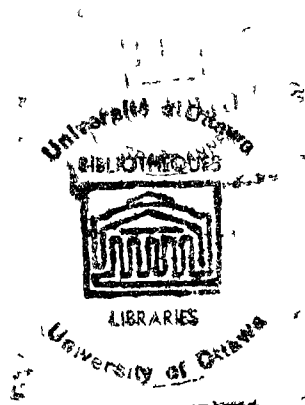


THE EVOLUTION OF CICERO'S ORATOR INTO
SIR PHILIP SIDNEY'S POET

by Edward C. Pappert, C.S.B.

Thesis presented to the Faculty of Arts
of the University of Ottawa through the
Department of English in partial fulfil-
ment of the requirements for the degree
of Doctor of Philosophy.



Toronto, Canada, 1953

UMI Number: DC53883

INFORMATION TO USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleed-through, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

UMI[®]

UMI Microform DC53883
Copyright 2011 by ProQuest LLC
All rights reserved. This microform edition is protected against
unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.

ProQuest LLC
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This thesis was prepared under the guidance of Doctor Emmett O'Grady, the Director of the Department of English.

The writer must also express appreciation to Doctor George Buxton under whose direction it was undertaken and partially completed.

Gratitude is also expressed to those others who have in any way contributed their time and efforts; by their suggestions, their performance of numerous favors and particularly by the sympathetic interest they showed and the enthusiasm they manifested in a project not of their own choosing.

CURRICULUM STUDIORUM

Place of Birth: Rochester, New York.

Religious Profession - Congregation of St. Basil,
August 15, 1933.

B.A., University of Toronto, 1938.

M.A., University of Detroit, 1944.
Thesis: The Literary Career of Cyril Tourneur.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
INTRODUCTION	v
I.- CICERO'S ORATOR	1
II.- QUINTILIAN'S ORATOR - STATESMAN	19
III.- PATRISTIC ORATOR - APOLOGIST	30
IV.- MEDIEVAL ORATOR - SCHOLAR	67
V.- RENAISSANCE ORATOR - CONTINENTAL HUMANIST	104
VI.- RENAISSANCE ORATOR - ENGLISH GENTLEMAN	141
VII.- RENAISSANCE ORATOR - POET	179
CONCLUSION	209
BIBLIOGRAPHY	212
Appendix	
1.- An Abstract.	221

INTRODUCTION

When the production of a thesis was first begun, the name of Philip Sidney did not at once present itself. An attempt was made to collect and sort bits of information on a subject which might be called, for want of a better name, "Decorum". In the course of this pursuit it was found necessary to study the numerous and tremendously involved figures of speech in which Greek writers phrased their work and which were frequently used by their English imitators. This proved rather involved and gave indications of leading to fields both unfamiliar and uninteresting to the writer.

In the process of this investigation, however, from time to time the notion of the exalted position of the poet and his function in society were noticed. Satisfying a curiosity about this matter eventually led me to a group of Renaissance writers in England who had seen fit to write about it. Prominent among these, and their acknowledged peer, was Sir Philip Sidney. Oddly enough, bibliographies of his work showed that to the time of the publication of Samuel A. Tannenbaum's Bibliography in 1941, out of 950 items of biography and criticism, there was not one study of Sidney's Defense of Poesie as representative of any tradition whatever. Private research failed to produce any studies of consequence for years, until 1948 when Michel Poirier made a summary study

of the whole career of Sidney and appended a bibliography of the intervening years. This likewise showed nothing had been done. The learned journals devoted to the Renaissance have not indicated the emergence of any new material up to the present.

Working backwards, it was discovered that Isocrates could be credited as a pioneer, in a literary way, of the social importance of the orator who was a close kinsman of the poet. In this particular field, attention was drawn to Cicero's treatise, De Oratore. It was decided that this would be a practical beginning, since the writer's interest did not lie in Greek antiquity and commentators made frequent allusions to Cicero as a source to which many subsequent writers were indebted.

The doctrine of the orator and his function in the Roman state were extracted from the De Oratore and then followed as a major pattern in the tapestry of the literature of the Christian era. It was found to be the fundamental doctrine at the base of the work of Quintilian a few generations later. The apologists of the Patristic period closely adhered to the basic notion but modified it according to the needs of the time and the impact of Christianity. The tremendous influence of St. Augustine on the Middle Ages insured the continuity of the doctrine through the earlier

and later stages of this era until what is called the Renaissance. With the coming of the Renaissance, a secular influence was keenly felt and the orator-statesman-apologist became a schoolmaster, a courtier, an educator, a governor, or as the general term was, a "Humanist". The terms orator, humanist, and poet become synonymous in the Renaissance. The account of this evolution is the content of the successive chapters of the thesis. Since the Renaissance produced such a bulk of material, it was thought advisable to consider it in two sections, one dealing with continental manifestations and then, as following from them, considering the English writers in the tradition. Lastly a chapter is devoted to Sidney himself.

Naturally the entire content of the individual authors could not be discussed, nor was there any need to do so since all that they produced was not pertinent to the matter at hand. Only such sections that had a bearing on the doctrine are mentioned, enough to indicate the continuity of the tradition. No attempt has been made to establish the validity of isolated statements made by certain authors, nor to refute them. They are taken just as they are, and related to the tradition of learned eloquence as formulated by Cicero.

This thesis is not properly a survey of the history of Education although educational matters are frequently introduced; not is it History while that subject some times calls for reference; nor is it a history of English literature or criticism, but rather the history of a particular problem of English literary criticism as it bears upon these fields.

CHAPTER I

CICERO'S ORATOR

Among the problems which have engaged the attention of thinking people almost from the dawn of creation, the problem of education stands quite close to the head of the list. Even before man tackled the problem, its elements existed in the mind of the Creator. He made man a certain way, to function in a certain way for a certain end. Then man in his turn, from time to time becoming aware of the fact that he was endowed with various gifts and that he should use them, both for his own perfection and as a means to contribute to the well-being of the society in which he lived and to prepare for eternity, set to work to devise means by which he could train his powers of mind and body to produce a desired end¹.

From what we can gather historically, it would seem that for many centuries the Hebrew people followed a kind of humanistic education which was not too far removed from the present-day concept of true humanism. They educated their children for eternity. They taught the things necessary for life on earth but their chief concern was for the life

¹ Werner Jaeger, Paideia, New York, Blackwell, 1950, I, xiii-xxix.

to come². Parents saw to it that this perspective was properly maintained until such time as the rabbinical schools assumed the responsibility of educating the race. Of course, where pagan principles prevailed, the balance between time and eternity was disturbed and man was educated or trained for some temporal end almost exclusively. The two great schools of Greece exemplify this point. The school of Sparta thought primarily that the cult of the body was essential to man's development, while the school of Athens, on the other hand, laid emphasis on things of the mind³. The history of education is an account of these emphases as they came to the fore in Europe and the New World. At one time or another, the stress was placed on the body, the mind, or in the acquiring of skills which ultimately would produce a highly developed animal with a keen mind. It was only occasionally that an educator even in the Christian era, vigorously strove to propagate a system which embodied these ideals and added to them some systematic presentation of the moral law and the teachings of Christ, not only to produce a highly skilled and conditioned animal but also to lay open the possibility that grace might build on that creature to produce the saint.

² P.R. Curoe, History of Education, New York, Globe, 1921, Chapter III; also John S. Brubacher, A History of the Problems of Education, New York, McGraw-Hill, 1947, Chapter 1.

³ William Boyd, The History of Western Education, London, Black, 1950, p. 13 and 17; also W. Jaeger, Paideia, p. 77-98 and 287 ff.

If man's program of education is to be a worthy one, it must be consonant with the Creator's who made man. The Creator destined man for a certain end and unless systems of training tend to bring man to a realization of that end, they are failures, no matter to what degrees of success they may attain.

If one were to attempt to trace the beginnings of any system of education aimed at the betterment of man, he would at once run into the process of listing names and notations of small pieces of theory which fit into the great puzzle of the educational picture. The name of Homer would be conspicuous⁴. The sophists cannot be left out. They were the teachers of Athens⁵. Plato, Aristotle, Gorgias and Isocrates must come in for their share of the praise that is showered on those who undertake to instruct men to make them better at something or other. Even the Stoics, who are generally thought of only as proponents of vigorous self-denial and the bearing of hardship for its own sake, contributed the notion that behind the literal sense of a piece of literature there might be found a more personal application of the text to a particular situation. This has come down to us as the allegorical interpretation of literature which will have considerable significance in a later portion of this work. The figures mentioned here are notable in what is called the East. They

⁴ John E. Sandys, History of Classical Scholarship, Cambridge, Univ. Press, 1903-1908, p. 19-37.

⁵ Jaeger, Paideia, I, 35-56 and 283-295.

are not of primary concern here, but they do indicate the length to which one must go to find the antecedents of modern problems of education. Moving to the West, the number of writers is fewer but the importance of one of them, Cicero, cannot be over-estimated⁶. Before him, however, mention must be made of Varro, who is responsible for organizing the liberal arts into a system of study which, when divided into the trivium and quadrivium, became the basis for all study through the Middle ages⁷.

This brings us to the first systematic presentation of an ideal of human culture. It is not the perfection of that culture, for that must come with Christianity. It is an ideal, however, which, when the light of Christianity is thrown upon it, will prevail through the glorious Middle Ages, through the Renaissance, and find another resurgence in the True Humanism of the present day⁸. This merely indicates its scope. The present study will stop at the middle of the seventeenth century, leaving the subsequent treatment to other hands. The ideal spoken of here is to be found especially in the De Oratore of Cicero, written about 55 B.C.

⁶ J.A. Thompson, The Classical Background of English Literature, London, Allen & Unwin, 1948, p. 121-123.

⁷ Sandys, History of Classical Scholarship, I, 178.

⁸ J. Maritain, True Humanism, London, Century Press, 1938, Introduction and p. 1-26.

The proper name for that Ciceronian ideal is "eloquentia"; it is the art of speaking according to the rules of perfect rhetoric. According to Cicero, true eloquence requires rhetoric as a kind of auxiliary. He is here placing in a secondary place the art of which he is undisputed master. He has laid down all the rules of the art and supplied countless examples in his own works. But he writes:

for I hold that eloquence is dependent upon the trained skill of highly educated men, while you consider that it must be separated from the refinements of learning and made to depend on a sort of natural talent and on practice.⁹

Cicero's adversary in the *De Oratore* was one Quintus who had asserted that a man is naturally gifted with eloquence, once he has mastered rhetoric. Cicero, on the other hand, affirmed that there was no eloquence in a man unless he first became acquainted with the various arts which are cultivated by the most learned among men. We will have occasion to examine more quotations on this point very shortly. Those who side with Quintus were men of considerable standing and when Cicero opposes their view it is not done lightly but rather as a forthright statement of his view. They boasted that by teaching any normally gifted man a set of rules and giving him some practice, he could deliver

⁹ Marcus Tullius Cicero, *De Oratore*, Harvard, Univ. Press, 1942, I, 2, 5.

eloquent speeches on any given occasion. They held that eloquence is a special art, distinct from all others, but, Cicero held that such segregation of intellectual disciplines resulted in their perishing.

But there are a great many other (evils) that have been inflicted on the wide domain of science by its being split up into separate departments. Do you really suppose that in the time of the great Hypocrates of Cos there were some physicians who specialized in medicine, and others in surgery and others in aptholmic causes? or that mathematics in the hands of Euclid or Archimedes, or music with Damon or Aristoxenus, or even literature with Aristophanes or Callimachus were such entirely separate subjects that nobody embraced culture as a whole, but instead of that everybody chose for himself a different division to work in?¹⁰

It is a general culture that Cicero is defending as the necessary basis for the authority of his orator. His use of rhetoric is something over and above learning which produces eloquence.

According to Cicero, eloquence was born in the Greek agora and in the Roman Forum; in the political meetings where citizens used to gather to discuss public affairs. On these occasions, some men spoke naturally better than others because of native gifts. To compensate for deficiencies on the part of the less gifted, certain techniques of "arts" of public speaking were developed. In time confusion arose concerning the roles of rhetoric and eloquence, so that the

¹⁰ Ibid., III, 33, 132.

true notion of eloquence was lost and all that was left was the art of public speaking. To remedy the situation Cicero advocates going back to the real and genuine source of eloquence, which is not found in text books, nor in rhetoric, nor in any introduction to culture.

And indeed in my opinion no man can be an orator complete in all points of merit, who has not attained a knowledge of all important subjects and arts. For it is from knowledge that oratory must derive its beauty and fullness, and unless there is such knowledge, well grasped and comprehended by the speaker, there must be something empty and almost childish in the utterance.¹¹

But Cicero's orator was not to be one who, when he had great knowledge thereby knew how to speak well. His orator is a man who in his own way is also a specialist, one whose job it is to be eloquent¹². Thus, the real issue between Cicero and those who wanted to reduce eloquence to rhetoric was: Is rhetoric a collection of practical formulas applicable to all subjects or is it a certain type of knowledge, namely, that which is required of a man who wants to speak well in public? Cicero's answer is: a type of knowledge.

What must a man know, then, in order to be able to express himself eloquently on practically any given subject? Obviously we do not expect a man to know everything in order to be eloquent. The type of eloquence that Cicero had in

11 Ibid., I, 6, 20.

12 Ibid., I, 8, 33.

mind was that of the great lawyer, the one who discusses great problems before tribunals, the statesman, the politician, the legislator. In short, he must know something about practically everything:

. . . the significance of the term "orator", and the mere act of professing eloquence, seem to undertake and to promise that every subject whatsoever, proposed to an orator, will be treated by him with both distinction and knowledge.¹³

The orator need not know everything; but he must have what we today consider general culture. With this he could, in a short time, learn enough about a subject that he could speak as well as even a specialist in that subject.

If however someone considers my expression 'whatever the topic' to be altogether too extensive, he may clip it and prune it to his individual taste, but to this much I shall hold fast -- though the orator be ignorant of what is found in all other arts and branches of study, and know only what is dealt with in debate and the practice of public speaking; none the less, if he should have to discourse even on these other subjects, then after learning the technicalities of each from those who know the same, the orator will speak about them far better than even the men who are masters of these arts.¹⁴

Even though there are numerous texts in the De Oratore which give ample evidence that Cicero demanded great learning on the part of his orator, he specifically singles out a knowledge of the division of philosophy which deals

13 Ibid., I, 6, 21.

14 Ibid., I, 15, 65.

with human life and manners¹⁵. Without this type of knowledge, thoroughly mastered, the orator is ineffective. This grasp of moral principles and the ability to be a complete judge of human nature is what Cicero means by "humanitas".¹⁶ This "humanitas" together with a knowledge of law seems to sum up the qualifications of the true orator. "Humanitas" is a term comprising many abilities and branches of knowledge. The orator should know dialectics; he must build his speech according to the rules of logic and the laws of rhetorical composition.¹⁷ This body of learning must be supplemented by a knowledge of history; the knowledge of the past, and the lives of famous men will provide the orator with an ample supply of examples which will fire the imagination of his audience¹⁸. The orator must read the poets, and generally speaking all that has been written; this Cicero calls "eruditio"¹⁹. The only principle of unity to be found in this vast maze of inorganic information is that all of it is to be used by the orator. It is a culture which rests upon an aptness to memorize in order to reproduce and to imitate what

15 Ibid., II, 16, 67, and III, 14, 54.

16 Ibid., III, 29, 111, and II, 9, 37.

17 Ibid., I, 33, 152.

18 Ibid., I, 34, 159.

19 Ibid., I, 34, 158.

Elsewhere in the same play we hear more of Prospero as a man, a kind of philosopher king - fitted admirably to rule:

And Prospero the prime duke, being so reputed
In dignity, and for the liberal arts
Without a parallel. Those being all my study,
The government I cast upon my brother
And to my state grew stranger, being transported
and rapt in secret studies.²⁴

This accumulation of knowledge by the exercise of the "Artes Liberales" was not a new idea with Cicero. It had come to Rome from Greece; his contribution was to relate them to eloquence as to their final cause and ultimate justification. Before we leave Cicero's orator, it might be well to note only a couple more passages for a further insight into the vast amount of learning he was supposed to have. After enumerating several outstanding features in his orator, Cicero says:

Accordingly, no rarer thing than a finished orator can be discovered among the sons of men. For attributes which are commended when acquired one apiece, and that in but modest degree, by other craftsmen in their respective vocations, cannot win approval when embodied in an orator unless in him they are all assembled in perfection.²⁵

²⁴ Ibid., I, ii, 72-77.

²⁵ Cicero, De Oratore, I, 28, 128.

Later on, in Book II, Cicero states, as he does on almost countless occasions:

All things whatsoever, that can fall under the discussion of human beings, must be aptly dealt with by him who professes to have this power (speaking), or he must abandon the name of eloquent.²⁶

To recapitulate the qualifications for an orator would practically demand a restatement of what has already been said. It should be borne in mind that the quotations selected are only a very small portion of the text devoted to this matter. If Cicero had a fault in writing, it must have been the constant repetition of the salient points in his argument. At the end of the Third Book, just before he launches into an elaborate and lengthy discussion of the ornate style, Cicero relates a story. With it, he hopes to send his adversaries in this debate away, convinced that the orator is the paragon of learning. He does, however, suggest that the hero may have overstepped the bounds of good taste, but for Cicero, it clinches the argument:

Hippias of Elis, visiting Olympia on the occasion of the quadrennial celebration of the celebrated games, boasted before an audience containing virtually the whole of Greece, that there was not a single fact included in any system of encyclopaedic knowledge with which he was not acquainted; and that he had not only acquired the accomplishments that form the basis of the liberal education of a gentleman,

26 Ibid., II, 2, 5.

mathematics, music, knowledge of literature and poetry, and the doctrines of natural science, ethics and political science, but had made with his own hand the ring he had on, the cloak he was dressed in and the boots he was wearing.²⁷

Certainly, Cicero had high ideals of learning although he never drew up any plan which could be used as the curriculum of a school of orators. He did not write treatises but dialogues on eloquence from which we may extract a list of the liberal arts which he considered the most suitable from that point of view. Other writers formulated different lists depending on what they wanted to produce. Varro, who has been mentioned as a predecessor of Cicero, lists the arts he considers necessary to produce encyclopaedic learning for its own sake²⁸, while Vitruvius gives a list calculated to produce the supreme architect²⁹. But the list extracted for Cicero's cultured doctus orator practically coincides with what will become the standard list of liberal arts in the schools of the Middle Ages. A later chapter of the thesis will be devoted to a survey of the principal works of that age which carried on the traditions of the Ciceronian ideal of learning.

But now the question to be proposed is, just why should anyone devote himself to such a program of encyclopaedic

27 Ibid., III, 32, 127.

28 Sandys, History of Classical Scholarship, I, 178.

29 Gwynn, Roman Education, p. 147.

learning? The answer is to be found in what Cicero himself had to say of the dignity and function of his orator in society. Once that question is answered we are in a position to see how the tradition passed from century to century until the time of Sir Philip Sidney. Section 8 of the First Book of the De Oratore is devoted almost entirely to extolling the glory of the orator. But along with the encomium we find some indication of the function of a poet in a free society. Cicero maintains that there is nothing more marvellous than that some men arise in society who can make effective a faculty bestowed by nature upon every man, nothing more pleasing to the understanding and the ear as a speech adorned and polished with wise reflections and dignified language, and no achievement more mighty and glorious than that the impulses of a crowd, the consciences of judges, the austerity of the Senate should suffer transformation through the eloquence of one man³⁰. He continues by asking what function is more kingly, so worthy of the foe, so generous, as to bring help to the suppliant, to raise up those that are cast down, and to maintain men in their civil rights³¹. He goes on at length detailing the office of orator and concludes

30 Cicero, De Oratore, I, 8, 31.

31 Ibid., I, 8, 32.

the section with:

. . . for my assertion is this: that the wise control of the complete orator is that which chiefly upholds not only his own dignity, but the safety of countless individuals and of the entire State.³²

What has been said has concerned the orator primarily as a public figure, an advocate before tribunals or in the pursuit of his office in the public interest. Elsewhere Cicero speaks of the orator as a kind of teacher and guide of the people. He speaks of the Orator's power of touching the hearts of people to make them act as he would have them act, and says that it is a purpose only to be achieved by a speaker who has investigated all the ways wherein, and all the allurements and kind of diction whereby, the judgment of men might be inclined to this side or to that³³. Most particularly, Cicero states elsewhere:

It is the part of the orator, when advising on affairs of supreme importance, to unfold his opinion as a man having authority: his duty too it is to arouse a listless nation, and to curb its unbridled impetuosity. By one and the same power of eloquence the deceitful among men are brought to destruction and the righteous to deliverance. Who more passionately than the orator can encourage to virtuous conduct, and more zealously than he reclaim from vicious courses? Who can more austerely censure the wicked or more gracefully praise men of worth? Whose invective can more forcibly subdue the power of lawless desire? Whose comfortable words can soothe grief more tenderly?³⁴

32 Ibid., I, 8, 34.

33 Ibid., I, 19, 88.

34 Ibid., II, 9, 35.

The orator, in addition to this office of public persuader, is called upon by Cicero to perform yet more service for his fellow-citizens. All the virtues allied to political prudence become his province:

But if we would connect with the orator that indeterminate, unrestricted and far-extending sort of investigation, and so think it his duty to discuss good and evil, things to be preferred and things to be shunned, fair repite and infamy, the useful and the unuseful, besides moral perfection, righteousness, self-control, discretion, greatness of soul, generosity, loyalty, friendship, good faith, sense of duty and the rest of the virtues and their corresponding vices, as well as the State, sovereignty, warlike operations, political science and the ways of mankind--then let us take up that kind of inquiry also. . . . Of course I hold that all things relating to the intercourse of fellow-citizens and the ways of mankind, or concerned with everyday life, the political system, our own corporate society, the common sentiments of humanity, natural inclinations and morals, must be mastered by the orator; if not in the sense that he is to advise in these matters one by one, as the philosophers do, yet so far at least as to enable him to weave them skillfully into his discourse, and moreover to speak of these very things in the same way as the founders of rules of law statutes and civil communities spoke, frankly and lucidly, with no formal train of argument or barren verbal controversy.³⁵

Cicero, beyond the fact that his orator's prime function was the service of the state, recognized his position as a teacher or guide. The two offices were inseparable.

