poetry. Bruce wrote "The Last Day" while still in college, where it was much admired by some and considered unsuccessful by others. (The information above was taken from John Guthrie Barnett's Life and Complete Works of Michael Bruce, pp. 29-30.) 1766 is an approximate date for "The Last Day," based upon the fact that the poet was born in 1746 and the poem was written while he was still in college.

1766

Lloyd, Evan, The Methodist. A Poem by the Author of "The Powers of the Pen" and "The Curate," pp. 26-27. (London: Printed by the Author, Sold by Richardson and Urquhart), MDCCLXVI.

1767

Dodd, William, "Reflections on Death." Text of Poems, 1767.

1768

Gray, Thomas, "The Descent of Odin." Text of Chalmers XIV.

Gray and Walters, both of whom mention "Lok's last flame," give the only non-Christian eschatology found among the poets listed in this bibliography.

1769

Chatterton, Thomas, "The Parlyamente of Sprytes—Elle's Spryte Speaketh," p. 388. Text of Chalmers XV.

1769 is an approximate date of publication.

1769

Gerrard, John, "An Epistle to a Young Deacon about to take Priest's Orders," pp. 99-102. Text of Poems (London: Printed for the Author), MDCCLXIX.

1769

The Middlesex Journal, November 30. "Written by the Prisoner supposed to have robbed Lord and Lady Weymouth."

The prisoner, who is innocent, consoles himself with the thought that those who condemn the innocent here will be doomed to everlasting woe at the day of judgment.

1770

Emily, Charles, "Death," stanza xvii. Text of A Collection of Poems in Four Volumes by Several Hands (London: Printed for G. Peearch), MDCCLXX, 2nd ed., Vol. I.

1770

Middlesex Journal, March 27. An untitled, anonymous poem dealing with the day of judgment and the immortality of the soul.

1770

Middlesex Journal, October 30. An untitled poem by a man who calls himself "Alexander." It is a rather pleased contemplation of the wrath that will fall at the last day upon various kinds of scoundrels whom the author sees on every hand.

1772

Brooke, Henry, "Redemption." Text of Redemption (London: Printed by T. J. Carnegie), MDCCLXXII, last lines.

1773

Byron, John, "Remarks on Dr. Middleton's Examination of the Lord Bishop of London's Discourses concerning the Use and Intent of Prophecy. 2 Peter 1:19, 'We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts,'" p. 218.
 "The Collect for Advent Sunday," p. 255.
 "On Works of Mercy and Compassion considered as the Proofs of True Religion."
 "On the Origin of Evil," p. 294.
 Text of Chalmers XV.

An entry in the Union Catalogue indicates 1773 as the date of publication for the "Remarks."

1773

Graeme, James, "Hymn to the Eternal Mind, 1773." Text of The Poems of Jenyns, Wilkie, and Graeme in The British Poets, Vol. LXXI, ed. R. A. Davenport (Chiswick: Printed by G. Whittingham), 1822.

The distinguishing mark of this work is the poet's idea that no man can forfeit eternal life. Harder (p. 119) dates the poem at 1773.

1774

Roberts, William Hayward, "A Poetical Essay on the Existence of God, Part II, On the Attributes of God," pp. 51-56. Text of Poems by Dr. William Hayward Roberts of Eton College (London: Printed for J. Wilkie), MDCCLXXIV.

1778

Crabbe, George, "The Resurrection, 1778." Text of The Poetical Works of George Crabbe, ed. A. J. Carlyle and R. M. Carlyle (London: Oxford University Press, Humphrey Milford), 1932.

1781

Logan, John, Paraphrases of the Psalms: Hymn V, VI, VII for the Scottish hymnal. Text of Chalmers XV.

There has been a considerable controversy about the authorship of parts of these paraphrases, but the Rev. R. Small seems to have defended Logan successfully from the charge of having pilfered from the pen of his friend, Michael Bruce. See Chapter I, "Chronology." 1781 is the approximate date of composition.

1784

Maurice, Thomas, "Westminster Abbey." Text of Westminster Abbey with other Occasional Poems (London: W. Bulmer), 1813.

An entry in the Union Catalogue indicates that this poem was published by the author in 1784.

1785

Blake, William, "Little Girl Lost," pp. 68-69.

"The Little Girl Found," pp. 70-71.

"For a Picture of the Last Judgment: Dedication," p. 139.

"Time," p. 234.

Text of Poems of William Blake, ed. William Butler Yeats (New York: The Modern Library), 1929.

"Milton, A Poem in Two Books to Justify the Ways of God to Man,"

Book I, pp. 324, 342-343, and Book II, pp. 366-368, 371-372.

"Vala, or the Four Zoas. Night the Ninth Being the Last Judgment," pp. 120-147. Text of The Writings of William Blake (The Nonesuch Press), MCMXXV, Vol. II.

For the sake of convenience Blake's work has been dated at 1785. Sherburn (p. 1095) speaks of his rise to prominence in the 1780's.

1785

Burns, Robert, "A Dedication to Gavin Hamilton, Esq."

"Holy Willie's Prayer."