35 Ibid., II, 16, 67-68.

He states this in Book III:

For in old days at all events the same system of instruction seems to have imparted education both in right conduct and in good speech; nor were the professors in two separate groups, but the same masters gave instruction both in ethics and in rhetoric, for instance the great Phoenix in Homer, who says that he was assigned to the young Achilles by his father Peleus to accompany him to the wars in order to make him 'an orator and a man of action too'.³⁶

Having established Cicero's orator as a man of encyclopaedic learning, gifted with eloquence for the service of the state and the instruction of mankind, a rather important shift now must be made. It is a shift which will become important in deciding the role of the poet in the renaissance and particularly in the evaluation of the work of Sir Philip Sidney. Nor is it an arbitrary transfer made for the purpose; it has a valid foundation in the text:

The truth is that the poet is a very near kinsman of the orator, rather more heavily fettered as regards rhythm, but with the ampler freedom in his choice of words, while in the use of many sorts of ornament he is his ally and almost his counterpart; in one respect at all events something like identity exists, since he sets no boundaries or limits to his claims, such as would prevent him from ranging whither he will with the same freedom and licence as the other.³⁷

The achievement of Cicero seems to be second rate beside the best of the Greeks; but the influence of Cicero on Medieval

³⁶ Ibid., III, 15, 57.

³⁷ Ibid., I, 16, 70.

and Renaissance culture is out of all relation to its intrinsic worth. Speaking of the extraordinary homogeneity and stability of Roman culture, Marrou says:

La grande figure de Cicéron prend ici une valeur symbolique. J'aurai bien souvent à rappeler, après tant d'autres, tout ce qu'Augustin doit à l'auteur des Tusculanes, quel rôle de premier plan Cicéron a joué dans sa formation. Ce n'est pas là un hasard: dans une certaine mesure Cicéron a dominé toute la culture latine; tous les lettrés de l'antiquité latine ont été ses disciples, ont plus ou moins voulu être ses imitateurs.³⁸

Cicero presents, then, in his De Oratore a program by which he shows what he believes should be the training and function of his orator. He is not interested only in a devitalized form of public speaking, but rather in an eloquence based on encyclopaedic learning. This in turn, must be tempered with a spirit of culture and refinement as a result of pondering moral philosophy. This battery of accomplishments Cicero would put first of all at the service of the state in the person of the public orator. But he visualized an end beyond this - the incitement to action. The orator's powers were to be used in influencing others to right action. The soundness of this kind of program was recognized by many influential writers of the centuries that followed and they utilized its principles in portions of their works.

³⁸ Irénée Marrou, St. Augustin et la fin de la culture antique, Paris, De Boccard, 1938, p. 6.

CHAPTER II

QUINTILIAN'S ORATOR - STATESMAN

The doctrine of the perfect orator or the "doctus orator" of Cicero did not pass as he conceived it nor unaltered through the centuries. It passed through many hands and felt the impact of many minds which used it and modified it in accordance with the needs of the time. The most notable figure to use it to a considerable extent appeared a little over a century after the writing of the De Oratore; he was Quintilian, a schoolmaster. He wrote his book, the Institutio Oratoria, not from the standpoint of the statesman, nor the professional orator like Cicero, but as a book of instruction for his pupils. He first of all admits that he should remain silent because Cicero has already done such a splendid job, but he bemoans the fact that Cicero has left some things unsaid¹. Quintilian consequently had to reduce the precepts and examples of Cicero into a sort of corpus of what had been Cicero's idea of culture and eloquence. The result is the Institutio Oratoria, which he published some time between 93 and 95 A.D.

¹ Marcus F. Quintilianus, Institutio Oratoria, New York, Putnam, 1922, III, 1, 20.

That Quintilian was on the whole a faithful disciple of Cicero is beyond doubt². There are, however, a few differences worth noting. The first appears in Quintilian's description of a perfect orator. Cicero had strongly emphasized the unity of eloquence and wisdom³. Quintilian rather insists on the inseparability of eloquence and morality⁴. Of course, Cicero would have wholly agreed that since he is supposed to be a philosopher in order to have wisdom, an eloquent man must also have morality. Quintilian himself holds for the necessity of philosophical studies and general encyclopaedic learning for the formation of the orator; yet the emphasis is not the same. But let us get the notion from the master himself. Quintilian makes a scholasticus out of Cicero's orator.

The first essential for such a one is that he should be a good man, and consequently we demand of him not merely the possession of exceptional gifts of speech, but of all the excellencies of character as well. For I will not admit that the principles of upright and honorable living should, as some have held, be regarded as the peculiar concern of philosophy. The man who can really play his part as a citizen and is capable of meeting the demands both of public and private business, the man who can guide a state by his counsels, give it a firm basis by his legislation and purge its vices by his decisions as a judge, is assuredly no other than the orator of our quest.⁵

2 Aubrey Gwynn, Roman Education from Cicero to Quintilian, Oxford, Clarendon, 1926, p. 188.

3 Marcus T. Cicero, De Oratore, Harvard, Univ. Press, 1942, III, 35, 142-2.

4 Quintilian, Institutio Oratoria, XII, 1, 1.

5 Ibid., I, "Proemium", 9-10.

The shift here from merely "doctus orator" to "vir bonus dicendi peritus" is surely in accordance with Cicero's desire to subordinate philosophy to rhetoric and to identify eloquence and wisdom. Quintilian's attitude is clear and makes a statement of Father Gwynn's rather confusing when it is put side by side with a later statement. On page 186 of his book on Roman education he says:

"Every chapter of the Institutio Oratoris is reminiscent of Cicero's teachings; but here the borrowing is more than usually evident. Quintilian has gone back to the De Oratore for his definition of the perfect orator. . ."⁶

This is not entirely true, because although Quintilian does draw from Cicero, to the "doctus orator", he opposes his own formula: "vir bonus dicendi peritus". Gwynn later on states: "One thing is certain; Quintilian did not get his ideal of the 'vir bonus' from Cicero". These appear to be irreconcilable views, but perhaps the second is a correction of the former view, because Gwynn obviously, in the rest of his treatment of the relationship of the two men, is aware of the correct position. The ultimate end of education for both Cicero and Quintilian is the formation of an eloquent statesman. Eloquence still remains the noblest of all arts, to which all the others must be considered ancillary and subservient⁷.

⁶ Gwynn, Roman Education, p. 186.

⁷ Cicero, De Oratore, I, 34, 157-159.

Yet the substitution of "bonus" for "doctus" is not without considerable significance because it is this very change which will facilitate the diffusion of the doctrine in the mediaeval schools. If eloquence requires learning, then to a Christian, eloquence is a good thing; but if it requires moral perfection and the practice of moral virtue, then to a Christian, eloquence is something still better. It is small wonder then that pagan Quintilian was to receive such a hearty welcome in the Christian schools of the Middle Ages, and persist through the Renaissance and right up to the present⁸. Cicero only had asked that his orator "appear" to possess the moral virtues he was speaking about; it would help him to win over his audience. Quintilian, on the other hand, requires that the goodness be a characteristic of the personality of his orator⁹.

Despite the difference between the ideals of Cicero and his publicist, there is no difference between the respective programs of study. Cicero discusses, in the De Oratore¹⁰, the sort of education then current in the Roman schools, "Puerilis institutio" is the first, then the "politior humanitas". The first was given by two different

⁸ J.A.K. Thomson, The Classical Background of English Literature, London, Allen & Unwin, 1948, p. 136.

⁹ Quintilian, Institutio Oratoria, XII, 1, 1; also XII, 1, 33-34.

¹⁰ Cicero, De Oratore, II, 1; also III, 31, 125.

sorts of masters, the "ludi magister" or "literator", who would give little children the first lessons in the three "R's". Then would come the "grammaticus", who would teach grammatica, i.e., grammar, poetry, history and literary composition. His job was the "litterarium studium" as Cicero calls it. Quintilian calls this same type of instruction, "literature"¹¹.

Only after that secondary education was over could the higher studies, the "politior humanitas" begin. Whenever a problem arose over what belonged to the province of one school and what belonged to another, the teachers usually settled to their own advantage by trying to keep their pupils as long as they could.

Leaving aside the "ludi magister", Quintilian considered as the necessary basis of regular teaching the course that he was giving in his own school, i.e. grammar, and all that is included according to his system. In order to explain, discuss and criticize the poets, principally Homer and Virgil, a child had to learn all that was required for a complete understanding of their works. As a matter of fact, literary culture was essential to the orator's education¹². Hence a

¹¹ John E. Sandys, History of Classical Scholarship, Cambridge, University Press, 1908, I, 8.

¹² Thomson, Classical Background, p. 136.

fragmentary study of a little bit of everything was undertaken according as such matter came up in the course of the lessons. The teacher would take up the necessary physics, astronomy, history, etc., and the pupils acquired broad knowledge, one might say, by accident of this literary exegesis¹³. The above-mentioned system was principally used in the section known as "enarratio", or the commentary on the poet, and the whole concept of this type of education summed up in the formula: "liberal arts as handmaids of grammar". Then the student was handed over to the professor of rhetoric who would teach him the more difficult types of literary criticism, declamation and the orators, mainly Cicero¹⁴.

It seems obvious that such a program was enough to cover the complete course of studies. It represented the complete Roman "institutio puerilis" at its best and was worthy of the ideal of the perfect orator of Cicero. Quintilian merely wanted to turn out eloquent statesmen; if the students wanted the extra gloss of the "politior humanitas", they had to acquire it for themselves because it was not taught in the schools. He was interested in an educational system adapted to all who were born or aspired to a place in society

13 Pierre de Labriolle, History and Literature of Christianity from Tertullian to Boethius, New York, Knopf, 1925, p. 6.

14 Quintilian, Institutio Oratoria, XI, 1, 105-113.

with its consequent duty of personal goodness devoted to public social service¹⁵. In Italy at the Renaissance with its multiform political units, republics, city-states, highly organized despotisms, their diplomacies, etc., a large proportion of the upper and educated classes was inevitably concerned with duties and careers in which a sound intellectual training, coupled with skill in expression, was essential to success. Even then, not less than in the transition period of ancient Rome, the practical exhibition of knowledge and personality was in their application to affairs of state. In most of the literature treating of government, philosophy and "eruditio" are usually spoken of as the hand-maids. Cato implies that an orator should be a sincere man, expert in speaking¹⁶. The name of the Orator is rather sacred and his ideal takes the place filled in Stoicism by the "perfectly wise man". Quintilian, therefore, appealed to the moralist by his insistence on goodness as the foundation of education¹⁷; to the man of learning by his demand that the orator must be versed in the entire circle of available knowledge¹⁸; to the man of affairs by the ultimate end which he set before his pupils, that they should be competent as logical and persuasive

15 Ibid., XII, 2, 9.

16 Gwynn, Roman Education, p. 40.

17 Quintilian, Institutio Oratoria, I proemium, 9.

18 Ibid., XII, 1, 25.

speakers, to place both character and wisdom at the service of the community¹⁹. Moreover, it was a characteristic tenet of early humanism that knowledge is desirable in proportion to the use which could publicly be made of it and that wisdom hoarded up and not expressed partook of selfishness.

Quintilian had in mind much less the theoretical wisdom of the new Academy, but rather the practical philosophy of the Stoics. He feels indignant against the pretensions of those in his own times who monopolize virtue which they preach but do not always practise²⁰. By the time Quintilian wrote, Rome was an empire and then perhaps the orator was not to be thought of as a legislator. That is probably the reason why he had to consider the eloquent man as a representative of personal moral perfection. In Book XII of the Institutio Oratoria, his words are plain:

It is no hack-advocate, no hireling pleader, nor yet, to use no harsher term, a serviceable attorney of the class generally known as 'considici' that I am seeking to form, but rather a man who to extraordinary natural gifts has added a thorough mastery of all the fairest branches of knowledge, a man sent by heaven to be the blessing of mankind, one to whom all history can find no parallel, uniquely perfect in every detail and utterly noble alike in thought and speech.²¹

19 Ibid., XII, 2, 7.

20 Ibid., XII, 2, 9.

21 Ibid., XII, 1, 25.

Discussing the then-current definitions of eloquence, Quintilian notes that Cicero identified eloquence, politics and philosophy. Not disagreeing, but taking slightly different ground, Quintilian adds:

The definition which best suits its real character is that which makes rhetoric the science of speaking well. For this definition includes all the virtues of oratory and the character of the orator as well, since no man can speak well who is not good himself²².

This conception is fundamentally Stoic and is basic in medieval and Renaissance thought about speech. The patristic modifications which were to be made a few centuries later in no way impaired the doctrine.

In his authoritative study of Roman education, Aubrey Gwynn says:

The type of education which Quintilian describes in his Institutio Oratoria remained for centuries the sole education known to the Graeco-Roman world. Poor men continued to send their children to the elementary schools of the 'ludi magister' and the 'calculator'; but the rich, well-to-do, and the professional classes sent their sons to the schools of literature and rhetoric, and were content with the 'liberal artes' of the 'egkuklios paideia'. . . From the days of Isocrates to the fall of the Roman Empire no other form of education was known to Europe; and when the Church became the inheritor of the Graeco-Roman civilization, she used the 'artes liberales' as a convenient framework for the new Christian education taught in her schools.²³

22 Ibid., II, 15, 34.

23 Gwynn, Roman Education, p. 246.

It is a commonplace that all the Latin Fathers of the Church underwent the kind of education outlined by Cicero and Quintilian. The educational ladder described in the Institutio Oratoria differs little from that which Saint Augustine climbed as a boy²⁴. Grammar and rhetoric was the basis for this education²⁵. The influence exerted on subsequent ages by Quintilian is suitably expressed in a passage which serves as a summary:

When it is remembered that for the last four centuries Englishmen have been educated in the main on a system introduced at the Renaissance, and that this system was very largely constructed on the principles advocated by Quintilian, it will be seen that we must count his book as having its place, and an important place, in the background of English literature.²⁶

It can be said, therefore, that Cicero's ideal of the unity of wisdom and eloquence was transmitted by Quintilian to the schoolmasters who were to come after him. But the account of that transmission is a long and involved one. Of particular notice is his addition of the notion of goodness to Cicero's requirements. This slight but tremendously important change did much to establish Quintilian's scheme in the affection of the era that followed him. From him the

²⁴ Irénée Marrou, St. Augustin et la fin de la culture antique, Paris, De Boccard, 1938, p. 10.

²⁵ Maurice Roger, L'enseignement des lettres classiques d'Ausone à Alcuin, Paris, Picard, 1905, p. 131-143.

²⁶ Thomson, Classical Background, p. 136.

Fathers of the Church derived their concept of the liberal arts. Mackail says: "The Institutio Oratoria became the final and standard treatise on the theory and practice of Latin oratory"²⁷. We must call to mind by way of establishing the necessary connecting links, that along with his account of the orator, Quintilian gave to his successors a plan of studies based on "grammar". The use made by the Fathers of his disciplines and knowledge for theology forms the substance of the next chapter. In it we will meet the conflict between Christianity and pagan literature; we must view it as a conflict, not as a prohibition, for the choice at that time was between a pagan education and no education at all.

²⁷ J.W. Mackail, Latin Literature, New York, Scribners, 1895, p. 197.

CHAPTER III

PATRISTIC ORATOR - APOLOGIST

The traditions established by the De Oratore of Cicero and the Institutio Oratoria of Quintilian were continued and followed almost without exception by the Fathers of the Church. This is not so surprising when it is realized that the Fathers were submitted to the type of education formulated by Cicero and modified by Quintilian. Wherever these Fathers of the Church received their training, it was along the lines of grammar and rhetoric, not because that system had been proven superior to some other systems, but simply because there was no other available¹. Since they had received such an education, it was the type that they themselves later passed on to those who would place themselves at the feet of the Fathers or study their writings. The Middle Ages looked to the Fathers for guidance and so it was that the doctrines of encyclopaedic learning and rhetoric or eloquence, plus moral goodness, was prevalent for several centuries. Such men as Tertullian, Minutius Felix, St. Cyprian, Arnobius, Lactantius, St. Hilary of Poitiers, St. Ambrose, St. Jerome and St. Augustine, all were educated according to the ideals formulated by Cicero. Speaking of Tertullian,

¹ Maurice Roger, L'enseignement des lettres classiques d'Ausone à Alcuin, Paris, Picard, 1905, p. 131-133.

Cyprian and Arnobius, De Labriolle says:

These men have been formed under the same system of education as were educated Romans under the empire; there is no need to suppose that when they embraced Christianity they very profoundly altered their intellectual method. This method was in conformity with the plan of studies which Quintilian had traced in his Institutio Oratoria, which the Roman tutor continued faithfully to observe.²

This fundamental fact is very important because in its light much of the confusion and misconception of the period of history which falls between antiquity and the Middle Ages becomes intelligible. As mentioned before, there seemed to be some opposition on the part of the Fathers of the Church to the classical Latin writers. Some historians, failing to view this opposition in the true light, have made it the basis for holding that the Fathers were hostile to classical learning. That there was conflict is true, but that conflict did not in the least amount to prohibition of the study of the classics. More truly, they encouraged this learning but insisted on some modification. Almost to a man, the Latin Fathers warn against the classical works but concede that they have to be studied³. The apparent contradiction, it will be recalled, arose because the pagan schools and the pagan

² Pierre de Labriolle, History and Literature of Christianity from Tertullian to Boethius, New York, Knopf, 1925, p. 6.

³ Frank P. Cassidy, Molders of the Medieval Mind, St. Louis, Herder, 1944, Chapter V.

literature left Christians the choice of either a pagan education or no education at all. Even St. Augustine had been a pagan; he studied pagan literature and furthermore, he was a master of it. Paganism as a religion or as a code of morality need not be held as synonymous with the study of pagan literature. The greatest among the Fathers of the Church were converts to the faith; but before they were convinced of the truth of the Christian religion, they had been firmly grounded in pagan learning. Tertullian says, "fiunt non nascuntur christiani"⁴. Minutius Felix in his Octavius I, 4; V, 1, says that he had been a pagan for a long time^{4a}. St. Cyprian's family were pagans and he was converted to Christianity after his youth. His background was pagan. Arnobius was converted in his sixtieth year. St. Jerome, although born of Christian parents, received his education as a pupil of the pagan Donatus⁵.

Certainly the Fathers knew what risks were to be run if they permitted students to attend pagan schools and imbibe what was unwholesome. The situation in which they found themselves was a contradictory one, not their attitude. The whole future of higher learning in the Church was at

⁴ Quintus Tertullianus, Apologeticum, Bonnae, Hanstein, 1933, 8, 4.

^{4a} Bonnae, Hanstein, 1930.

⁵ J. Tixeront, A Handbook of Patrology, St. Louis, Herder, 1920, p. 50, 120, 125.

stake, yet they had to guard against pagan beliefs and immorality. Hence the repeatedly given warning to study the classics, literature and rhetoric and then to forget them, in so far as they were pagan, as early and completely as possible; retain the acquired intellectual training but forget the contents. The progressive rise of a Latin Christian literature did something to ease the situation but the classics held fast. It is little wonder then that the burning question during the Middle Ages was, how should a Christian read Virgil and Ovid?

Like educators in any other age, the Latin Fathers were products of their age and whatever they did in the field of education coincided with what others were doing at the same time. And so, from the standpoint of technique, early Christian literature must have been essentially a manifestation of the other Latin literature than being written. The ideal of intellectual education, of culture and of learning which expressed itself in their works was the same as their contemporaries produced for the simple reason that it was the only one taught in the existing schools. We know that the name of that ideal was eloquence. Some of the main features of Cicero's program had been lost, but not enough to change the ideal even for the schools of rhetoric in the Roman Empire in the fourth century.

Cicero's was an eloquence of oratory but he sensed that oratory would not always be the vogue and so he at least made provision for the day by hinting broadly that the poet was akin to the orator⁶ and that "the pen is the best and most eminent author and teacher of eloquence"⁷. He realized there would not be much room in an empire for eloquent public speaking and when the Roman Republic waned, the golden age of eloquence was over. When this happened, it was the natural tendency of the professors of rhetoric to substitute the written word for the spoken word; to teach a literary eloquence in place of oral eloquence. This was hardly an innovation, since Cicero himself had showed how written eloquence came first from the Greeks, especially Herodotus⁸. Besides, without style there is no eloquence, and style is acquired by writing:

. . . he too who approaches oratory by way of long practice in writing, brings this advantage to his task, that even if he is extemporizing, whatever he may say bears a likeness to the written word. . . so that in an unbroken discourse, where written notes are exhausted, the rest of the speech still maintains a like progress, under the impulse given by the similarity and energy of the written word.⁹

6 Marcus T. Cicero, De Oratore, Harvard, Univ. Press, III, 7, 27.

7 Ibid., I, 33, 150.

8 Ibid., II, 13-14.

9 Ibid., I, 33, 152-153.

Boissier states that after the Empire, eloquence applies to all possible types of written style; it came to mean almost what we today call literature¹⁰. With the passing of Cicero's orator and Quintilian's eloquent statesman, the normal and natural end of their systems of education was lost. It is true that the liberal arts as they outlined them were still being studied, but the end in view was altered and they were directed to writing, history and poetry. It was into this setting that the Fathers of the Church eventually came.

The first important figure after Quintilian insofar as the continuance of the doctrine of the "doctus orator" is concerned, is Tertullian. The facts of his life are not of importance for the present study. His falling from favor and deserving the censure of a heretic because he joined the Montanists, is matter for the historian. Our interest is in Tertullian as an example of encyclopaedic learning put to use¹¹. Whatever fault he may have had as a writer -- he is accused of having an obscure style -- he is certainly acknowledged as a man of immense learning. St. Jerome, in one of his letters, No. 70, asks who is as competent as

¹⁰ Gaston Boissier, La fin du paganisme, Paris, Hachette 1891, I, 224.

¹¹ G. Bardy, The Christian Latin Literature of the First Six Centuries, London, Sands, 1930, p. 36.

he (Tertullian) in things human and divine¹². Tertullian was born about the year 155 A.D., a little over one generation after Quintilian, and even then the course of study outlined by Cicero must have been in effect in whatever schools existed. He is credited with knowing all philosophies, all the sects of the philosophers, their founders, their adherents, all history and all science. He wrote both Greek and Latin with great fluency, knew whatever could then be called medicine, probably little more than physiology. One of his greatest achievements was a thorough understanding of law. He is said to have put the stamp of the technique of the lawyer on everything he wrote, not like the amateur who ventures on unfamiliar ground, but like one who knows all its secrets, all its machinery, all its tricks and cleverly uses them for his own end. He knew intimately whatever literature was available, the Greek and Latin authors in prose and verse; Scripture, too, was included among his intellectual treasures. All of these he used to advantage for the cause of Christianity against paganism¹³. His *Apologeticum* is a defense of Christian morals and beliefs and is an outstanding example of putting vast knowledge to use for a particular purpose -- here the explanation of the

¹² J.P. Migne, Patrologia Latina, Paris, Garnier, 1855, Vol. 22.

¹³ Bardy, Christian Latin Literature, p. 28-32.

basis of belief¹⁴. Tertullian was a prolific writer and in all he wrote the depths of his learning are evident, but with him as with the other Fathers of the Church, the orator has gradually become an apologist and moral teacher. In the field of literary technique he followed closely the traditions of his age which were simply the Greek theory of artistic prose as advocated and practised by Cicero himself. Here for the first time perhaps was actually realized the Ciceronian ideal that the true eloquence was really artistic prose and not rhetoric alone, although Tertullian was a past master at rhetoric too. St. Cyprian, of whom something will be said later, called Tertullian "the master". Whenever he wished to consult one of his "master's" works, he would say to his associates, "Da magistrum"¹⁵. Tertullian was his model in practically everything that St. Cyprian wrote. Whole passages are quoted from him to strengthen arguments and everywhere the phrase and style of "the master" are in evidence. This is not only true of St. Cyprian, for it may be said that nearly every writer for the next seven centuries bears the stamp of Tertullian; he is the model, the one they look up to for guidance and it would indeed be difficult to estimate the extent of his influence had he remained in the fold of the Church he so ably defended.

¹⁴ Bernard Schmid, Manual of Patrology, St. Louis, Herder, 1899, p. 127.

¹⁵ De Labriolle, History and Literature, p. 132.

Minucius Felix was a mild soul, interested in explaining the Christian faith to those outside the Church. He had seen the great harm that could be done if the pagans adopted a hostile attitude because of the ridicule which some less tactful apologists heaped upon them. His objective was to convince without offense. St. Jerome speaks of him as "insignis causidicus", a pleader of a cause¹⁶. We do know that before he devoted himself to the "cause" he was practising as an advocate in secular business. His knowledge of all the artifices of his profession stood him in good stead when he came to write his great apologetic work, the Octavius¹⁷. The clever way in which he wove and adapted his sources is simply an application of the principles laid down by Cicero in the latter part of Book III of the De Oratore. Cicero would have felt proud to see such an excellent execution of rhetoric. But in Felix, this was coupled with tremendous and vicarious reading. Throughout the Octavius there is an ease and facility in the use of allusions to all kinds of curious knowledge¹⁸. Each of the speakers of the dialogue reels off doctrine after doctrine of the philosophies as though he were an authority in the subject. Even the literatures, ancient

16 Ibid., p. 109-110.

17 Bardy, Christian Latin Literature, p. 37.

18 Schmid, Manual, p. 133.

and contemporary, supply the needed examples to drive home a point of belief. As a matter of fact, the dialogue form itself and nearly all of the opening part are direct borrowings from Cicero, as well as the notions of a providence, the succession of seasons and the order of the heavens¹⁹. The style suggests he was an ardent student of Tertullian. The work was intended as a defense of Christianity against paganism but here for the first time we see the technique which will flourish in the Renaissance, i.e. the presentation of some possibly distasteful matter with a happy turn in order to render it pleasing, to incline hearts to accept it. This technique was that to be used by Sidney in his Arcadia. By the time Sidney enters the literary scene, the orator, statesman and apologist will have been replaced by the poet, a man with a purpose, to instruct people and make them like it. To return to Felix for a concluding remark, De Labriolle calls him "the most learned and most delicately tempered of lettered men"²⁰. He also shows how Origen, in the third century, familiar with all Greek systems, had conceived the idea of an encyclopedic synthesis, the book of the Principles²¹

19 De Labriolle, History and Literature, p. 127.

20 Ibid., p. 128.

21 Ibid., p. 345.

Other writers of this period, of greater or lesser importance, must at least be mentioned briefly to show the continuity of the Ciceronian ideal until the Middle Ages take over. During this survey, however, it would not be in order to suppose that each of those mentioned were just so many copies of the orator. What is intended is simply to point out that for several centuries the figures whom history, both secular and religious, has shown to be significant were definitely in the Ciceronian tradition.

St. Cyprian apparently did not create any sensation as a scholar. He is referred to as having received the "customary" education of the day and we know that it must have been the course in grammar and rhetoric as Quintilian planned it²². We know, too, that he taught rhetoric, indicating that he must have at least attained better than average skill in that department, along with the necessary knowledge. Philosophy and its history were to serve him well in two of his treatises, De Mortalitate and De Bona Patientiae. These were directed against the Stoics, so at least he was versed in that field. His major work, Testimonia ad Quirinum, especially Book III, contains a great compendium of the Christian duties regarding morals and

22 F. Cayré, Manual of Patrology and History of Theology, Paris, Desclée, 1936, I, 255.

discipline²³. He built up his arguments by references to Scripture and in the process formulated and classified nearly 900 passages. It was used as the basic work by the polemicists of the third and fourth centuries in nearly all the writings where a Scriptural authority had to be invoked²⁴.

A writer by the name of Commodian flourished about the year 250, wrote satirical and ironic pieces called *Instructiones* and *Carmen Apolepticum* (the latter a series of some 500 two-line verses) and then passed from notice. His education is revealed in his writings, showing that while far from brilliant he had a thorough grounding, aside from the "artes", in the writings of his immediate predecessors in the field of Christian writing, Cyprian and Tertullian, as well as a knowledge of Terrence, Lucretius, Virgil, Horace, Cicero and Sallust²⁵. These he put to the service of Christianity against the pagans.

A later contemporary of Commodian was Arnobius, a teacher of rhetoric at Sicca-Venevia. He was likewise educated under the conventional system but had great facility as an orator. When he came to write his Adversus Nationes he demonstrated that he could pull all the stops of the

23 Ibid., p. 257.

24 Cassidy, Molders, p. 109.

25 De Labriolle, History and Literature, p. 175-181.

orator's trade to the point of exaggeration²⁶. For this reason, his style is often thought of as a bit ridiculous; he overstepped the nice balance of polished oratory. But he was an old man by the time he was induced to employ his tremendous knowledge of Latin antiquity for the benefit of Christianity, and the overbalance of oratory is gladly forgiven this true "doctus orator" and "vir bonus dicendi peritus".

Perhaps the closest approach to the classic masters was attained by Lactantius. He admired and studied them arduously, especially in the matter of style, and received from St. Jerome, the name "Cicero of the Christians"²⁷. He had gone through the usual courses of training and became professor of rhetoric at Nicomedia. He was selected as tutor of Latin Literature to Crispus, a son of Constantine²⁸. In his *Institutiones Divinae* he attempted to add something to cultured minds since he believed that the day of refutation of paganism was over, although many who succeeded him continued to inveigh against it. He had a deep and earnest love of things intellectual and felt that not all of those who had undertaken to become apologists had troubled to qualify

26 Bardy, Christian Latin Literature, p. 57.

27 Cassidy, Molders, p. 111.

28 Schmid, Manual, p. 144.

themselves and so he took upon himself the production of a literary apology²⁹. Most of the writers who had preceded him were ardent quoters of Scripture against the pagans, but Lactantius relied more on the force of logic to bend the mind and the will to the acceptance of his moral system; the Philosophers, the historians and the poets were his chief weapons. He insisted on "ratione" to achieve a union of wisdom and religion which was simply a Christian adaptation of Cicero's ideal³⁰. If being too much of a slave to the imitation of the style of Cicero is a fault, Lactantius had a great one.

With the Edict of Milan, 313, the Church no longer felt that it had to pick its way in a hostile world, and began to take a prominent part in the life around it and contribute to the culture of the time. In biblical exegesis, speculative and moral theology, hymns of the liturgy, didactic, epic and lyric poetry, Christian effort was manifesting itself with great vigor. Even in the field of science, at that time not tremendously popular, the Church entered the lists. A certain Firmicus, a man learned in letters and also a senator and convert, about the year 335, wrote the Matheseos, the first

29 Bardy, Christian Latin Literature, p. 63.

30 Ibid., p. 60.

attempt to relate science and religion³¹.

The name of St. Hilary of Poitiers marks the beginning of a period which was to see an increased interest in the study of Greek Christian literature. He had received a careful education along the usual lines just like his educated contemporaries³². Unfortunately, he incurred the displeasure of the Arian bishops and was exiled. It was while in this state that he entered upon an intense study of the Greek Christian writers whom he uses to advantage in his work, De Trinitate³³. But the chief point of interest in the man is the fact that he was the first to write Latin Church hymns³⁴. He was a poet at heart and felt that aside from apologetic prose explanations of doctrine, he could reach the hearts of the people through a more popular medium. The Arians had hit upon the use of poetry to disseminate their views and Hilary would fight fire with fire. Moreover, he knew that poetry was a good way to imprint essential truth on the memory because of the frequent repetition of the dogma. Aside from his gift of poetry, Hilary was renowned as an eloquent orator.

31 De Labriolle, History and Literature, p. 237.

32 Cassidy, Molders, p. 113.

33 Bardy, Christian Latin Literature, p. 84.

34 Schmid, Manual, p. 223.

His soundness of doctrine, knowledge of philosophy and the natural sciences and whatever else could possibly come to his hand, merited for him the title of "the Athanasius of the West"³⁵. His range of culture, plus his goodness and zeal, coupled with eloquence in speaking and writing, made him an outstanding product of the Quintilian school, some three hundred years after its founder³⁶.

It is difficult to sort out from among hundreds of learned men, those who should be considered as forming important connecting links between Cicero and the Middle Ages. Perhaps it will suffice if we content ourselves with an account of three great figures, Ambrose, Jerome and Augustine, and one or two minor ones. Among the latter must be mentioned Victorinus, a man who, like Newman in the nineteenth century, first opposed the Church and in his search for material with which to confute, was led to defend³⁷. He was official rhetor at Rome and was accounted one of the wisest and most eloquent men of his time. He had, besides the required studies of the Quintilian curriculum, read Scripture carefully, all the Christian literature available, as well as metaphysics. De Labriolle's comment on him pretty well sums up his worth: "His commentary on Cicero's

35 Cayré, Manual, p. 357.

36 Tixeront, Handbook, p. 228.

37 Bardy, Christian Latin Literature, p. 78-80.

Invention is not important otherwise than informing us of the method of instruction followed by the rhetoricians in the fourth century"³⁸.

Before launching into the account of St. Ambrose, perhaps, in order to give some perspective to what is to follow, and to establish some connection with what has been said, it will be advantageous to quote what Chateaubriand had to say about bishops of this period and their office:

There is nothing more complete and well filled than the life of the prelates of the fourth and fifth centuries. A Bishop baptised, acted as confessor, preached, prescribed private and public penances issued anathemas and lifted excommunications, visited the sick, ministered to the dying, ransomed captives, gave relief to the poor, the widows and orphans, founded hospitals and lazar hospitals, administered the goods of his clergy, adjudicated as a Justice of the Peace in private suits and arbitrated on the quarrels between different cities. At the same time, he published treatises on moral discipline and theology, wrote against heresiarchs and philosophers, interested himself in science and history, dictated letters to people who consulted him on one or another religion, corresponded with Churches and Bishops, monks and hermits, sat in Councils and Synods, was called in by Emperors to advise them, was charged with the arrangement of affairs, and despatched to usurpers and barbarian princes to disarm or restrain them: three powers -- religious, political and philosophical -- were concentrated in the Bishop.³⁹

While the foregoing quotation includes much which is primarily the office of a religious leader, the latter part

³⁸ De Labriolle, History and Literature, p. 260.

³⁹ François Chateaubriand, Etude (Paris, 1836), V, 268, quoted by De Labriolle, Op. cit. p. 264.

especially indicates the secular duties which also fell to him to perform. Beyond a doubt he was called upon to rally all his accomplishments of learning in the discharge of these duties. Some of the offices mentioned here give us a preliminary look into what Cicero's orator will develop in the course of history, especially when the governor, schoolmaster and courtier enter the picture.

To return to the Fathers. St. Ambrose, like all his contemporary educated fellow-men, was put through the regular schooling of grammar and rhetoric⁴⁰. In due time, he was made a Bishop without the ecclesiastical training usually required for the office. Once he was made Bishop, he felt it his duty to study Scripture and theology. The writers of the East attracted his attention most especially because they had more of a speculative trend than the Latin writers. By nature, Ambrose was a man of action and consequently he did not devote a great deal of his time to literary production but rather undertook the busy life described by Chateaubriand. What he did write is quite important in the light of the progress of the transition from orator to poet. Like Hilary before him, he replied in kind to the efforts of the pagans and heretics. He gathered together a tremendous system of Christian morality which he modeled on that of his great model, Cicero. He used

40 Cayré, Manual, p. 520-521.

the De Officiis for the general scheme, the setting forth of the ideas and sometimes he even borrowed expressions. When Cicero wrote his treatise, he intended to point out a life of proper conduct to his son and indirectly explain philosophy to the general public. Ambrose too, wrote for his sons, his spiritual sons, a manual of morality⁴¹. From Cicero he took the distinction between reason and passion, the ideal of the sovereign good, the classification of the virtues, the various grades of duties for each state in life and the role of conscience.

Solely desirous of offering his sheep the truths pertaining to salvation in a form most fitted to move them, Ambrose from preference employed what is called the allegorical method of exegesis.⁴²

Here we have another important step towards our goal -- the use of allegory as a method of instruction. We must not suppose that the device originated with Ambrose; it was in use as a technique centuries before his time, especially in the East. But it is of importance to the present study to find that method used by a Christian for instructing others. The word "orator" will broaden in connotation as time goes on, until the poet uses allegory to influence minds to virtuous action.

⁴¹ Cassidy, Molders, p. 119.

⁴² De Labriolle, History and Literature, p. 282.

The fourth century, as a matter of fact, produced a body of Christian poetry, which while not extensive, yet marked a significant milestone in the history of literature⁴³. Lessons from the bible had traditionally been explained in prose but not always in a popular style. To minds and ears not attune to classical periods and other intricate devices of rhetoric, much of the lesson material was just so much rhetoric and so a group of writers undertook to present this essential matter in verse. It was to be helpful to young minds by instilling into them sacred teachings transposed in an attractive form; it was to appeal to the educated classes too, because it was cast in a literary mould. For the most part, even to those not favored with complete instruction in grammar and rhetoric, the style of Horace was familiar, so this was the model most widely used. Furthermore, from him the notion of the criterion of literary Rome was borrowed -- a hierarchy based on subject matter, with the epic poem as the highest form of expression. With the advent of the Christian poets, the Faith took its place side by side with the heroes of antiquity, and the opening verse of Virgil's Aeneid, "Arma virumque cano", can read, "I sing the noble deeds of Christ on earth". The classical form was kept but the matter was the

⁴³ This entire paragraph is a summary of De Labriolle, Book III, Chapter IV, p. 311-322.

Gospel story; the invocation of the Muse was replaced with the invocation of the Holy Ghost. In time, Virgil, Lucretius and Statius were used as models for style.

Again the old cry of "beware the ancients" was heard and the literary world was fearful that one of its great lights would be extinguished. Paulinus, a Senator, the Procurator of Campagna and an extremely learned and cultured man who could produce prose adorned with all the flowers of rhetoric, threatened to forsake the world and live as a hermit⁴⁴. He was the "vir bonus dicendi peritus" of the early fifth century and many tried to persuade him to remain in the world because his memory was so loaded with reminiscences that he came to apply to his own beliefs, turns of expression coming in a straight line of descent from the poets of paganism⁴⁵. He settled the point of utilising the old learning for his friend Jovius and for the Christian world at large by his advice to take from it the qualities it is able to impart, "linguae copian et oris ornatum" and turn them to the service of true wisdom. It was to be a Christian Ars Poetica⁴⁶. St. Jerome favorably compares Paulinus' correspondence to Cicero's⁴⁷.

44 Bardy, Christian Latin Literature, p. 123.

45 Ibid., p. 124-125.

46 Ibid., p. 124.

47 Ibid., p. 125.

To begin the account of St. Jerome, it is fitting that we mention something from his own hand wherein he calls himself a Ciceronian. The incident is nearly always included when St. Jerome is the subject under discussion. It is narrated in his 22nd epistle: he was on his way to Jerusalem to undertake the hermit's life, laden with his beloved books which he had carried from Rome, at the cost of much trouble and labor, and with which he would not part under any pretext⁴⁸. He says:

Miserable man that I am! I was fasting and then I began to read Cicero; after many nights spent in watching, after many tears, . . . I took Plautus in my hands. If by chance, on recollecting myself, I started reading the Prophets, their unadorned style awoke in me feelings of repulsion. My eyes, blinded saw no longer the light, and it was not on my eyes that I laid the blame, it was on heaven . . .

Suddenly, I felt myself ravished away in ecstasy and transported before the tribunal of the Judge. Such a dazzling light emanated from those present that, crouched on the ground, I dared not lift up my eyes. On being asked my profession, I replied, "I am a Christian". Whereupon, he who presided said, 'Thou dost lie; thou art a Ciceronian and no Christian; where thy treasure is, there is thy heart also . . .

From that moment, I betook myself to the reading of the divine books with as much passion as I had given to reading the books of men.⁴⁹

At least we can gather from this that there must have been continuance of the Ciceronian ideal until some years after 350 A.D. Jerome was educated according to the formula

⁴⁸ J.W. Thompson, The Medieval Library, Chicago, Univ. Press, 1939, p. 19.