Text of The Complete Poems of Robert Burns (Boston and New York: Houghton-Mifflin Company, The Riverside Press, Cambridge, Mass.), 1926, Vol. II.

"The Holy Fair," p. 344. Text of English Poems—The Restoration and Eighteenth Century, ed. Walter C. Bronson (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press), 1908.

For the sake of convenience these poems have been given the approximate date of 1785.

1785

Cowper, William, "Truth," p. 534.

"Hope," p. 542.

"Charity," pp. 547-550.

Hymn LXIII, p. 584.

"The Task," Book VI--"The Winter's Walk at Noon," pp. 600-601.

"On a Similar Occasion," 1790, 1792.

The reference is to "Stanzas subjoined to the Yearly bill of mortality of the Parish of All-saints, Northampton."

Text of Life and Works of William Cowper, ed. T. S. Grimshaw (Boston: Crosby and Nichols), 1864.

1785

Perronet, Edward, "The Second Psalm," p. 33.

"A Thought on Malachi III," p. 59.

"A Thought on the New Year 1785," p. 89.

"Quid De Mortuis--What say you of the Dead?" p. 89.

"What Is Life?" pp. 120-121.

"A Thought on Jeremiah XXIII:23, 24."

"Who Is the Right Calvinist and Who Is the Right Arminian?" p. 124.

This poem is not eschatological, but it shows that the poet is not a predestinarian and reveals his spirit of tolerance.

Text of Hymns and Occasional Verses for the Instruction and Amusement of the Candidly Serious and Religious (London: Daniel Sedgwick, Hamilton Adams, and Co.), 1865.

The MS preface included in this work is dated 1785. It seems probable that the eschatological poems were included in the 1785 edition: A [illeg.] Hymns and Sacred [illeg.] (J. Julian), 1785.

1786

Walters, John, "An Ode on the Immortality of the Soul." Text of Poems with Notes (Oxford), MDCCLXXXVI.

1786

Yearsley, Ann, "To Mrs. M-----s." Text of Poems on Several Occasions, 4th ed. (London), 1786.

1788

Haley, William, "Ode Inscribed to John Howard from William Haley," p. 138. Text of Poems and Plays (London: T. Cadell), 1788, Vol. I.

1789

Gilbank, William, "The Day of Pentecost," Book XI, pp. 236-242. Text of The Day of Pentecost or Man Restored, A Poem in Twelve Books (London: Printed by H. Raynell), 1789.

This poem reviews the history of mankind up to the Day of Pentecost. The day of judgment is worked into Book XI as part of a vision given to Abraham after he had successfully passed his test regarding the sacrifice of Isaac. The vision was granted in response to the patriarch's request to be "made acquainted with the particular nature and extent of the Christian Sacrifice."

1790

Walpole, Horace, "Epitaph on Two Piping-Bullfinches of Lady Ossory's, Buried under a Rose-Bush in her Garden," pp. 389-390. Text of The Works of Horatio Walpole (London: G. G. & J. Robinson), 1798, Vol. I.

In case this little jeu d'esprit should subject the author to misrepresentation, as touching with unbecoming levity upon serious subjects, an extract of a letter from Mr. Walpole to Mr. Mason, who it seems had thus misconceived his meaning, is here subjoined. It not only completely vindicates the innocent playfulness of his muse, but is a serious profession of serious opinions, which, it is presumed, all his readers will see with pleasure. E.

To Mrs. Mason.

Nov. 1783.

"...You amaze me by even supposing that the epitaph I sent you could allude to the immortality of the soul. Believe me, I think it as serious a subject as you do; nor, I am sure, did you ever hear me drop a hint of doubting it. The three last lines, which reasonably offended you, if you so interpreted them, were intended to laugh at that absurd idea of the beatified sitting on golden thrones, and chanting eternal hallelujahs to golden harps. When men ascribe their own puerile conceptions to the Almighty Author of every thing, what do they, but prove that their system is of human invention?—What can be more ridiculous, than to suppose that Omnipotent Goodness and Wisdom created and selected the most virtuous of its creatures to sing his praises to all eternity? It is an idea that I should think could never have entered but into the head of a king, who might delight to hear them chant birth-day odes for ever.

"Pray be assured that I never trifle on so solemn and dear an interest as the immortality of the soul, though I do not subscribe to every childish or fantastic employment that silly people have chalked out for it. There is no word in any language expressive enough of the adoration and gratitude we owe to the Author of all Good. An eternity of praises and thanks is due to him—but thence are we to infer, that that is the sole tribute in which he will delight, and the sole occupation he destines for beings on whom he has bestowed thought and reason?

"The epitaph did not deserve half a line to be said on it; but your criticism, indeed misconception of it, will excuse my saying so much in my own justification...."

1791

Williams, Helen Maria, "Paraphrases from Scripture—Isaiah xlix:15, 'Can a Woman forget her sucking Child, that she should not have Compassion on the Son of her Womb? etc.,' pp. 184-185. Text of Poems (London: Printed for T. Cadell), 1791, 2nd ed., 2 vols., Vol. I.