⁴⁹ St. Jerome, Epistle 22, 30, in Migne, J.P. Patrologia Latina, Vol. 22, 416, quoted by De Labriolle, p. 11-12.

and as a young man he went to Rome to finish his studies under Donatus. Here his chief interest was grammar according to the Quintilian scheme⁵⁰. Two other events in his life are of some significance; while in the desert he undertook the study of Hebrew, and after he settled in Bethlehem he opened a school for boys in which grammar was taught as well as the advanced step of "enarratio poetarum", the commentary on the poets⁵¹. With the possible exception of St. Augustine, whom we shall consider next, perhaps no other Christian author was more strongly nurtured on the core of the Classics plus a thorough knowledge of Christian literature than Jerome⁵². On the point of his studying Hebrew, Jerome says:

Relinquishing there the skilled turns of Quintilian, the flood of eloquence overflowing from Cicero, the gravity of Frontonius and the charm of Pliny, I set myself to learn the Hebrew alphabet and to study a language of guttural and heavy-breathing words.⁵³

Surely no one can doubt this sincere devotion to a study of the classics and we not only find it here but elsewhere that Jerome and other writers of the period felt it as some sort of hardship to lay aside their classics for some

50 Tixeront, Handbook, p. 253; also Schmid, Manual, p. 237.

51 De Labriolle, History and Literature, p. 354.

52 Tixeront, Handbook, p. 254.

53 St. Jerome, Epistle 125, 12, in Migne, J.P. Patrologia Latina, Vol. 22, 1079, quoted by De Labriolle, p. 338.

other cause, no matter how worthy. The words used by Jerome in reference to the writers named suggest something of a genuine affection for them.

Jerome was not a man of bandy words. His outspokenness caused more than a little hard feelings on the part of those who came under his censure but failed to grasp the personality behind the words⁵⁴. On the matter of studies, Jerome utilizes a passage from Deuteronomy wherein God ordained that before a captive could be married to a Jew, her head and eyebrows were to be shaved and her nails cut. Jerome adapts it this way: so a Christian, seduced by the beauty of secular learning, must begin by cleansing it of all that it holds of death, idolatry, voluptuousness, error and passion, and when thus purified it will become worthy for the service of God. His attitude here is quite in keeping with the opinion of others who felt that scholarship, although pagan, could be put to use for the service of God⁵⁵. It is in line with Cicero's notion of learning for the service of the state. De Labriolle shows how Jerome, as it were, stood as the guidepost to two succeeding epochs, the Middle Ages and

54 Bardy, Christian Latin Literature, p. 26.

55 De Labriolle, History and Literature, p. 26.

the Renaissance. He puts it this way:

Lastly, as a writer he has enriched the entire domain of classic literature . . . He was thus assured of the greatest influence upon the literature of the Middle Ages in the West. And by an exceptional fate his gifts as a man of letters and a scholar, and the brilliancy of his style closely resembling the classics which he imitated, even in their methods, preserved for him a like admiration among the men of the Renaissance.⁵⁶

Among the Fathers of the Church, the greatest happens to be the most typical instance of the writer whose works bear the marks of a Ciceronian formation. Only a generation separated the death of St. Ambrose from that of St. Augustine and yet St. Augustine had a different point of view in regard to Christian culture. St. Ambrose, a true Roman, looked upon the Roman Empire of his day with its Christian Emperor as a civil society which afforded a temporal economy suited to the work of the Church. All that remained was to spread the Gospel and Christianize the culture of Rome. St. Augustine, on the other hand, lived to see the sack of Rome by Alaric⁵⁷. To him the Roman Empire had rotted from within and was falling apart under the shock of invasion. The old Roman virtue was gone and the hope of the world was in a new city, the City of God, whose citizens lived in a civil society but only to use it as sojourners, since their true citizenship was

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 373.

⁵⁷ Bardy, Christian Latin Literature, p. 144.

elsewhere⁵⁸. To him, culture meant a knowledge and skill; not the knowledge of the savant, of the intellectually curious or the humanist with his attention to beauty of style and expression, but a knowledge subordinated to and directed towards eternal life⁵⁹. For him, true wisdom was a knowledge of God made alive and all-pervading through love; this is true wisdom and the chief reason for life on earth and all else must be subordinate to it as a means. He aimed not a citizenship in the Empire but in the City of God.

St. Augustine took Cicero's De Oratore and with parts of the Orator used it as the basis for his system of education⁶⁰. He was himself a product of the schools of grammar and rhetoric and had been for several years a professor of rhetoric in Africa and Rome. He had a genuine sympathy for the system and never quite lost sight of the ideal of eloquence and of the "doctus orator" even in his writings on theology. But Augustine was not an encyclopaedist in the Ciceronian sense; he believed in making selection of material to fit the need. He felt that those portions of pagan literature dealing with their gods, worship and taboos, must be rejected, but not the

58 Ibid.,

59 Aurelius Augustinus, De Doctrina Christiana, Bonnae, Hanstein, 1930, Fasc. 24, L, 3, 3; and I, 22, 21.

60 Cassidy, Molders, p. 135.

whole division of human institutions which are helpful in daily life⁶¹. Accordingly, St. Augustine took over the liberal arts already taught in the schools of grammar and rhetoric and made them a preparatory discipline for the pursuit of sacred science⁶². He does not assume that there will be special schools for Christians to learn these things but that they may be learned in the established ones. The modern divorce between the liberal arts and the natural sciences was unknown to the ancients; they were listed with the arts, and St. Augustine follows Cicero quite closely in drawing up his curriculum. But the extent of the study of science and language was limited to the needs of a student of the Scriptures⁶³. Aside from these, his list included history, a knowledge of Greek, Hebrew and Latin, enough of Syriac and Coptic to enable one to interpret the names of places and persons⁶⁴. Astronomy should be known but care must be exercised because of the associations with astrology⁶⁵. A cursory knowledge of medicine, architectures and navigation is helpful.

61 Ibid., p. 148-149 and 172.

62 De Labriolle, History and Literature, p. 27.

63 Roger, L'enseignement, p. 131-133.

64 Augustinus, De Doctrina Christiana, II, 11, 16.

65 Ibid., II, 29, 46.

Arithmetic in its various applications should be included⁶⁶. Nor is the "politior humanitas" overlooked. Since he is striving to produce a Christian eloquence, the art of rhetoric is an important one. In fact, he devotes the fourth book of the De Doctrina Christiana to an exposition of rhetoric applied to Christian teaching, and especially of the perfection and use of the special style appropriate to the subject in hand. Finally, he includes the study of philosophy, especially that of Plato and the Platonists⁶⁷.

Unfortunately, some of St. Augustine's treatises were never finished; such were: De Dialectica, De Rhetorica, De Geometria, De Arithmetica, and De Philosophia. If they had been finished, we would now have an encyclopaedic course of the liberal arts from the hands of Cicero, Quintilian and Augustine, showing that the tradition was kept even through the mediaeval schools, since Augustine was followed religiously during the Middle Ages⁶⁸. Even to the Renaissance the Doctrina Christiana and the De Catechizandis Rudibus were source books for Cassiodorus, Isidore of Seville, Alcuin, Rhabanus Maurus, Petrarch, Erasmus and Vives⁶⁹.

66 Ibid., II, 38, 56.

67 Ibid., II, 40, 60.

68 Tixeront, Handbook, p. 264.

69 Cassidy, Molders, p. 155-156.

Even in his theological works, he followed the types of reasoning and methods of a grammarian, but somewhat enlarged. De Magistro contains a discussion on the relation of words, while his commentaries on the bible proceed as though written by a learned grammarian. Quintilian's "poetarum enarratio" becomes with St. Augustine's "psalmorum enarratio". The terms used in the art were: emendatio, enarratio and iudicium, but St. Augustine eliminated the latter, maintaining that we must refrain from any criticism of the word of God.

As we can see, to construct a Christian system of education, St. Augustine took over the old Roman curriculum of the liberal arts and gave it a new purpose⁷⁰. The pagan studies could not be undertaken for their own sake, but only insofar as those studies were required as preparation for the reading and interpretation of the bible. Hence it was necessary to develop a new type of culture because the end or term of education was changed. It could not be the "doctus orator" nor the "vir bonus dicendi peritus"; it had to be a cultured Christian, a "doctus christianus" and had to be the ideal aimed at by the Christian teachers of grammar and rhetoric. With a view to preparing such a teacher, St. Augustine composed the De Doctrina Christiana, the charter of Christian education

⁷⁰ Augustinus, De Doctrina Christiana, II, 28, 42 - II, 38, 56.

as Cicero's De Oratore had been for the pagans. The end of Christian learning was to be a "modus inveniendi quae intelligenda sunt, et modus proferendi quae intellecta sunt"⁷¹. In the preparation of the exegesis of the Bible, the pupil was taught whatever he had to know for a thorough understanding of the passage under consideration.

As to the technique of the one engaged in the work of instructing, St. Augustine goes back directly to Cicero, saying with him that an eloquent man must speak to as to teach, to delight and to persuade⁷². He cites St. Ambrose and St. Cyprian as examples of those who have fulfilled that office to a marked degree⁷³. Cicero had said that the good orator should be able to use all sorts of styles, at times light, at times serious according to the importance of things. But, notes St. Augustine, a Christian is always talking about great and important things. Hence the Christian shall be able and eloquent by saying little things in a subdued style, moderate things in a temperate style and great things in a majestic style⁷⁴.

71 Ibid., I, 1.

72 Cassidy, Molders, p. 149.

73 Augustinus, De Doctrina Christiana, IV, 21, 45.

74 Ibid., IV, 17, 34.

One can see here a typical instance of the problems which unavoidably arise when a Christian thinks that some of the disciplines he has learned are fundamentally sound, but have to be transformed by grace. Thus St. Augustine felt that all of Cicero's doctrines had to be overhauled and he was in a position to do so; for with the great Christian orators of the four centuries before him, Roman eloquence was coming back to life in the purity of the Ciceronian ideal; not merely the written eloquence of Quintilian. The difference was that instead of addressing men to guide them toward the common good of the city, as Brutus, Cassius and Cicero, such men as Ambrose, Jerome, Cyprian and Augustine resorted to eloquence to guide Christians to God. For Cicero, eloquence is at the top of the pyramid of studies, for St. Augustine it is the study of Scripture⁷⁵ and in the thirteenth century it is to be theology.

The point is sometimes raised as to whether St. Augustine in his De Doctrina Christiana was describing a system of Christian education in general or only for those who were to teach the faith. Specifically, he wrote for those who are to be instructors, that the rest can learn all that is needful by being taught by those so instructed⁷⁶. Granting

75 Cassidy, Molders, p. 148.

76 Cayré, Manual, p. 653.

all that, yet it remains true that Christian culture was to be produced by his course of studies and those who were masters in it were to instruct others. A significant fact, generally overlooked, is that he completed the De Doctrina Christiana the very year that he finished fourteen years of work on The City of God. There is little doubt that in publishing it in 426 he meant it to be the complete system of education, leading to the highest degree of Christian culture for those who were to be chiefly instrumental by their teaching in training the citizens for this City of God.

Furthermore, the system which he inaugurated became, by default, of the Roman system, the one which, at least as the ideal, prevailed until the rise of the universities. Except in Italy, the Roman schools of grammar died out and the monastic, cathedral and parish schools which took their place followed the Augustinian tradition and the study and understanding of revealed truth was the final purpose of education. Newman maintained that St. Augustine formed the intellect of Christian Europe⁷⁷. Even Charlemagne's reform in education stemmed from his purpose to give better training to those who were to instruct others.

The passing of St. Augustine does not mark the beginning of the Middle Ages, but it does signal the end of the

⁷⁷ John Henry Newman, Apologia pro Vita Sua, New York, Longmans, Green, 1908, p. 264.

significant productions in the Ciceronian tradition. But before undertaking a survey of the Middle Ages, there are some minor figures whom it would be shortsighted to leave out, and actually they complete the picture. The period following St. Augustine was largely devoted to the production of poetry, not exclusively didactic in nature, although that form dominated the literature of the period⁷⁸. It was a medium so well suited to the Roman temperament, the best and most glorious Latin tradition, that it was natural that Christianity, eager to instruct souls in order to conquer them, appropriated it in its turn.

Early in the fifth century, Prudentius, a poet well grounded in the classics, produced a poem which he called Psychomachia⁷⁹. He cast it in the form of an allegory or symbol, a form long used by both Greek and Roman writers: Plautus, Virgil, Claudian and Tertullian. It was to be a Christian ode but unfortunately it was a bit too slavish in its imitation of the Aeneid⁸⁰. However, its popularity lasted well through the Middle Ages as did many another didactic poem which put the classical form at the service of the new faith and exploited the allegorical method which became standard

78 De Labriolle, History and Literature, p. 455.

79 Tixeront, Handbook, p. 249.

80 Cayré, Manual, p. 556.

practice in the drama, art and literature of the Middle Ages⁸¹. Likewise, the Commonitorium of Orientius was an exhortation in elegiacs written for the purpose of instructing his readers as to "which are the means which open heaven to us and put death to flight"⁸². It omits none of the classical trimmings, even substituting an invocation of Christ at the beginning to replace the regular invocation of the Muse of the poet.

Victor, the "orator Massiliensis", espoused the cause of instructing youth and so when he wrote the Alethia, a paraphrase of the Book of Genesis, he expurgated it that he might not offend the youngsters⁸³. Claudianus Memertus, a late fifth century figure, approached something of excellence in nearly every field of Cicero's program. He was an orator, dialectitian, poet, sermon writer, geometrician, musician and defender of the faith against the heretics⁸⁴. It is not necessary to review what he wrote or how he wrote it; it suffices to say that he fits perfectly into the mould made by the ancients for the formation of future public servants. One Sedulius informs us "that while he was spending his time to no purpose in secular studies, the Divine pity touched him and

81 Ibid.

82 Bardy, Christian Latin Literature, p. 171.

83 De Labriolle, History and Literature, p. 468.

84 Ibid., p. 472.

decided him to write some work which might strengthen his readers in the right way after he had first attracted them by the "honey" of his poetry for which they were so eager"⁸⁵. Here we have another instance of a poet who realized that by his art he can instruct; it is to be an important device in the later history of our problem.

The barbarian invasion swept before it wealth, works of art, privileged classes and whole peoples and brutal hands scattered them throughout a pillaged land. But that is not the whole story -- educational institutions also faced annihilation. Public schools found themselves almost wholly disorganized, gradually became rarer and for the most part disappeared. Instruction was reduced almost entirely to tutoring for the remaining aristocracy and the number of scholars dwindled almost to nothing. There were, however, some cultivated intelligences who retained the taste for good style and a genuine respect for literary tradition⁸⁶. To these we owe the beginning of an era in which efforts, often accompanied with hardship, were made to preserve learning at Bobbio, Luxeuil and St. Gall.

On the threshold of the Middle Ages stands Isidore of Seville. His fame perhaps rests upon borrowed ground, since

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 474.

⁸⁶ Bardy, Christian Latin Literature, p. 217-218.

he was a compiler rather than an original thinker. He spared no pains in collecting and handing on to future generations the information he culled in the course of his immense reading. This compilation served as a summa for centuries even though it is honeycombed with pagan allusions, guarded, however, by the caution practised by all the Fathers⁸⁷. His master-work was the Etymologiae, an encyclopaedia of human knowledge in twenty books: I, Grammar; II, Rhetoric, and Dialectic; III, Arithmetic, Geometry, Music and Astronomy; IV, Medicine; V, Law and Chronology; VI, Ecclesiastical Books and Offices; VII, God, the Angels, and Man; VIII, the Church and the Sects; IX, Languages, Peoples, Kingdoms; X, Etymology; XI, Man and Monsters; XII, Animals; XIII, the World and its Parts; XIV, the Earth and its Parts; XV, Houses and Fields; XVI, Stones and Metals; XVII, Agriculture; XVIII, War and Games; XIX, Ships, Houses and Clothes; XX, Food, Instruments and Tools⁸⁸. Such a list of subjects as this leaves little to be desired as far as the encyclopaedic ideal is concerned and his purpose was the benefit of his fellowman, bringing together at this critical period of history the ideals of Cicero and Quintilian, culminating in St. Augustine.

87 Tixeront, Handbook, p. 370.

88 Bardy, Christian Latin Literature, p. 211.

With the work of Isidore, the framework of the intellectual life of the Middle Ages was established; it closed the history of Latin Christian Literature. But it did not mark the end of patristic influence because the Etymologiae were used for centuries as the chief manual in educational institutions and it would be difficult to estimate what the Western world owes to them⁸⁹.

A rather concise estimate of the Latin Christian period is given by J. W. Thompson:

For propaganda purposes Christian apologists soon found that citation of secular classics gave the strongest force to their arguments against paganism. And finally, as the simple convictions of the early disciples were formulated, discussed, defended and developed into a complete theoretical system, such extensive use was made of classical grammar, literature, history and philosophy that the church, almost unconsciously, was forced to undertake secular academic education as a preparatory school to its own teaching.⁹⁰

89 Ibid.

90 Thompson, Medieval Library, p. 11-12.

CHAPTER IV

MEDIEVAL ORATOR - SCHOLAR

It is to be shown that the Middle Ages never lost sight of the Ciceronian connection between oratory and letters, on one hand, or between law and oratory on the other. But when great dialecticians and metaphysicians arose in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, they could scarcely be expected to submit their science to those of the grammarian and rhetorician. A great strife ensued, having the widest consequences for the development of human knowledge¹. The triumph of grammar and rhetoric in the sixteenth century provides all the methods and tools for the literary achievements of that age. They provide the ideal of Castiglione embodied in Shakespeare's Henry V:

Hear him but reason in divinity,
And all-admiring with an inward wish
You would desire the king were made a prelate:
Hear him debate of commonwealth affairs,
You would say it hath been all in all his study:
List his discourse of war, and you shall hear
A fearful battle rendered you in music:
Turn him to any cause of policy,
The Gordian knot of it he will unloose,
Familiar as his harter: that, when he speaks,
The air, a charter'd libertine, is still
And the mute wonder lurketh in men's ears,
To steal his sweet and honey'd sentences;
So that the art and practic part of life
Must be the mistress to this theoric.²

1 Eteinne Gilson, The Unity of Philosophical Experience, New York, Scribners, 1937, p. 32. Also p. 92-121.

2 William Shakespeare, Complete Works, edited by W. Wright, New York, Garden City, 1940, Henry V, I, i, 38-52.

Significantly, the opening lines of this speech show the modification which St. Jerome and St. Augustine and their successors, including Erasmus, made upon the Ciceronian ideal. Apart, however, from the precedence given to grammatical theology, the rest of the speech could have come straight out of the De Oratore. It is simply an amplification of the position that:

Whatever the theme, from whatever the art or whatever branch of knowledge it be taken, the orator, just as if he had got up the case for a client, will state it better and more gracefully than the actual discoverer and the specialist.³

Quintilian gives a lengthy development and illustration of this same position⁴. It is not necessary to review the matter here, since it has been sufficiently taken notice of in a preceding section.

The starting point of the history of mediaeval schools is the so-called Carolingian Renaissance⁵. The man actually responsible for the work accomplished was Alcuin, a monk who had received his training in the school of York. The noteworthy part of his life, it is true, is centered around his activities in France, yet it would not be correct to limit

³ Marcus Tullius Cicero, De Oratore, Harvard, Univ. Press, 1942, I, 12, 51.

⁴ Marcus F. Quintilianus, Institutio Oratoria, New York, Putnam, 1922, II, 21, 1-24.

⁵ Beryl Smalley, The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages, Oxford, Clarendon, 1941, p. 24-57.

any comments on his life to that period alone. He had been educated in England and simply brought to ninth century France the type of intellectual culture which had been flourishing in England when he completed his studies. What we call the Carolingian Renaissance is nothing more than the culmination of that English culture.

Here, as in any type of historical survey, it is not possible to mention all the people and movements which contributed to the whole picture; always selections must be made which best suit the purpose of the study. And so, when we start here with England, it should not be supposed that the rest of the world was asleep intellectually. For example, some fifty years before our first item of interest occurs, Cassidorus (about 540) was the spearhead of the liberal arts; he encouraged them but not as an end in themselves, only as a means⁶. Furthermore, he anticipated much of the activity of scholars of the Middle Ages by assembling a great library at Vivarium⁷.

In 596 Pope Gregory sent Augustine as a missionary to Britain⁸. We are indebted to Bede for most of the information

⁶ A.F. West, Alcuin and the Rise of the Christian Schools, New York, Scribner, 1892, p. 23-25.

⁷ Cf. J.W. Thompson, The Medieval Library, Chicago, Univ. Press, 1939, especially chapters I-IV.

⁸ The Venerable Bede, Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation, London, Dent, 1913, p. 32-33.

on this period. Along with Augustine he sent many monks to preach the word of God to the people. Our present interest stems as a sort of by-product from their missionary work. When Augustine and his monks went to England they naturally carried with them the necessary religious books, without which Christian liturgy and instruction would have been impossible. Some five years later, after Augustine had been consecrated first archbishop of Canterbury, the Pope sent a number of sacred vessels, ornaments, and also many books to him⁹. Bede does not say what sort of books these were, nor do we know from any other source but we can be sure that they were not entirely of a religious nature because the Roman missionaries had to learn Anglo-Saxon for themselves and teach Latin to those who were to become priests. It is more than likely that they passed on the same type of education that they themselves had received. It is quite possible then that among the books brought in 601 some grammatical textbooks had been included.

By the middle of the century there were at least three native bishops consecrated in Britain, indicating that the progress of the missionaries must have been very favorable¹⁰. It was then no longer advisable to send simply pious and zealous missionaries; they had to be highly learned men as

9 Ibid., p. 51.

10 Ibid., p. 101-102.

well so that they could continue the educational work of their predecessors. In 664 Theodore was made bishop and Bede says that he was a man well learned in both profane and divine literature, in both Greek and Latin¹¹. He was accompanied by Hadrian, an African abbot, well versed in Scripture, experienced in discipline and skilled in the Greek and Latin tongues. Hadrian was put in charge of the monastery of St. Peter at Canterbury. Both he and Theodore gathered a company of students around them and daily imparted knowledge. Hence from that time there was a regular school of teaching; and along with the study of sacred writings, they instructed in metrics, astronomy and arithmetic,

the proof whereof is that even to this day (after 700) some of their scholars are still living who are well versed in the Greek and Latin tongues as in their own, in which they were born.¹²

To get some notion of the content of this culture we have only to go to Aldhelm of Malmesbury who received his education in Kent. He was attracted to the school of Canterbury and even though he considered himself a master beforehand, he felt that he was once more a pupil because of the excellence of the teaching there¹³. He studied Roman Law, as though he were

11 Ibid., p. 161-164.

12 Ibid., p. 164.

13 Eleanor S. Duckett, Anglo-Saxon Saints and Scholars, New York, Macmillan, 1947, p. 38.

to become a "doctus orator", metrics and prosody, rhetoric, mathematics and astronomy, and a part of astrology. In this latter either Augustine's warning in the De Doctrina Christiana is unknown or unheeded. Aldhelm's education was dominantly literary and his own writings abound in quotations from the Latin Poets: Virgil, Terence, Horace and Juvenal¹⁴. His prose, however, is unduly rhetorical, overflowing with unnecessary alliterations. However he is the first Englishman of whom any literature remains¹⁵ and so it is justifiable to conclude that the Canterbury school was but a continuation of the "puerilis institutio" of the later Roman Empire. At the same time it was also a continuation of the Augustinian ideal of a "doctrina Christiana" and the type he took back to Malmesbury after his stay in Kent was but a local adaptation of the classical culture of the Fathers of the Church.

Another companion of Theodore was Bennett Biscop, an Englishman. He was given charge of the monastery of St. Peter but stayed there only two years. He went to Rome and when he returned, "he brought back a large number of books on sacred literature (eruditionis) which he had either bought at a

14 Ibid., p. 49.

15 John E. Sandys, History of Classical Scholarship, Cambridge, Univ. Press, 1903, 1908, I, 467.

price or received as gifts from friends"¹⁶. On his way back he stopped at Vienne and picked up more books and thus equipped with an extensive library, he received from King Egfrid some land at the mouth of the Wear River for a monastery -- St. Peter's at Wearmouth. Some years later he again visited the continent and brought back more books "of all kinds". He did the same shortly after for his monastery of St. Paul in Jarrow¹⁷. Biscop himself, therefore considered books as the most important elements after the choice of an abbot and the discharge of religious service. When near death he exhorted his monks to observe the rules:

. . . and the most excellent and large library which he has brought back from Rome, and which was necessary for the instruction of the church, he commanded to be kept entire and not marred by neglect nor dispersed.¹⁸

Under Geolfred, the third successor of Biscop, the libraries of the monasteries of Sts. Peter and Paul became doubled¹⁹.

¹⁶ Bede, Ecclesiastical History, "Lives of the Holy Abbots, p. 351.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 353-356.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 356.

¹⁹ Ibid., 360. Cf. also J. De Ghellinck, "Diffusion, utilisation et transmission des écrits patristiques". Gregorianum, Vol. 14, 1933, p. 379, and Note.

They were excellent and extensive libraries at Canterbury, Dover, Rochester, Durham, and Lincoln as well as numerous other abbeys and schools scattered throughout England²⁰.

Concerning the one at Durham, he says:

No better example than Durham could be found to illustrate the Benedictine interest in learning, its library was one of the most notable medieval English establishments both in extent and in the proportion of classical authors it contained.²¹

A similar account of the famous collection of Glastonbury Abbey, given by C.H. Slover indicates that the work done there was along the same line - the classics²².

But the figure of this period who stands foremost is Bede, a product of the monastery school, classicist, a Scripture scholar, a poet and in general, an authority in nearly all branches of learning²³. His Ecclesiastical History is monumental in the field. His ideal as a writer was the ideal of St. Augustine, just as his program of study as a young monk had been according to the Augustinian tradition. The De Natura Rerum bears this out, for it is a sort of encyclopaedia; it tries to fulfill the plan of the Doctrina

20 Thompson, Medieval Library, p. 269 ff.

21 Ibid., p. 293.

22 C.H. Slover, "Glastonbury Abbey and the Fusing of English Literary Culture", in Speculum, Vol. 10, 1935, p. 160.

23 Duckett, Anglo-Saxon Saints, p. 336.

Christiana: a summary of all that it is necessary to know in order to understand the Bible and explain it to others²⁴. The books of Bede became the teachers not only of England but of Europe as well; they were the text-books of the famous school of York, to which scholars and students came from Germany and France; they went with Alcuin to the schools of Charlemagne²⁵. When Bede died in 735 England had become the home of several important monastic schools whose value is attested by the scholars they produced. There were schools at Canterbury, Winchester, Nursling, York, Wearmouth, Jarrow and Lindesfarne.

The name of Alfred, King of Wessex is high on the list of those who were formed by and who were leaders in the spread of learning in the best Ciceronian tradition. He was the type of ideal Englishman, a type which was to see a revival during the Renaissance. He both translated and caused to be translated into Anglo-Saxon those works which he deemed necessary for his people to know²⁶. He feared that Latin learning was beginning to decay and he was anxious to preserve it as well as make the knowledge available to all.

24 Ibid., p. 256.

25 Paul Abelson, The Seven Liberal Arts, New York, Columbia Univ. Press, 1938, p. 23.

26 G.O. Sayles, The Medieval Foundations of England, Philadelphia, Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1950, p. 101.

The necessity therefore arose of creating an Anglo-Saxon prose form based on Latin models and so it was that the pieces he caused to be translated were the important works of that era: Orosius' History, and Bede's Ecclesiastical History²⁷.

In 766, the successor of Egbert, a pupil of Bede and master of York, was Albertus. He in turn was the master of the one responsible for the transfer of English culture to continental Europe, Alcuin who gave an account of the library at York, which caused Sandys to declare: "The library of York in the last quarter of the eight century far surpassed any possessed by England or France in the twelfth century"²⁸. Alcuin has this to say in Versus de Sanctis Eboracensis Ecclesiae:

There shalt thou find the volumes that contain
All of the ancient Fathers that remain,
Glorious Greece transferred to Rome . . .²⁹

Notice should be taken of the mentioning that learning had come from Greece to Rome and thence transferred to York. The poem goes on to name the writers: Jerome, Ambrose, Hilary, Augustine, Orosius, Basil, Cassidorus, Chrysostom, Bede, Aldhelm, Pliny, Aristotle, Cicero, Sedulius, Juvenal, Lactantius, Virgil, Donatus, and Priscian. The catalogue itself

27 Sandys, History of Classical Scholarship, I, 500.

28 Ibid., p. 472.

29 West, Alcuin, p. 34.

shows that the school of York was equipped with the sort of books required for the formation of learned Christians. The various ones mentioned fall under the following classifications:

1. Grammar and grammatical commentaries.
2. A set of Latin poets.
3. Natural history - Pliny.
4. Philosophy - Aristotle.

It is quite safe to regard Alcuin as a typical representative of Northumbrian culture at its best since he received no other. He was not a brilliant pupil, however; more passionately attached to grammar than his master wished. It is related that he even preferred to stay in his cell and read Virgil, than go to the chapel for the night office. On a certain night, Alcuin, then a young boy at the school of York, was asleep in his cell with a young peasant lad, a sound sleeper and snorer. Suddenly the place was invaded by a troop of evil spirits. They looked at the boys and began by tackling the young peasant; they flogged him severely. Alcuin made a vow then that if he escaped the cruel hands of the fiends, never again would he prefer the reading of Virgil to the reading of the psalms³⁰. This anecdote serves a double purpose; it shows Alcuin's love of the classics and at the same time is a warning for the historian who claims that during the Middle Ages nobody read the classics. Actually, the attitude

³⁰ J.P. Migne, Patrologia Latina, Paris, Garnier, 1863, Vol. 100, 91-92A.

generally was the same as that held by the Fathers: read them if necessary but beware of the doctrines. Alcuin himself later forbade the reading of Virgil in his school, probably to protect other youth from his own unhappy experience because of over-indulgence³¹.

In the introduction to De Grammatica, Alcuin invites his pupils to the study of true wisdom, provided they learn to love it only for the sake of God, purity of soul and knowledge of the truth³². Wisdom has built her house on seven pillars, the seven liberal arts, the necessary disciplines by which the philosophers, statesmen and kings of old have achieved their ends and doctors of the church have defeated enemies³³. Alcuin's ideal is to raise his pupils by progressive study of liberal arts to the highest peak - Scripture. Of the list proposed by Varro, Alcuin's grammar fulfilled the requirements of the first part perfectly. His De Rhetorica³⁴ is in fact a combination of rhetoric and ethics, drawn from Cicero's De Inventione and the De Oratore, while De Dialectica³⁵ concerns itself with the definitions of philosophy, categories,

31 Sandys, History of Classical Scholarship, I, 476.

32 Migne, Patrologia Latina, Vol. 101, 850B.

33 Ibid., 853C-854B.

34 Ibid., 919-946.

35 Ibid., 951-976.

sylogisms, topics and interpretation. With these three works Alcuin covered the whole trivium and the quadrivium was discussed in a number of his letters (143, 144, 148, 155, 170, 171, 172) on mathematics. He taught Charlemagne arithmetic and astronomy³⁶ and he also wrote a treatise on the subject of leap year³⁷. When Alcuin came to the part of the De Anima Rationali dealing with the origin of the soul he says that he cannot finish because he had not been able to find the treatise of St. Augustine on this point and expresses the hope that if Gundrada, the cousin of Charlemagne does come across it she will send it to him³⁸.

Alcuin was fully aware of the greatness of pagan classical culture and his acknowledgement of the beauty of pagan civilization appears in the dialogue between Charlemagne the pupil and Alcuin the master on rhetoric.

Alcuin: It must first be observed that certain things are so illustrious and noble that they should be sought and loved and followed, not because of some advantage which accrues as a result, but rather because of the inherent excellence of the things themselves.

Charlemagne: I should like above all else to know what these things are.

Alcuin. They are virtue, knowledge, truth, love of good.

36 Ibid., 920C.

37 Ibid., 993-999.

38 Ibid., 645C.

Charlemagne. Does not the Christian religion chiefly celebrate these things?

Alcuin. It celebrates and respects them.

Charlemagne. What attitude did the philosophers have towards these things?

Alcuin. They preceived these things in human nature, and cultivated them with the greatest devotion.

Charlemagne. Then what is the difference between these philosophers and the Christians?

Alcuin. Faith and baptism.³⁹

Somewhat later in the dialogue we read a passage which is reminiscent of the patristic view of the relationship of pagan and Christian thought to the "good life":

Charlemagne. If those philosophers cultivated the virtues merely because such an activity lent great prestige and honor to their lives, then I am astonished that we Christians should turn away from the virtuous life and fall into many grievous errors when we are promised by Jesus Christ who is Truth itself that our faithful and loving devotion to good conduct will bring a reward of eternal glory.

Alcuin. We ought to feel pity rather than astonishment that so very many of us cannot be made to acknowledge the inherent worth of a virtuous life, either by the fear of punishment or the hope of reward.⁴⁰

Alcuin's own mission in France was to conceive and carry into realization this Christian culture. He knew that he was the missionary of Northumbrian culture to Europe, and

³⁹ Wilbur S. Howell, tr., The Rhetoric of Alcuin and Charlemagne, Princeton, Univ. Press, 1941, p. 145-147.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 151.

as early as the end of the eighth century he foresaw the development of learning in France and knew that with his grammar, rhetoric and dialectics he was laying down the foundation of what was to be a magnificent edifice. He spoke of the culture he was building as a new Athens, more excellent and surpassing the ancient because ennobled by the teaching of Christ. The old Athens was instructed by the wisdom of Plato; the new by the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost⁴¹.

The work he wanted to accomplish he could not do without the help of the school at York. Every time he was in need of books he would remember his former home where the writings of the ancient wise men of Rome were so easily found. Sometimes he expressed his sadness at not being there and asked Charlemagne for permission to send some of his pupils to Britain to bring back the texts he needed at St. Martin's⁴².

Besides Alcuin, Charlemagne imported at least half a dozen other scholars to carry on the work of education in France. Conspicuous among these were Paulus and Peter of Pisa. Charlemagne ordered Paulus to revise a collection of homilies which he published with the warning that he was undertaking a revival of the study of letters which was

⁴¹ Migne, Patrologia Latina, Vol. 100, 282C.

⁴² Ibid., 208C.

nearly extinguished through the neglect of their ancestors, and he charged all his subjects, so far as they were able, to cultivate the liberal arts as he had set them the example. Peter of Pisa was the first professor of grammar in the Palatine school of Charlemagne⁴³.

Keeping in mind these other men, it would be misleading to ascribe the whole Renaissance to Alcuin. Charlemagne himself was largely responsible for it since he gathered the scholars; some he brought back from his military campaigns, some just happened along, while others were attracted to his court by the report that scholars were always welcome there⁴⁴. Alcuin is unique among the scholars there principally in that he was nearly fifty-two years old when he came, was made head of the Palatine school, and minister of national education, besides teaching the whole range of the seven liberal arts⁴⁵. There is further significance in the fact that in the later history of classical scholarship we find pupils of Alcuin almost everywhere and practically none of the other staff members of the school⁴⁶.

43 Duckett, Anglo-Saxon Saints, p. 98-108.

44 Migne, Patrologia Latina, Vol. 98, 895-896.

45 West, Alcuin, p. 40 ff.

46 Ibid., p. 165-179.

In the second chapter of the Chronicles of St. Gall, we read that Charlemagne was welcoming wise men to his court, and Albinus, i.e. Alcuin went to him. This Albinus was well instructed in the whole field of letters, better than any other man of his time, because he had been a pupil of the most learned Bede. Albinus' teaching bore such fruit that the "modern" Gauls equalled the ancient Romans and Athenians⁴⁷.

The main point is that the modern historians of the Renaissance describe it as a re-discovery of antiquity which was forgotten or despised by the men of the Middle Ages, but the men of the Middle Ages always considered that they were modern men, living in a modern age, entrusted by God with the mission both to preserve the classical culture of Greece and Rome, and to enlarge it and bring it to perfection through the teachings of Christ. This same notion of "translatione studii", was traditional in the Middle Ages and we find the same expression in Chrétien de Troyes⁴⁸.

In the ninth century the same problem was present as the one which faced the Fathers of the Church, i.e. the position to be taken in regard to the study or prohibition of the classics. A perfect example of this tradition was Rhabanus Maurus. He was a pupil of Alcuin and as such had

⁴⁷ Migne, Patrologia Latina, Vol. 98, 1373B.

⁴⁸ W.W. Comfort, tr., Arthurian Romances by Chrétien de Troyes, London, Dent, 1928, p. 91.

followed rigidly the *De Doctrina Christiana* of St. Augustine⁴⁹. He was the author of a grammar, arithmetic and a long series of German poems. In his educational program he followed the course as outlined by Cicero and Quintilian: grammar, rhetoric, dialectics, mathematics, arithmetic, geometry, music and astronomy⁵⁰. Poetry and literature of the pagans could be read because of the beauty of their excellence only.

To extend the list of classical scholars through the Middle Ages would add only bulk to an already impressive list. Let it suffice to say that the tradition of Ciceronianism as modified by St. Augustine persisted throughout the period, and our chief concern can be directed to modification of the tradition, rather than to an extension of a list of proponents.

Around 935 there was born a girl named Roswitha who was to **make** a marked advance in the progress of the Ciceronian and Augustinian ideal. In her life of the Emperor Otto I we come to learn that the educational system of which we have been speaking was also in vogue in monasteries of women, and the level of excellence was quite high at least at Gandersheim where she studied⁵¹. This spread of learning to women throws

49 C.S. Baldwin, Medieval Rhetoric and Poetic, New York, Macmillan, 1928, p. 143.

50 Sandys, History of Classical Scholarship, I, 483-484.

51 C. St. John, tr., The Plays of Roswitha, London, Chatto, Windus, 1923, p. xxxii.

some light on an important later case, that of Eloise, and we must accept the fact that there was a high degree of learning in the convents, not from any statements about it but rather from the evidence of some students who bear witness to the education they received. The products of a school are its best advertisements.

From Roswitha's account of her own work we come to know what inspired her. She had received the usual classical education but the use she put it to is the point of interest. We have seen attempts to put doctrine into the hymns of the liturgy, but with Roswitha we see the desire on the part of a pious woman to help her fellowmen through the medium of the drama. She wrote six plays of rather meager literary excellence but her account of the "why" is noteworthy. She says that many Catholics prefer the vanity of pagan literature to the usefulness of Sacred literature⁵². They are wrong yet their excuse lies in the eloquence of the language in which pagan literature is written. On the other hand there are Catholics who, while they keep faith with their own sacred Books and despise all the rest of the pagan literature yet will read and re-read Terentius which is a very dangerous thing to

52 Ibid., p. xxvi.

do, for while they enjoy the charm of his style they cannot but defile their souls by the shameful things they learn there. Such was the reason why she, the voice of Gandersheim, did not hesitate to imitate in her writings the man whom others honor by reading him⁵³. That same style which Terentius once used to describe the shameful deeds of lascivious women, she tried to use to glorify the honorable continence of Christian virgins⁵⁴.

She knew well that the public would be less interested in her good women than in Terentius' bad ones, so she decided not to eliminate the element of immorality altogether but to show it as immorality and sin, which is to be overcome by the grace of God⁵⁵. All her plays hinge upon the notion that if there is a Christian dramatic element in life it certainly is the everlasting fight of grace against sin, the fundamental law of the Christian theatre. Roswitha stands like Janus looking both ways, to the past and to the future. She realized the pressing problem of the Fathers of the Church, the Christianization of classical Latin culture and indicated the line of action toward the fulfilment of Alcuin's program, the building up of the new Athens, still more beautiful than the old one had been.

53 Sandys, History of Classical Scholarship, p. 506.

54 Migne, Patrologia Latina, Vol. 137, 972D-973A.

55 St. John, Plays of Roswitha, p. xxvi-xxviii.

The notion of consciousness on the part of a writer of the importance of his office in the instruction of men begins to take definite shape also in a letter of Gerbert of Aurillac who was born in the middle of the tenth century and later became Pope Sylvester II. In a letter to the abbot of Tours, speaking of his admiration for and agreement with Cicero on the good and the useful, he writes:

. . . And as morality and the art of speech are never to be severed from philosophy, I have always joined the study of speaking well with the study of living well. For although by itself, living well may be nobler than speaking well, and may suffice without its fellow for one absolved from the direction of affairs, yet for us, busied with the State, both are needed. For it is of the greatest utility to speak appositely when persuading, and with mild discourse check the fury of angry men. In preparing for such business, I am eagerly collecting a library.⁵⁶

With the rise of the study of dialectics, the importance of grammar and rhetoric was pushed into the background and the chief concern of scholars was the use of logic almost for its own sake, without regard for any other end. This does not mean, however, that the pursuit of the liberal arts was completely forgotten. The history of the three centuries from the twelfth to the fifteenth was in reality the history of two intellectual parties, the scholastics and the classicists, although the latter was almost completely forgotten. The classicists had been defeated but they kept fighting for their

⁵⁶ H.O. Taylor, The Medieval Mind, London, Macmillan, 1930, I, 287.

ideals and in the long run they gained the upper hand; they were a sort of intellectual underground waiting and working for their day of victory⁵⁷. It is not necessary here to discuss all the problems of the struggle between rhetoric and dialectic; it will suffice to note that rhetoric faded from the picture for some time but finally was revived in what is commonly called the Renaissance. It must not be understood as a re-discovery of something that had been lost, nor as a movement somewhat antiquarian wherein there is a renewed interest in old things. It was a gradual process of reaction against a movement not in sympathy with the teachings of the ancients; it was a rebellion against an era of *summae, quaestiones disputatae* and *quodlibetales*, things unheard of in the early Christian era. To counteract these novelties, there was to be a return to Christian tradition, that is, the classical ideal of Cicero and Quintilian, as revised by the Fathers of the Church.