1792

Cumberland, Richard, "Calvary." Text of Calvary; or the Death of Christ, A Poem in Eight Books, A New Edition in Two Volumes (London: Lackington, Allen and Co.), 1800.

An earlier edition came out in 1792. At the end of this description of the crucifixion, Cumberland discusses the last judgment.

1793

Robinson, Mary, "Sight, Inscribed to John Taylor Esq. Occulist to His Majesty," Vol. II, pp. 25-26. Text of Poems (London: Printed by T. Spilsbury and Son), MDCCXCII.

1793

The Dorchester and Sherborne Journal, Nov. 15. Anonymous, untitled lines appear in an article based upon Rev. 14:15, 18, "Thrust in thy sickle and reap; for the harvest of the earth and its vines are ripe." It attacks Voltaire, atheistical France, and brutality to Negro slaves. The style and ideas of the author both suggest strongly that he is the same one who wrote articles and poems in later issues of this newspaper and who in some of these places proclaims himself a follower of John Wesley, in his later eschatology. Any of these poems will be referred to henceforth as "Wesleyan D" plus the date of publication in the Dorchester and Sherborne Journal.

1794

The Dorchester and Sherborne Journal, Jan. 3. In this issue are more lines within an article anticipating the soon-coming millenium. They seem to be the work of "Wesleyan D."

1794

The Dorchester and Sherborne Journal, Feb. 28. More lines by "Wesleyan D." appear in an article based upon the text: "He maketh wars to cease in all the world," Ps. xlvii:9; Isa. 2:4.

1794

The Dorchester and Sherborne Journal, Oct. 3. The article in which further verses by "Wesleyan D" appear is based upon the text: "The Nations shall learn war no more," Isa. iii:2, 4.

1797

Oisborne, Thomas, "The Duellist: An Elegy," p. 100.

"Epitaph on the Rev. William Mason," p. 118.

"Solitude, an Ode."

Text of Poems Sacred and Moral (London: Printed for T. Cadell, Jr. and W. Davies), 1799, 2nd ed.

1797 is an approximate date for the first edition.

1798

Woodhouse, James, "The Life and Lucubrations of Crispinus Scriblerus,"
 "Letter II [to his wife, Hannah] in Love Letters to My Wife, 1788.
 from The Life and Lucubrations of Crispinus Scriblerus. A
 Novel in Verse, Written in the Last Century." [First published
 in this edition--1896, according to the preface.] Text of
The Life and Works (London: Printed and published by the
 Leadenhall Press), 1896, 2 vols.

1798 is an approximate date for the "Lucubrations."

1798

The Weekly Register, Nov. 28, "A Missionary Hymn," by an anonymous author
 who calls himself "The Christian Spectator." This poet also antici-
 pates a soon-coming millenium, but unlike the later John Wesley
 thinks that once begun it will never cease. In this he resembles
 John Logan more than anyone else because no mention is made of a
 terrible second coming of judgment.

1799

Gray, Charlotte, "The Pleasures of Hope," Part II, pp. 73-74. Text of The
 Pleasures of Hope and Other Poems by Thomas Campbell (New York:
 Sage and Thompson), 1804.

This poem is included because it may have been written before
 1800 and because its imagery is noteworthy.

1799

Horne, Bishop, "The Vanity of Life, Isaiah xlv:6 'We all do fade as a leaf.'" Text of The Weekly Register, Feb. 27, 1799.

1799

The Weekly Register, Jan. 23, "Ode for New Year's Day."

This poem expects (like the Wesley of the later period) that
 the Pope will be deposed at the second coming of Christ.

1799

The Weekly Register, April 17, "Sonnet," by "Civis."

1799

The Weekly Register, May 15, "On Christ's Second Coming," by "R.B."

1799

The Weekly Register, July 31, "The Request," by "Vernis."

1799

The Weekly Register, Aug. 7. The poem is untitled but is based upon Jer.
 31:11: "The Lord has redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand
 that was stronger than he."

1799

The Weekly Register, Sept. 11. An untitled poem based upon Amos 9:9:
 "For lo, I will command, and I will sift the seed of the house of
 Israel from among all nations, like corn...yet the least grain shall
 not fall to the earth." The poem deals with the gathering of the
 Jews at the last day.

1799

The Weekly Register, Oct. 30. "An Antidote against unbelief, or, An
 Humble Attempt to Elucidate Scripture Harmony in Verse." The poem
 is based upon Deut. xxxii:4: "God is the Rock!—His Work is perfect."

1800

More, Hannah, "Bible Rhymes—Jonah, Jude, The Revelation." Text of The
 Works of Hannah More, Vol. VII (New York: Harper), 1855.

There is a bare possibility that these rhymes were written
 before 1800.

1800

The Monthly Magazine, Jan. 1, "On the Death of Tippoo Saib," by "J.P."

Since this poem must have been composed before 1800, and
 since the imagery is interesting, it was thought fit to include
 it in this bibliography. Tippoo Saib was a famous warrior of
 Marathon who chose to die amid the thunder of battle. The poet
 compares his death to that of the earth which will meet its doom
 also at the sound of the clanging trumpet and amidst war--the war
 of worlds.

1800

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