A step in the right direction towards the realization of a writer such as Sir Philip Sidney was made by John of Salisbury. He was acquainted at first hand with the excesses of the dialecticians and logicians, but he was also profoundly

57 Gilson, Unity of Philosophical Experience, p. 92-121.

convinced of the value of grammar and rhetoric since he had been educated in that regimen himself. He proposed in his Metalogicon⁵⁸ to strike something like a middle way: the use of the liberal arts together with philosophy and logic to produce a Christian dialectitian. Philosophy is wisdom, this wisdom is ethical and should be passed on to men, but how can this be done unless the learned man is also eloquent? Dialectics with him is a handmaid of eloquence, the most useful and quickest, but nevertheless it will serve one to the full extent of what he knows, but no farther⁵⁹. John of Salisbury's ideal was quite similar to Cicero's and as a matter of fact, he accomplished what Cicero had failed to do: bridge the gaps between philosophy and the moral virtues, and then from the moral virtues to the happy life⁶⁰. John could do it better since John was a Christian; he was in a position to see clearly the whole synthesis of grace working on a highly skilled and developed intelligence. His Policraticus is by no means an end-of-the-line work, it is but an important landmark in a tradition which sets eloquent wisdom as the princely ideal and produces Erasmus' Education of a Christian Prince, Casti-

58 Clemens C. Webb, tr., Metalogicon of John of Salisbury, Oxford, Clarendon, 1929.

59 Ibid., II, 9, 866-867.

60 J.B. Pike, ed., John of Salisbury's Frivolities of Courtiers, Minneapolis, Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1938, p. 25 ff and p. 221.

glione's Courtier, More's Utopia, Rabelais' Gargantua, Bacon's Essays and even Mandeville's Fable of the Bees.

Writers on the commonwealth and political science have often made use of nature as the model for society. Mandeville's ideas may have come from any number of sources because the "bee" model was common enough; note John of Salisbury among others. He cites Plato, Cicero, Plutarch and Virgil on Nature's design for men in society; saying that we can run through all the authors who have written of the commonwealth, turn over all the histories of commonwealths and we will find no truer or more appropriate description of life in civil society than that afforded by the bees⁶¹.

Following in this train of thought we come upon Roger Bacon, a Franciscan of the early thirteenth century. His personal ideal was that of a universal Christian society under the leadership of the Popes, quickened and ruled by Christian wisdom. His own task in that huge undertaking was to be the restoration of Christian wisdom, and his Opus Majus⁶² was but a restatement, in terms of the thirteenth century learning, of the De Doctrina Christiana of St. Augustine⁶³. Perfect wisdom is to be found implicitly in Scripture; it is therefore

61 J. Dickinson, The Statesman's Book of John of Salisbury, New York, Knopf, 1927, p. 245.

62 R.B. Burke, tr., Opus Majus of Roger Bacon, Philadelphia, Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1928.

63 Ibid., I, xii.

necessary to be able to read it⁶⁴. This demands grammar, Hebrew, Greek, Arabic and Latin. Next comes Mathematics, the gateway and key to the sciences. All in all Bacon held for the liberal arts as the necessary foundation of a system of life essentially designed for the production of citizens of heaven, much the same as St. Augustine visualized long years before in his City of God.

The concept of the Ciceronian ideal and its modification which is the basis of John of Salisbury's humanism in the twelfth century, is expressed by St. Bonaventure in the thirteenth:

If, however, we consider speech by reason of its end, it exists in order to express, to instruct and to move. But it never expresses anything except through the mediation of a form, never teaches except through the mediation of the light of conviction, never moves except through the mediation of virtue or power. . . And accordingly Augustine concludes that he alone is the true doctor, who can impress form, infuse light, and give virtue or power to the heart of the hearer.⁶⁵

In the sixteenth century Erasmus speaks in precisely the same way of the function of rhetoric, saying that the mysteries of the Faith owe their power over the minds and conduct of men, in large degree, to the grace and eloquence of their presentation⁶⁶.

64 Ibid., I, 36.

65 C.G. Wallis, tr., On the Reproduction of the Arts to Theology of St. Bonaventure, Annapolis, St. John's Bookstore, 1938, p. 9.

66 W.H. Woodward, Erasmus, Concerning the Aim and Method of Education, Cambridge, Univ. Press, 1904, p. 124.

The enlistment of rhetoric, and all it implies, by the humanists of the Renaissance, to purely secular ends was simply an outgrowth of the view held by Vincent of Beauvais (d 1262). For him, and Francis Bacon after him, eloquence is a necessary art and practical virtue. Both men try to order the arts with regard to their function for the relief of man's fallen estate. The principal evils of the fall are ignorance, concupiscence, and death; three remedies are needed to combat these evils: Wisdom, Virtue and Need. In the Speculum Doctrinale, Vincent writes:

For the obtaining of these three remedies every art and every disciplina was invented. In order to gain Wisdom, Theorica was devised; and Practica for the sake of virtue; and for Need's sake, Mechanica. For the end and aim of all human actions and studies, which reason regulates, ought to look either to the reparation of the integrity of our nature or to alleviating the needs to which life is subjected. . . . Last found of all is Logic, source of eloquence, through which the wise who understand the aforesaid principal sciences and disciplines, may discourse upon them more correctly, truly and elegantly; more correctly, through Grammar; more truly through Dialectic; more elegantly, through Rhetoric.⁶⁷

Vincent, like John of Salisbury and the ancient Stoics, extends the term Logic to include all the arts connected with Speech. In this extensive but lucid order of the encyclopedia of the arts, Cicero's ideal stands out very sharply. Eloquence, which implies wisdom, is a principal means by which the integrity of our nature is achieved once more, for

67 Taylor, Medieval Mind, II, p. 350-351.

eloquence operates on the passions of men by way of the imagination, controlling men for a common social good⁶⁸. Thus eloquence and political prudence are inseparable concepts for Cicero, John of Salisbury, Vincent of Beauvais, and Francis Bacon. The latter although some three hundred years later than Vincent, had a passage in his Advancement of Learning which is almost identical with his on the function of rhetoric for the relief of man's estate:

. . . it is eloquence that prevaieth in an active life. . . The duty and office of rhetoric is, to apply reason to imagination for the better moving of the will.⁶⁹

Something must be said of poetry itself because we have shifted our ground a little from orator to poet. Perhaps the proper place for such discussion would be immediately preceding the study of Sidney himself but to keep chronology straight, it is to receive at least an introductory treatment here.

With the rise of dialectic, as we have indicated⁷⁰, classical studies had to take a back seat and the time allotted for them became shorter and shorter. The remedy, then as now, was to compile some sort of text book and make

68 Baldwin, Medieval Rhetoric, p. 175.

69 Francis Bacon, The Advancement of Learning, London, Dent, 1930, p. 146.

70 Supra, p. 87.

the students learn it. This is exactly what was done with poetry in the thirteenth century. The professors of Grammar, who for the most part were able poets as well, resorted to poetry in order to teach boys how to write poetry. When poetry is used as a didactic device there is danger that the form of poetry will degenerate into nothing more than a branch of mnemonics. It will be looked upon simply as a means to facilitate learning and especially as an aid to memory. But this is an extreme abuse and is not the type of poetry with which we are concerning ourselves ultimately. There are other values, and far nobler ones, in poetry than mere metric. Good or bad, there has been didactic poetry in all ages. Mention has been made at least of the use of Church Hymns to teach doctrines during the patristic period⁷¹. In the twelfth century we find rhymed charters, chronicles, the Metrical Formulary for letter writing composed by Matthew of Vendome and other works attesting to the popularity of poetic teaching. According to L.J. Paetow:

As early as 1150, Peter Helias, a teacher at Paris, wrote a brief summary of Latin Grammar in Hexameters. . . practically all the new text-books which appeared were written in verse form.⁷²

71 Supra, p. 44.

72 L.J. Paetow, The Arts Course at Mediaeval Universities, Champaign, Univ. of Illinois Press, 1910, p. 34-35.

Priscian began to lose ground partly because his works were in prose -- hence attempts were made to bring him up to date in this respect. A manuscript in the British Museum contains a versified form of Priscianus Major which was used at the Sorbonne. The following gloss, found in one of the new grammars, clearly states the demands of those times:

The metrical form which this author follows is better than prose, which Priscian uses, for three reasons: the metrical form can be more easily comprehended, it is more elegant, is briefer and can be remembered more easily.⁷³

The mechanization of poetry must have been an accomplished fact before the second half of the thirteenth century because Matthew of Vendome's Ars Versificatoria, Geoffroi de Vinsauf's Poetria Nova, and Evrard's Laborinthus all appear before that time and were widely used as texts. There will then be little doubt that the idea of reducing the teaching of poetry to that of practical text-books, wherein poetria is more or less confused with rhetorica, had come to the grammarians of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries by the same spirit that was inspiring at the same time, the Summae, or Summulae used by the Logicians⁷⁴.

Before leaving the Middle Ages we have yet to investigate the work of Coluccio Salutati. He is important because

73 Ibid., p. 35.

74 Baldwin, Medieval Rhetoric, p. 195.

he brings to light a considerable amount of material which directly concerns our present problem: poetry as a means to the good life. Even at this late date, (c 1400) there are still many who feared the paganism of the classics; one such was Giovanni de Samminiato. He had been a soldier in Lombardy and after his retirement to a monastery in Florence, he suffered pangs of conscience regarding some plundering. He told Salutati of his trouble and the latter did his best to ease the conscience of the young brother⁷⁵. Apparently he succeeded, for, several years later, Giovanni sought to repay Salutati's good advice by warning him that it was dangerous for him to read pagan authors. Salutati answered him again in a short letter saying that truth should be sought wherever it is, even in pagan fables and that of all modes of expression, none had more affinity with the divine speech and with the very divinity than the speech of the poets⁷⁶. God himself through the mouthpiece of David, Job and Jeremiah has resorted to poetry to reveal himself to men. How then could there be impiety in cultivating poetry? Lest Giovanni object that it is not the shortest way to God and that Jerome had been flogged before the tribunal of God for reading too much of the poets, he hastens to point out that if the cloister is

75 Coluccio Salutati, Epistolario, Rome, Forzani, 1891-1911, II, 462-469.

76 Ibid., III, 539-541.

a shorter way, it is not the only way. As to Jerome, God did not want him to read the poets because he wanted him to devote his whole time to the translation of Scripture; St. Augustine on the other hand had been destined by God to build up the city of God with stones borrowed from paganism, and so God never turned Augustine's mind from the classics⁷⁷.

After a few years of silence, the controversy was once more revived by Giovanni but this time he wrote a letter to Angelo Corbinelli, a young Humanist of the Salutati circle. He stated that his old quarrel with Salutati had not been settled and went on to repeat that the reading of classics was harmful to Christians. One of his arguments was to be of considerable consequence because it brought forth from Salutati a letter of reply which is practically a treatise on poetry. Giovanni insisted that if one must read pagan writers, why not read Seneca and Aristotle instead of the fables of the poets? At least their moral doctrines are useful. But if what you seek are the first principles of things, Holy Scripture is the only book⁷⁸. The answer came from Salutati⁷⁹, as Giovanni hoped, and not from Corbinelli; it amounts to a manifesto of

77 Ibid., p. 541-542.

78 Remi Coulon, ed., Lucula Noctis Beati Johannis Dominici, Paris, Picard, 1908, lxi-lxii.

79 Salutati, Epistolario, IV, 170-204.

the new humanistic school at the opening of the fifteenth century.

Since Samminiato condemns the reading of the poets, we must first ask what poetry is. He calls it a pack of lies because truth cannot hide itself under the bark of deceitful images. Salutati asks in his reply, How is it then that we read in Genesis I, 2, "Spiritus Domini ferebatur super quas", and I, 3, "dixit Deus, fiat lux"? etc. The spirit of God is incorporeal; how can He be borne over the waters? God has neither mouth nor tongue; how can He speak? Are we then going to say that such sentences are as many lies? Of course not; they are poetry⁸⁰. Scripture is so often poetry because we think before we speak: there is nothing in our words that does not exist first in the mind. What we have in mind we first express according to the congruity of Grammar, prove it by Logic and speak it persuasively by the flowers of Rhetoric. When we want to speak of God, however, since we do not understand him, we do not have any concept of him and so we have no words. Hence man has to resort to another way of talking, and since it must be such a one as is suitable to express God, it must be an excellent one. The only conceivable way to do it is to start from the works of God and to imagine God after the image of his own effects⁸¹. It is not only so when we

80 Ibid., p. 175.

81 Ibid., p. 176.

have to speak of God, but also when we speak of anything corporeal; the bark of our speech is bound to be false, yet inside there is to be found hidden truth. Therefore, let this be our definition of a poetical expression: a mode of expression, outwardly false but inwardly true⁸². As to poetry itself, it is the method, the expertness in, or the science of, this mode of expression.

The second point -- the relation of poetry to Holy Scripture is handled this way. The holy books have God for their own subject, and since nothing we can say about God or incorporeal things can be literally true, Holy Scripture is bound to make use of expressions which are outwardly false but inwardly true: this is poetry. In so far as its mode of expression is concerned, Holy Writ is poetry, consequently there can be nothing wrong with poetry as a distinct mode of expression⁸³.

The origin of poetry, therefore, goes back to the origins of the world, since no man has ever been able to speak but poetically either of God or to God. These discussions about God are the birthplace of poetry. The pagan "theologians" were poets, called theologians because they made hymns about the gods. Poetry came to the Christian era through

82 Ibid., p. 177.

83 Ibid., p. 177-178.

Christ himself, who, not to mention anything else, has inserted so many parables in his Gospel. Whence it follows that poetry is much more a divine invention than a human one⁸⁴. The same "apology" for poetry occurs in Petrarch⁸⁵. It can be said that Theology is poetry about God; when Christ is called now a lion, now a lamb, when he speaks in parables himself; all that is allegory and therefore poetry. Poetry is but a part of the luxury in the worship of God which takes its place along with temples, statues and vases of gold which men have fashioned from the first moments when they suspected that there was a God at all⁸⁶. Petrarch adds that the most various poetic meters have been used by the sacred authors. He was a friend of both Salutati and Boccaccio, the latter of whom discusses exactly the same position on poetry and its origin in his Genealogia Deorum Gentilium⁸⁷. Boccaccio bitterly attacks the "religious hypocrites" who condemn poetry as contrary to Christian religion. On the contrary, poetry is a science, it is truth, it was first born with Moses and has been used even by Christ⁸⁸. Incidentally, the chief

84 Ibid., p. 181.

85 Francesco Petrarca, Le Familiari, Firenze, Sansoni, 1934, II, 301-310.

86 Ibid., p. 301-302.

87 Charles G. Osgood, tr., Boccaccio's Genealogia Deorum Gentilium, (Books 14 and 15), Princeton, Univ. Press, 1930.

88 Ibid., p. 42 and 49.

Renaissance arguments for poetry are based on the utility of poetry, whether to make men witty, or eloquent or wise. Most of them were derived from Boccaccio who never adduces an argument from antiquity which has not been approved by the Fathers of the Church⁸⁹. This defence of poetry against ignorance, Philistines, and Puritans is along the lines of allegorical exegesis as later on in Sidney and Jonson, and Salutati himself is but one link in the chain of the tradition.

Coming now to the important shift of which we have spoken before, from orator to poet, we must again turn to Salutati. Instead of merely restoring poetry to its normal place in Grammar, Salutati and his group extol it as the discipline par-excellence and the queen of all arts. He tells us he is simply transferring to Poetry all that Cicero says of eloquence in his De Oratore:

And here I may transfer the words of Cicero from the orator to the poet and say with him: In my opinion no one can reach the highest rank as a poet unless he has mastered all the highest arts and sciences. For discourse must grow and develop out of knowledge, and if the poet have not gained this knowledge he will have a vacant and almost childish manner of speech.⁹⁰

Giovanni da Samminiato said that philosophers were more noble than poets. Salutati answers that this is impossible

89 Salutati, Epistolario, IV, 181 also III, 221-231.

90 Ibid., p. 202. cf. Cicero, De Oratore, I, 6, 20.

since no one can be a perfect poet unless he is also a philosopher: the poet then is greater than the philosopher and that is why there are so many philosophers and so few poets⁹¹. This is almost a faithful echo of Cicero. He defends poetry on account of its identity with eloquence and on the strength of the principles laid down by Cicero. His top man must be the poet because Cicero's orator is the top man; and poets are but orators who write in verse.

Furthermore, Salutati follows the lead from Aristotle, through the Classical period, the Patristic Age and the Middle Ages on the function of the poet. He says that orators, historians and poets all do the same thing; i.e. they relate some scandalous things about men but do not praise these things:

And although orators and historians do this same thing, yet the former do it in order to persuade, to incriminate or to excuse, the latter in order to put in writing the truth of things as they happened, while it is the special function of poets to celebrate deeds in song in order that they may praise or blame them. So, if we would form a right judgement about poets it is necessary to admit that when they write about immoral things they desire to bring reproach upon evil persons and evil deeds, but when they speak of virtuous things they desire to praise them and thus to warn their readers against the one as unseemly and incite them to the others as worthy of imitation.⁹²

It cannot be passed by in silence that during the last several decades of the history we have traced, laymen interested

91 Ibid., p. 201-202.

92 Ibid., p. 197-198.

in the classics were increasing in number. With the neglect of the classics by the Church an important event took place, -- Classical culture, which had been preserved to the Church's religious ends, was taken in hand by the laymen and exploited by them to their own temporal ends. They felt that they became the promoters and maintainers of classical studies against the successors of the very monks whose untiring care had made it possible for these studies to survive. In the next Chapter, on the Renaissance, we will take a look at the developments in the Ciceronian doctrine at the hands of these laymen.

CHAPTER V

RENAISSANCE ORATOR - CONTINENTAL HUMANIST

It does not lie within the province of the present work to engage in the pro's and con's of debates about the Renaissance; nor to decide what caused it, what it was, what it might have been, nor to prophesy where it might lead. There are, however, a few basic notions which it is well to have in hand before launching into a survey of the writers of that period who fall into line with the general theme of this thesis.

Traditional opinion seems to be that the intellectual activity of the Middle Ages was given over to Scholastic philosophy and theology and that it was the peculiar merit of the Renaissance scholars to resurrect a literary tradition which had been dead since the fall of the Roman Empire. Such a view can no longer be maintained. The monumental work of J.E. Sandys¹ for one, demonstrates that the literary tradition was never dead during the Middle Ages. Jebb also testifies to this fact.

¹ J.E. Sandys, A History of Classical Scholarship, Cambridge, Univ. Press, 1903-1908.

A tradition of learning derived especially from Fulda, (8th Cent.) had been created, which descended without a break to the time when the University of Paris arose, (c. 1215). Nowhere on the Continent was there such a violent interruption, or such a general blight upon culture, as was caused in England and Ireland by the raids of the destroying Northmen. . . The incipient revival of a better literary taste was checked in the thirteenth century by the influence of the Scholastic Philosophy.²

The Greek and Latin classics had their champions even though the philosophical tradition achieved dominance in mediaeval intellectual life. The two currents went along side by side for a while and then alternated in importance as significant influences, and the Renaissance was little more than the upsurging of the literary tradition in Italy where the philosophical tradition had never been strong at any time. It certainly was not a sudden rising from a background of utter darkness but rather a gradual process by which classical letters came to answer the material needs of a growing urban people³. This change was just as gradual as the economic transformation of Europe from a self-contained agrarian economy to a commercial community spread over the Mediterranean and Baltic areas⁴.

² R.C. Jebb, "The Classical Renaissance", Cambridge Modern History, New York, Macmillan, 1934, I, 536.

³ H.O. Taylor, Thought and Expression in the Sixteenth Century, New York, Macmillan, 1920, II, 382-383.

⁴ H.S. Lucas, The Renaissance and the Reformation, New York, Harper, 1934, p. 3-4.

With the advent of the Renaissance came a spirit of "this-worldliness" as a substitution for the "other-worldliness" of the Middle Ages, and so it is not surprising that most of the writers in the new era are laymen, interested chiefly in the production of some earthly ideal for man. They sought to form schoolmasters, governors, courtiers and gentlemen. As a result of the submerging of philosophy with its attention to the abstract, there arose a tradition whose chief concern was with the concrete and practical⁵. The artist (in literature, the poet) replaced the philosopher as the ideal man. Philosophy and theology had not produced acceptable fruit and men turned to the arts and letters to the litterae humaniores for the values of human life.

It may be asked why Italy took the lead in turning to Classical letters and the practical moralism to be found therein. It can be answered with Sandys that "Italy had preserved, to a far greater degree than any other part of Western Europe, the traces of ancient civilization"⁶. In Italy there was the continuous tradition of the Latin language; in the southern half there was Magna Graecia, where Greek flourished. The remains of antique sculpture and the ruins of Rome were a continual reminder of Italy's classical past.

5 Preserved Smith, A History of Modern Culture, New York, Holt, 1930, I, 182.

6 Sandys, History of Classical Scholarship, I, 609.

Dawson sees the Italian Renaissance as a true national awakening.

Men saw the revival of classical learning as the recovery of a lost inheritance. They revolted against the mediaeval culture not on religious grounds but because it was alien and uncivilized. They entered on a crusade to free the Latin world from the yoke of Gothic barbarism.⁷

The name of Francesco Petrarca appears in the chronological treatment of any historical survey among those who exerted influence in the latter part of the Middle Ages. He was born just after the turn of the century, in 1304, and so he naturally falls outside the period generally reserved for the discussion of Renaissance problems. One of the major problems of that period is the renewal of the centuries-old difficulty of reconciling the classics with Christianity. Petrarca stands somewhat between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. He is at once a Christian classicist and a humanist. His admiration for Cicero is stated in terms which certainly go far to vindicate the patristic position of utilizing the good found in paganism and demonstrate that at least the leading figure of the late Middle Ages still held the traditional view. He writes:

You are well aware that from early boyhood of all the writers of all ages and of all races and one author whom I most admire and love is Cicero.⁸

⁷ Christopher Dawson, Progress and Religion, London, Sheed-Ward, 1937, p. 178.

⁸ Francis Petrarch, Letters to Classical Authors, trans. M. Cosenza, Chicago, Univ. Press, 1910, p. 18.

He goes farther perhaps in the defense of his beloved Cicero than most of the early apologists would dare to have gone. Jerome and Ambrose staunchly uphold the morally acceptable portions of the classical writers, but neither they nor their colleagues would have uttered this:

I am not afraid of being considered a poor Christian by declaring myself so much of a Ciceronian. To my knowledge Cicero never wrote one word that would conflict with the principles proclaimed by Christ.⁹

Nor does he stop there; but continues by declaring that if Cicero held anything contrary to Christ's doctrines it would be sufficient to destroy his belief not only in his beloved Cicero, but in Aristotle and Plato as well. He sums up neatly the basic patristic position by declaring, "Christ is my God; Cicero, on the other hand, is the prince of the language I use"¹⁰.

No doubt Petrarch's admiration for Cicero was based on his doctrine of the function of eloquence. For Cicero, as previously shown, saw speech as the special mark of man; it is the mark of man's superiority over the brute creation¹¹. Speech should be the expression of a rich mind¹². The ideal

9 Ibid.

10 Ibid., p. 19.

11 Marcus Tullius Cicero, De Oratore, Harvard, Univ. Press, 1942, I, 8, 32.

12 Ibid., I, 6, 20.

is found in the doctus orator, wisdom wedded to words, "sapientia juncta eloquentia"¹³. This wisdom is the conjunction of knowledge and right action. Wisdom is what he aims at who seeks to know the natures of all things human and divine, their power and causes, and hold to and apply in their entirety the laws of right living¹⁴. This formula is repeated almost verbatim by Petrarch¹⁵. He got it doubtless from his own "trivial" education, handed down as it was from Cicero to Quintilian and thence made the foundation of all medieval education.

It is scarcely a point for debate that the aims and methods of any educational system are dependent upon and vary according to the ideals and interests of the age. The school and the schoolmaster merely express the dominant intellectual and social aims of their time. Thus far in our study the trend of the times and the objective of the leading intellectuals of those times have been noted, and may be stated simply that certain people used the classics and encyclopedic learning to produce first the orator, then the rhetorician and then the scriptural exegete. All of these objectives differ in detail but not in general, they follow the same

13 Ibid., III, 35, 142-143.

14 Ibid., I, 49, 212.

15 François Pétrarque, La Traité de sui ipsius et multorum ignorantia, Paris, Champion, 1906, p. 45.

plan and preparation although the specific uses to which they were directed differ only insofar as Cicero, Quintilian and St. Augustine had different goals for them to reach. From St. Augustine to the Renaissance the objective of learning was to produce the inhabitant of the city of God. With the Renaissance came a humanism which directed man's efforts to the successful living of a life in this world rather than in the next. It is not surprising then if we find several educators listed among those who will be chosen to show the continuity of the Ciceronian tradition. It has been shown that Quintilian followed Cicero and St. Augustine followed Quintilian. It is significant then that we find an authority on education making statements such as these:

The influence of the treatise of Quintilian (Education of the Orator), great as it was in imperial Rome, was still more fruitful of results in the Renaissance . . . humanists from Petrarch downwards seized his importance as the prime authority upon the Roman educational ideals. . . Every educator of the Revival, whether man of theory or man of practice, whether on Italian or Teutonic soil, Aeneas Sylvius or Patrizi, Agricola, Erasmus, Melanchthon or Elyot, steeped himself in the text and in the spirit of this treatise.¹⁶

What has been mentioned as humanism need not be discussed in any great detail here. It will suffice for our purpose simply to state that the movement in general is

¹⁶ W.H. Woodward, Studies in Education during the Age of the Renaissance, Cambridge, Univ. Press, 1906, p. 8-9.

thought of as a revival of interest in the classic literature of Greece and Rome, with an emphasis upon the worldliness of this life, not upon the other-worldliness of the life to come. Our chief concern with humanism and the Renaissance in Italy is as a point of departure and little else. It will be of service to the final conclusion of this study by providing some important names from the history of education; men who are strictly in the Ciceronian tradition but not primarily figures in the field of literature.

Italian humanism at least goes back to Dante¹⁷. He and Petrarch and Boccaccio are the significant writers of the movement but in addition to them we must mention such men as Niccoli, Poggio, Guarino and Filelfo who contributed to the expansion of the cult by putting their vast energies to the task of collecting manuscripts and books of the classics. Filelfo it is said, had read all Greek and Latin literature available in his day¹⁸. These men found the necessary funds and encouragement forthcoming from the Strozzi and Medici families. The latter had received an education modeled on the curriculum of Quintilian which was the only education available in Italy. Lucas comes perilously close to the

17 Lucas, Renaissance and Reformation, Chapters 15-18.

18 Ibid., p. 252.

solution of a very important problem when he states, almost apologetically:

During the Middle Ages men had made collections of books but these were mostly in monasteries and cathedrals and, needless to state, were designed to serve theological and religious interests.¹⁹

What Lucas fails to grasp, while being so close to the truth, is that the Ciceronian tradition, as Christianized by St. Augustine is really at the base of this. He does not ask himself why the Church kept the classics alive, how they were used and then why do we attribute the vast interest in classical learning during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries to the discovery of some manuscripts. It is this fact that was missed by Lucas which Etienne Gilson remarked as far back as 1939, that if a single fact were to be brought forward in proof of the continuity of classical learning, it would be that by examining the manuscripts which caused such a furor of excitement in the early Renaissance, it would be discovered that they were ninth century copies of the classics then being used as common educational texts²⁰. This particular aspect of the Renaissance might be called the core of the present work. Nowhere has the writer come upon a historian of the Renaissance who seems to be aware of this. L.K. Born and

19 Ibid., p. 341.

20 Etienne Gilson, Lecture given at Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, Toronto, 1939-40.

W.H. Woodward come within sight of the truth but fail to follow it up. These lapses will be noted later in their proper places. The statement of Lucas cited above²¹ tells only part of the story of the Renaissance. Actually the study of the classics had not died and centuries later been revived, but rather the classics continued to be studied but were regarded as an end in themselves and not as the patristic writers regarded them, as a means only.

The first Renaissance educator, and incidentally one of the most influential of the whole period is Vittorino da Feltre. He opened his school at Mantua about the year 1425 and modeled it on the ideal of a general culture, both moral and intellectual²². His purpose was to effect a reconciliation between the moral and religious teaching of the Church and classical learning on the Quintilian plan. It was a truly humanistic plan and remarkably similar to the patristic objective of study. It was a practical discipline, designed to prepare its subjects for a life of action; statesmen, administrators, high ecclesiastics and school-masters. Da Feltre used to say that not everyone was called to be a lawyer, a physician, a philosopher, or to live in the public eye, but everyone is created for the life of social duty; all are

21 Lucas, Renaissance and Reformation, p. 341.

22 Ibid., p. 255.

responsible for the personal influence which goes forth from them²³. This, too, was the distinctive mark of the "vita civile" of Florence or Siena - the complete man of modern society, the harmonious personality of the Renaissance man²⁴. Nor has higher education in Western Europe been consciously blind to this high precedent, as the writings of educators like Palmiere, Alberti and Patrizi quite clearly show; there is constant insistence on the conjunction of the outward act and the inward virtue²⁵. Especially notable was the man who, in imitation of Cicero's orator or Quintilian's rhetorician, could carry his part well in general conversation, not only privately but also in political or diplomatic circles. Certainly in our own day, men such as Winston Churchill, Franklin D. Roosevelt and General Douglas MacArthur are evidence that the tradition has carried on nearly two thousand years from Cicero. Woodward shows that the Italian "conto" the short story or the eclogue were the staples of an evening's entertainment in the salons of the nobility²⁶. And the treatises which he published under the title Vittorino da Feltre and other Humanist Educators all contribute to the

23 Woodward, Studies in Education, p. 12-13.

24 Ibid., p. 246.

25 Ibid., p. 247.

26 Ibid., p. 251.

Ciceronian ideal of eloquence²⁷. Their aim was not mere imitation however. He says:

In the widest sense, these men set before themselves the reconciliation of the ancient learning with the Christian life, thought and policy of their own day; they had no dream of a dead reproduction of the past.²⁸

His failure to see the patristic tradition here and elsewhere is somewhat tragic in the light of the vast use made of his books in the schools of education today. At least he fails to direct attention to the fact, even after making the following extracts from the writings of Leonardo D'Arezzo:

True learning, I say: not a mere acquaintance with that vulgar threadbare jargon which stiaifies those who devote themselves to theology, viz., the knowledge of realities - Facts and Principles - united to a perfect familiarity with Letters and the art of expression. Now this combination we find in Lactantius, in Augustine, or in Jerome. . . .²⁹

and, on the subject of the completely rounded citizen, the versatile and encyclopedic individual which was the Renaissance ideal and Cicero's orator:

That high standard of education to which I referred at the outset is only to be reached by one who has seen many things and read much. Poet, Orator, Historian and the rest, all must be studied, each must contribute a share. Our learning thus becomes full, ready, varied and elegant, available for action or for discourse in all subjects. But to enable us to make effectual use of what we know we must add to our knowledge the power of expression.³⁰

27 Cambridge, Univ. Press, 1921.

28 Ibid., p. 10.

29 Ibid., p. 123-124.

30 Ibid., p. 132.

It was a group of people such as described here who debated "the Orator" at Antonius' Tusculan villa in 91 B.C. and "the Courtier", at the palace of the Duke of Urbino in 1507.

A late contemporary of Vittorino was Guarino of Verona the founder of a famous school at Ferrara (c. 1430), modeled on the elementary, grammatical and rhetorical pattern of Quintilian³¹. He is not notable as an innovator but rather as one who made the precepts of Cicero and Quintilian more firmly established as the basis of Italian humanism. Woodward devotes a chapter of his Studies in Education to Guarino, indicating in some detail that Guarino had a passion for the ancients and at the same time used the Fathers as examples in the teaching of his pupils. Here again, Woodward comes upon the evidence of the continuity of the Ciceronian tradition but does not see it as the basic issue of Renaissance classicism.

Since Italian humanism is regarded as the ancestor of the Renaissance in England we shall confine ourselves to a somewhat detailed consideration of the most significant document of sixteenth century Italy, The Book of the Courtier by Castiglione³². First something of the author; he first

³¹ R. Weiss, Humanism in England, Oxford, Blackwell, 1941, p. 85.

³² tr. L. Opdycke, New York, Scribner, 1903.

attests to the truth of what is to follow, humbly denying in typical "sprezzatura" language that he has any power to adorn simple facts. He admits that the ideal he is about to describe may be regarded by some as too lofty and unattainable, yet he says that he will in this go along with Plato, Xenophon and Cicero, men who also put forth ideals in the hope that some others might try to attain them. And to those who will accuse him of being auto-biographical he answers, "To these I shall not deny having essayed everything that I should wish the courtier to know. . ."33 Here certainly we have a man who devoted a great portion of his life to the acquiring of that encyclopedic ideal set down by Cicero, and it need not be assumed to be an unique case in history. Writers whom we will meet later must have also attained, to a greater or less extent, a goodly portion of the learning and virtue they required of others.

Castiglione designed his book as a treatise on what the courtier should "be" and "do"; he was to prepare himself for public personal service to his prince at home although he might be called upon to represent him at courts abroad³⁴. He was the ideal personality as the Renaissance conceived it. The court stood for the highest social activity possible to

33 Ibid., p. 2-6.

34 Ernest Barker, Traditions of Civility, Cambridge, Univ. Press, 1948, p. 143.

man in the sixteenth century and the courtier was its central figure; a concept proper not only to Italy but to the rest of Europe as well. The courts were frequented by statesmen, soldiers of fortune, scholars, poets and artists, as well as nobles and all of them looked to the court for encouragement and patronage³⁵. Castiglione has stated the function of his courtier in unmistakable words:

I think then that the aim of the perfect Courtier, which has not been spoken of till now, is to win for himself, by means of the accomplishments ascribed to him by these gentlemen, the favour and mind of the prince whom he serves, that he may be able to say, and always will say the truth about everything which it is fitting for the prince to know, without fear or risk of giving offence thereby; and that when he sees his prince's mind inclined to do something wrong, he may be quick to oppose . . . so as to banish every bad intent, and lead his prince into the path of virtue.³⁶

This passage appears in Book IV - the preceding books are devoted to the "accomplishments". The true motive of the courtier is to serve the prince in all ways which may redound to his honor and interest. It is the same relationship which Cicero envisioned between his orator and the state, which Elyot had in view for his governor and the country and Ascham wished for his schoolmaster and his pupils. The orator, the governor, the courtier, the schoolmaster all have a job to do

35 Woodward, Studies in Education, p. 252.

36 Castiglione, The Courtier, p. 247.

and each of the writers concerned devises a program for him to follow in order to execute it properly. The poet too takes his place alongside these men.

The opening pages of the text of The Courtier tell us that Count Guido filled his household with valiant men and took great pleasure in discourse because he was well versed in the learned languages, had a knowledge of things without number and was accomplished in all the exercises proper to noble cavaliers³⁷. As to the courtier himself, he must be skilled in arms, which he will exercise with vigor, bravery and grace³⁸. He is by preference not a professional soldier, rarely talks of war, especially in the presence of ladies, but always shows to advantage against an enemy, accepting personal risk. All ostentation is unworthy of him and self-advertisement is beneath him³⁹. He will be a perfect horseman, take part in tournaments, the chase, swimming, tennis, throwing and he must know the use of all weapons⁴⁰. So much for his physical prowess - all of which must be executed with a certain air of effortless skill.

The next section is devoted to his qualities as a man of culture. Castiglione says that the courtier has great

37 Ibid., p. 10.

38 Ibid., p. 25.

39 Ibid., p. 27.

40 Ibid., p. 29-31.

need of speaking and writing well for without them all other accomplishments are not worthy of praise. What is necessary for this speaking and writing well is knowledge, then the arranging of it in suitable order and lastly, expressing it well⁴¹. Great attention is to be paid to the cultivation and adornment of the mind since it is nobler than the body. Keeping in the tradition of the primacy of moral training, Castiglione declares that, "besides goodness, I think that letters are for everyone the true and principal ornament of the mind"⁴².

Like Cicero, Castiglione "would have him more than passibly accomplished in letters, at least in those studies that are called the humanities. . . Let him be well versed in the poets, orators and historians"⁴³. Decorum certainly is the mark of the Renaissance gentlemen, and the courtier must attend to what he does, where he does it, before whom he does it, why he does it, and see to it that the action is consonant with his age and profession⁴⁴. To foster international relations in the exercise of foreign missions for his prince, the courtier has need of many languages and so he must undertake their study. Here, as always "he must excel

41 Ibid., p. 42-45.

42 Ibid., p. 56.

43 Ibid., p. 59.

44 Ibid., p. 83.

in all things mentioned of him"⁴⁵. More in the spirit of Quintilian than of Cicero, Castiglione requires that the courtier possess goodness, not merely seem to be good:

. . . and thus possessing the goodness which these gentlemen have described, together with readiness of wit and pleasantness and shrewdness and knowledge of letters and many other things the Courtier will in every case be able deftly to show the prince how much honour and profit accrue to him . . . to lead or help one's prince towards right, and to frighten him from wrong, are the true fruit of Courtiership.⁴⁶

The didactic use of poetry which will become a major issue in England during the later Renaissance finds at least a supporting hand in The Courtier. As a teacher, the courtier will be able to incite his prince by pointing out to him the examples of famous captains and other eminent men to whom the ancients erected statues in public places. He will show that these men attained honor for themselves and their country by their deeds of virtue, as well as by establishing themselves as examples and stimuli to others to strive to reach that glory too⁴⁷. Although the prime interest in the book is the preparation and function of the Courtier, Castiglione does not fail to say a little something of the prince. It must be noted that it is to the production of the good prince, for the benefit of the kingdom, that all this elaborate plan

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 115.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 247.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 250.

is directed. The inculcation of virtue resulting in virtuous action is the ultimate goal of the courtier, the instructor of the governor, the schoolmaster and the poet. Castiglione claims that if the prince be aided by the teachings and by the education and skill of so prudent and excellent a Courtier as described by the guests of the Count, he will be just, continent, temperate, strong and wise, full of liberality, magnificence, religion and clemency⁴⁸.

Thomas Hoby's translation of The Courtier appeared in England in 1561 and became the manual of the court of Queen Elizabeth⁴⁹. An Epistle to the Reader which accompanied the text has become the standard estimate of the work. Hoby calls it a pathway to the beholding and musing of the mind for grown men, for young men, and encouraging to garnish their minds with moral virtues, and their bodies with comely exercise, and for both a pattern of honest qualities with which to attain their noble end. For ladies it is a mirror in which to deck themselves with virtuous conditions, comely behavior and honest entertainment⁵⁰.

The Book of the Courtier is simply one of many books of instruction which appeared during the sixteenth century,

48 Ibid., p. 262.

49 Barker, Traditions of Civility, p. 141.

50 B. Castiglione, The Book of the Courtier, tr. Sir Thomas Hoby, London, Dent, 1930, p. 3.

and doubtless the most expeditious way of showing the continuity of the Ciceronian concept of eloquent wisdom would be to examine each of these manuals in detail. But such a procedure would hardly result in conclusions other than those which can be arrived at by showing the basic issues contained in one or two representative works. In the tradition of the Courtier are to be found such books as Machiavelli's Il Principe, Sturm's De Institutione Principis, Erasmus' Institutio Christiani Principis, Vives' De Institutione Feminae Christianae, Hippolytus' Nobilis, Princeps, Consiliarius and Palatinus, Petrizi's De Regno et Regis Institutione, Elyot's The Doctrine of Princes, The Education or bringing up of children, and The Book of the Governor, and Ascham's Schoolmaster.

All of these are concerned with the nature of culture, the training it entailed and the influence it could exercise on character and conduct. There is a similarity in all these texts in that they insist on the study of the classics and the moral law, aiming at a conjunction of learning and good conduct. There was to be fashioned a grave and sober man, but a man likewise of wit (wisdom) fashion, gallantry and the arts - a man like Leicester, Raleigh, Sidney or Essex in England⁵¹. The vogue was there in the time of Elizabeth, derived from the Italian pattern. The good queen herself was

51 Barker, Traditions of Civility, p. 144.

well versed in Italian culture and by 1575 nearly all the privy councillors spoke Italian⁵². Of course this proves nothing but at least it indicates strongly that the tradition had wide currency during the sixteenth century and was too well-founded and firmly established throughout Europe to be the result solely of an interest which could hardly have been growing for more than seventy-five years. The doctrine of learned eloquence must have been continuous from the time of Cicero at least: a conclusion based on something more than fancy. Certainly the personality of Shakespeare's Hamlet was typical of the educated man of the day; the writer of sonnets to his beloved and called in turn "the glass of fashion and the mold of form", the prince, fired by personal wrong and conscious of his place in the state, the debater of moral problems and the hapless swordsman battling against the treachery of false friends. Castiglione set the mode for Italy beyond a doubt, but before taking leave of that country, mention must be made of one or two minor figures who in their smaller way exercised an influence on England, whither our study will in time lead us.

Writing in 1536, Daniello, an Italian critic, says that the function of the poet is to teach and delight, but more than that, to persuade. The poet must move his readers

52 A.F. Pollard, History of England 1574-1603, London, Longmans, 1910, p. 179.

to share the emotions of his characters, to shun vice and embrace virtue⁵³. Also following the general classical tenet that poetry is to teach, delight and move, which was laid down by Aristotle in the Poetics, Minturno wrote his treatise, De Poeta. He defined the duty of the poet as consisting in the same three-fold objective but added the view of Quintilian, that the poet also be a "good man skilled in speech and imitation: vir donus dicendi et imitandi peritus"⁵⁴. The ideal of goodness in the orator and in Plato's philosopher is said to have been transferred to the poet by the Renaissance⁵⁵. A propos of this Lucas states that Conrad Celtes (1459-1508) was typical of the numerous itinerant scholars who overran Europe, and "everywhere he became the center of those who admired Humanist learning or 'poetry' as it was called"⁵⁶.

An attempt to determine when and how this transfer came about has not resulted in anything conclusive. The "grammarians" in the classical period was one who made a methodical study of literature but by the latter Middle Ages (c. 1500) he was spoken of as one interested in learning in general. The "poet", as an artisan, dates from the fourth

53 D.L. Clark, Rhetoric and Poetry in the Renaissance, New York, Columbia Univ. Press, 1922, p. 136.

54 Ibid., p. 137.

55 Ibid., p. 54.

56 Lucas, Renaissance and Reformation, p. 368.

century B.C. and appears early in English literature as the writer of didactic verses on Scriptural themes, notably such works as the Cursor Mundi, written c 1300. He is acknowledged in Piers Plowman, 1362, as a maker of literary work. Scarcely any evidence is given in the Oxford Dictionary prior to Chaucer, that the office of poet was of any great standing. Chaucer mentions Petrarch as a poet laureate in the Prologue to the Clerks Tale, l.31, in 1386. The best evidence that the Renaissance was interested in stimulating the pursuit of letters is, that the official patent by which the title was given to Petrarch in 1341, states that the practice of granting the laurel to a poet had not been much in use since early Roman times, and was now being revived for its original purpose. Petrarch's submission to an examination before King Robert of Sicily set the vogue for succeeding laureations. The laureateship conferred on Petrarch the privilege of composing new books and poems, and of reading, disputing and interpreting, in Rome and elsewhere, such writings of the ancients as concern the arts of poetry and history. For succeeding periods of history the laurel was given to scholars versed in the literature, oratory and history of the ancients⁵⁷. We have no records to show on what basis the laureate was granted, but in 1776 an estimable lady named Corilla was given the honor

⁵⁷ John Nelson, John Skelton, Laureate, New York, Columbia Univ. Press, 1939, p. 40-41.

after examinations on "sacred history, revealed religion, moral philosophy, physics, metaphysics, heroic poetry, law, eloquence, mythology, harmony, fine arts and pastoral poetry"⁵⁸. This would seem to indicate rather well that a recognized poet of the late eighteenth century was not far from the encyclopedic orator of Cicero.

The last Italian to be cited in the Ciceronian tradition during the Renaissance is Scaliger who in his Poetics (1561) mentions the philosopher, orator and poet as all being users of language in order to persuade. He quotes Euripides to the effect that the major merit of a poet is "the ability to impress adroitly upon citizens the need of being better men"⁵⁹. Later in the text he states that "the poet teaches mental dispositions through action, so that we embrace the good and imitate it in our conduct and reject the evil and abstain from that"⁶⁰.

Chronologically speaking, Erasmus was the next great force in the spread of Italian humanism after the Italians themselves. In the present study, however, Erasmus must serve as the link connecting continental with English humanism, and so he will be considered last in this chapter. Our ground

58 Ibid., p. 42, n. 6.

59 F.M. Padelford, tr., Select Translations from Scaliger's Poetics, New York, Holt, 1905, p. 2-3.

60 Ibid., p. 83.

now shifts to Spain and the part played by Juan Luis Vives. He was the author of several works which do not directly concern us in the present problem, but his tract, De Tradendis Disciplinis, is very much in the tradition we are following. It is particularly the second part of this work that deals with the aim, methods, instruments and curricula of education. Woodward states that it was the standard authority in the field of education for more than a century⁶¹. Vives utilized not only the traditional authority of Quintilian but also drew notably from his contemporary, Erasmus. He felt that there was something of a divine obligation on the part of man to attain knowledge; it gave a sanction to the effort required to attain it. Pietas and eruditio go to make up the student. Letters are no obstacle to the faith if they are properly studied and for the right motive; the end of all wisdom was to be the uplifting and improvement of human life⁶². Vives is here perfectly in line with the patristic notion of learning and represents perhaps better than his contemporaries, with the possible exception of Erasmus, a truly Christian humanism untouched by the forces of reformation which produced a Protestant humanism. Like Erasmus, he demands that the teacher be a man skilled in the whole circle

61 Woodward, Studies in Education, p. 184.

62 Ibid., p. 188-189.

of knowledge, that classical authors be taught for the imparting of wisdom and not for style only. He views ancient literature from a purely historical point and feels no anxiety about the moral danger involved in its study. He regards the Christian Fathers as an integral part of the world's inheritance and provides for the study of their writings⁶³. Woodward sums up his section on Vives by saying: "We may say that his aim was to inculcate the union of pure learning with a rightly developed and well informed conscience"⁶⁴. Nor is it surprising to find that Vives held for an ethical value for poetry, especially for what is called heroic poetry, just as Spenser, Sidney and Milton were to claim some years later for the epic⁶⁵. Perhaps the best over-all estimate of Vives is given in the Introduction to Foster Watson's edition, where, after discussing the relationship and concord of ideas found in him and his two famous pupils, St. Ignatius and Francis Bacon, we find:

Vives was often called the second Quintilian. He was to the Europe of his time what Quintilian had been in the first century to Rome. He was the modern Quintilian, prepared to incorporate what was best and permanent in humanity from the ancients; but to use the ancient writers as a starting place.⁶⁶

63 Ibid., p. 192-200.

64 Ibid., p. 210.

65 Foster Watson, Vives on Education, Cambridge, Univ. Press, 1913, p. 126.

66 Ibid., p.

No doubt in France, too, there were some people vitally interested in humanism, and it is quite likely that there is a body of literature which demonstrates how the movement fared there in the sixteenth century. But for the purposes of this study it will suffice if but two men are mentioned in connection with the Ciceronian ideal. The first in importance and in time is François Rabelais. His work, Gargantua and Pantagruel, while primarily designed as a satire containing a great deal of material of questionable taste and value, does at times foresake the ludicrous and reveals some matter pertinent to Renaissance thought. It is well to keep in mind from the start that Rabelais admitted that the greatest debt he owed to anyone was to Erasmus for his Adages (1500)⁶⁷. There is one chapter in the Gargantua of special interest; it is a letter written to Pantagruel on the subject of his education⁶⁸. Rabelais shifts from his customary involved and clownish style and here writes in obvious imitation of the classical spirit. It is a clever use of a classic style when writing on a kindred subject. He employs rich Ciceronian periods, carefully worked out anti-theses, rhetorical questions and the familiar Ciceronian triple climax. Speaking of his own education, Rabelais remarks that it was along the lines which

⁶⁷ Gilbert Highet, The Classical Tradition, Oxford, Univ. Press, 1949, p. 184.

⁶⁸ Francis Rabelais, Works, London, The Navarre Society, 1931, p. 201.

found favor in the schools of the Middle Ages - he never wrote his lessons, all was learned orally and committed to memory⁶⁹. But the tremendous appetite for learning all languages, for reading all the great books and assimilating all the useful sciences is characteristic of the Renaissance. This latter was the substance of the education of Pantagruel. Gargantua mentions that the old learning has been revived and that the learned languages (Greek, Hebrew, Arabic, Chaldee and Latin) have been restored to their pristine purity. All the world is full of learned men, schoolmasters and great libraries making study a real convenience so that "no one may adventure henceforward to come in public or present himself in company that hath not been pretty well polished in the shop of Minerva"⁷⁰. He exhorts his son to employ his youth to profit as well as he can both in studies and in virtue. He is to watch carefully the laudable examples of the brave men he will see at Paris, "to stir up his mind to gallant actions"⁷¹.

The next section of the letter deals with curriculum. Pantagruel is to learn Greek, (as Quintilian will have it), Latin, Hebrew, (for the study of Scripture). His style in Greek composition should follow Plato; in Latin, Cicero. He

69 Ibid., p. 46-47.

70 Ibid., p. 204.

71 Ibid., p. 204.

must have all history ready in his mind, continue his study of Geometry, Arithmetic and Music; study the rules of Astronomy, know the texts of Civil Law by heart and "then confer them with Philosophy"⁷². He is to know all Nature exactly; Medicine and Scripture, and the study of Chivalry will complete his training and find its best expression in the practice of Oratory as a crowning effort⁷³. Certainly the contents of this letter show that Rabelais was familiar with the traditional Ciceronian - St. Augustine program and the Gargantua was his literary vehicle for giving these notions to the people of France. The conclusion of the letter leaves no doubt at all about Rabelais' position:

But because as the wise man Solomon saith,
Wisdom entereth not into a malicious minde; and
that knowledge without conscience but the ruine
of the soule, it behooveth thee to serve, to
love, to feare God, and on him to cast all thy
thoughts and all thy hope, and by faith formed
in charity to cleave unto him, so that thou
mayest never be seperated from him by thy sins.⁷⁴

The moral side of his character is herein made the mainspring of his life - his encyclopedic learning must be accompanied by virtue. The purpose of this vast and extremely versatile preparation is stated simply - "Be serviceable to all thy neighbours"⁷⁵.

72 Ibid., p. 205.

73 Ibid., p. 206.

74 Ibid., p. 206-207.

75 Ibid., p. 207.

Michael de Montaigne, the other French writer in our tradition, was likewise indebted to Erasmus for the Adages which he used as a constant guide in his own literary productions⁷⁶. Any student of Erasmus must have had more than a passing interest in humanism, and Montaigne was no exception. Villey has made a list of the writers who evidently influenced Montaigne and concludes that the great essayist was familiar enough with at least fifty authors to quote them or use their ideas. There were no Greek writers in this group⁷⁷. It is certainly an indication of Montaigne's intense humanism when we consider that he died about a decade before the close of the sixteenth century. He quotes Cicero 312 times⁷⁸. Montaigne, in his essay on education, called Of the Institution and Education of Children, gives evidence of having had the types of training we have been tracing, for he says of the student:

Let him examine every man's talent . . . a man may learn something from every one of these in their several capacities, and something will be picked out of their discourse whereof some use may be made at one time or other; nay, even the folly and weakness of others will contribute to his instruction. By observing the graces and manners of all he sees, he will create to himself an emulation of the good and a contempt of the bad. . . Let him read history, not as an amusing narrative, but as a discipline of the judgement.⁷⁹

76 Hightet, The Classical Tradition, p. 192.

77 Ibid., p. 188-190.

78 Ibid., p. 190.

79 Michael de Montaigne, Works, New York, Hurd and Houghton, 1864, p. 227-228.

He searched the classics for their thought content and for the ethical values to be found therein. As Taylor says, "he made a personal path through the teachings of antiquity, the practical teachings of its later phases of accumulated precept and blended philosophies"⁸⁰.

Desiderius Erasmus has been kept until last, because his intellectual universality and his widespread travel do not tie him down or identify him specifically with any one country. The progress of Italian humanism was in a northerly direction through France and Germany taking with it the homo-centric ideals of the movement. It must not be supposed that whenever it went it was accepted in its totality; on the contrary, in some quarters it met with opposition and in others it received a modification which made it useful in a particular place. One such place was the area of the Netherlands. About the year 1400 a group of religious men, the Brethren of the Common Life, opened schools in the Low Countries modeled, as was natural, on the Theo-centric ideals of the Middle Ages⁸¹. Two of their students have become world famous: Gerhard Groot for his Imitation of Christ and Erasmus the press-agent of humanism.

⁸⁰ Taylor, Thought and Expression, p. 361-362.

⁸¹ Lucas, Renaissance and Reformation, p. 372.

There is one man who, above all others must be regarded as the herald of humanism in the North. It is the distinction of Erasmus that by the peculiar qualities of his genius and the unique popularity of his writings he prepared the advent of the New Learning, not only in his native Holland alone, but throughout Europe.⁸²

Lucas calls him the greatest influence in Renaissance letters, saying that he embodied all the ethical and intellectual conceptions of his age⁸³. Since he was trained at Devanter in the traditions of the Middle Ages and was later fired with the zeal of a humanist he may well be considered the focal point of the two movements - a Catholic humanist. As such he combined the best features of both; he set aside the rigid and lifeless formalism of the Middle Ages and the exaggerated worldliness of the Renaissance, yet he leaned heavily towards a practical patristic method of developing man. He held that the study of the classics, poetry and philosophy, was a good thing but only as a means or prelude to the highest study to which man could devote himself, the study of Scripture⁸⁴. To this end he edited Scriptural texts and the writings of the Fathers of the Church⁸⁵. Although the revival of classical thought also revived the patristic apprehension of the incompatibility of pagan and Christian

82 Jebb, The Classical Renaissance, I, 568.

83 Lucas, Renaissance and Reformation, p. 386.

84 Margaret Phillips, Erasmus and the Northern Renaissance, London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1949, p. 48-49.

85 Taylor, Thought and Experience, I, 157.

ideals, Erasmus met the objection in the same way that clear-thinking apologists did - the acceptance of all in the ancient world which was in harmony with Christian thought⁸⁶. His aim was to find the good life and he judged that the best way to do this, as well as to mitigate the evils of ignorance was to disseminate as widely as possible the civilizing influence of knowledge⁸⁷; setting the wisdom of the ancients at the service of the interpretation of Christianity and the betterment of man⁸⁸.

While we are still considering Erasmus as a continental figure it is proper to show here his attitude towards the Ciceronian tradition of public service. He urges parents to be mindful of their duty to the fatherland through the proper education of their children. A brave and efficient citizen is the gift which a father owes to his own city. In the same way the nobility are encouraged to educate their sons for public service. Here he is definitely in the tradition of Castiglione's Courtier⁸⁹. The climax of Erasmus' educational program was the study of eloquence and oratory.

86 Phillips, Erasmus, p. xxiii.

87 Jebb, "The Classical Renaissance", C.M.H., p. 578-579.

88 Phillips, Erasmus, p. 44.

89 W.H. Woodward, Erasmus, Concerning the Aim and Method of Education, Cambridge, Univ. Press, 1904, p. 74.

Such an ideal was the traditional one, the completely educated man, the "orator", which reached the Italian humanists through Quintilian. He was the good man, the highly informed man, trained in oratory. In ancient Rome it had been the training of the Orator, the young man destined for the law courts; in fifteenth century Italy the same program had trained many a Courtier who would never grace a royal chamber; and to Erasmus it produced the gentleman⁹⁰.

The encyclopedic ideal is like a thread running throughout nearly every piece Erasmus wrote, but it is especially true of him who is to be a teacher of others: "there is no discipline, no field of study . . . which may not prove of use to the teacher in expounding the Poets and Orators of antiquity"⁹¹.

Both Woodward, in the text here cited and L.K. Born in his edition of Erasmus: The Education of a Christian Prince⁹², fail to see clearly the extraordinary way in which Cicero's orator is the prototype of all the treatises on princely education from St. Augustine to Castiglione. Born's failure is especially unfortunate because he has assembled a valuable array of princely educational writings dating from Isocrates without noticing the one thing that really makes

90 Ibid., p. 76-77.

91 Ibid., p. 168.

92 Columbia Univ. Press, 1936.

them kindred. Douglas Bush quotes the sentence from Erasmus which should be used to throw the proper light on what was yet to be said of him: "All studies, philosophy, rhetoric are followed for this one object, that we may know Christ and honour Him. This is the end of all learning and eloquence"⁹³.

Turning now to the writing of Erasmus, we will consider his Education of a Christian Prince because that work especially concerns the propagation of the doctrine which we have been tracing. We shall see in it very definite agreement with the major texts thus far considered, insofar as it and they are documents written in conscious imitation of the Ciceronian tradition. First of all Erasmus calls upon his prince to be a man of virtue. He must possess integrity, continence, clemency, devotion to his people, self-restraint, truthfulness and be free from the vices of cruelty and pride⁹⁴. He follows too the tradition that excellent qualities of person are to be put to practical use; in governing well. Encyclopedic learning is also required as in the other traditional writings. Erasmus recommends Scripture, Petrarch's Moralia, Seneca, Aristotle's Politics, Cicero's Offices, Plato especially and selections from Xenophon and Herodotus⁹⁵.

⁹³ Douglas Bush, The Renaissance and English Humanism, Toronto, Univ. Press, 1939, p. 64.

⁹⁴ Born, Erasmus, p. 13.

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 200-201.

Specifically, Erasmus states that first "the story of Christ must be firmly rooted in the mind of the prince"⁹⁶. Later he becomes quite clear as to his ideal - "Christian theology attributes three prime qualities to God - the highest power, the greatest wisdom, the greatest goodness. In so far as you can, you should make this trinity yours"⁹⁷.

Erasmus' primary concern in this work is the preparation of the prince to be a worthy ruler, yet he admonishes the prince that "the main hope of a state lies in the proper education of its youth. . . Therefore the greatest care should be exercised over public and private schools. . ." ⁹⁸

Margaret Phillips makes two rather notable remarks which may well be used to conclude this chapter. She notes the statement of Erasmus to the effect that while the prince is studying classical history he is to keep in mind that he is reading the deeds of pagans and that he, a Christian, is called upon to surpass them in virtue⁹⁹. More than a century later we will find Milton keenly aware of his duty on the same point. Lastly she shows that Erasmus fits perfectly into the pattern of his age and sets the vogue for the decades of the Renaissance which follow: "the Bible, the classics, the experience

96 Ibid., p. 148.

97 Ibid., p. 158.

98 Ibid., p. 212.

99 Phillips, Erasmus, p. 131.

of things themselves - it is not hard to recognize in this the typical education of the Renaissance"¹⁰⁰.

The English Renaissance owes its origin to continental Europe. We have shown in the previous chapters how learning first came to England from the efforts of the missionaries under Augustine in 596. They brought the culture of the continent, a Christian culture, and planted the seeds of learning which were later to produce the great fruit of the Middle Ages. This harvest was abundant, but towards the end of the fourteenth century, a new growth appeared. It is well to remember that it was a growth from the same parent plant. It produced what is called the Renaissance. It was a re-birth in the realistic sense that we usually think of springtime, as a budding forth of young and vibrant life from the dormant seeds of the past. In this chapter we have seen something of the Ciceronian tradition of learned eloquence at the hands of laymen who were vitally interested in the application of political prudence to the all-important affairs of their daily life in order that they might live it well. Our attention has been directed only to those significant persons who flourished on the continent. Erasmus appears as a Colossus with one foot there and the other in England. We will now trace the course of the Ciceronian-Augustinian tradition as it manifested itself in England.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 132-133.

CHAPTER VI

RENAISSANCE ORATOR - ENGLISH GENTLEMAN

Since it was said that Erasmus forms the link which connects English Humanism with Continental humanism, it is only fitting that this chapter begin with some notices of his career insofar as they concern England. This does not mean that before the time of Erasmus there had been no suspicion of a Renaissance or Humanism on the part of English scholars. Among the earliest Englishmen to be actively aware of humanism was the Duke of Gloucester who died in 1447. He had been greatly interested in learning but not from a scholarly point of view; he had been but a patron of scholars. Grocyn had been educated at Oxford, then went to Italy and later returned to England as a teacher, bringing no doubt, a great deal of the spirit of the Italian Renaissance to England. The same may be said of Latimer, Linacre and Colet¹.

When the name of Erasmus is mentioned in relation to English humanism it is primarily because through him the movement became popular, and also because of the tremendous influence he had on education in England; as T.W. Baldwin

¹ H.S. Lucas, The Renaissance and the Reformation, New York, Harper, 1934, p. 381.

puts it: "He who wishes to understand the principles of sixteenth century grammar schools must begin with Erasmus"². He spent five years in England (1509-1514) and made several other visits of shorter duration during his lifetime. While there he became the great friend of Colet, the Dean of St. Paul's School, and Thomas More. For Colet, in 1511, he devised the curriculum used at the school, undertook the search for qualified teachers and actually edited the Latin text although the name of Lily is now identified with it³. The results of Erasmus' work here had a far-reaching influence. By 1540 his Latin text was the only one allowed in the schools and it has retained this primacy almost to the present day⁴. Wolsey used Erasmus' curriculum of St. Paul's as the model for his school at Ipswich in 1529; the following year the Convocation of Canterbury decreed that it was to be used in all schools. This meant that the schools at Peterborough, Winchester, Durham, Eton, Westminster, Stratford and Norwich were offering their students the traditional humanist education of Erasmus, or Catholic humanism which in turn was patristic in its objectives⁵.

2 T.W. Baldwin, Small Latine and Lesse Greeke, Urbana, Univ. Press, 1944, I, 77.

3 W.H. Woodward, Studies in Education during the Age of the Renaissance, Cambridge, Univ. Press, 1906, p. 109. I.

4 Baldwin, Small Latine, I, 118.

5 Ibid., I, 123.

From the writings of Strype (at St. Paul's about 1661) and Knight (at St. Paul's about 1696) we learn that the curriculum at that time was the same that Erasmus had devised⁶. It consisted of a study of the classics and the Church Fathers leading eventually to the study of oratory according to Cicero and Quintilian. It called for encyclopedic learning on the part of the teacher so that he might adapt it to the needs of the pupils. Although Ascham was not entirely in accord with all of Erasmus' notions they did find champions in the leading educators of England for the next century at least - Thomas Wilson, Elyot, Kempe, Brinsley and Clarke⁷. With such a profound influence on the men who shaped the minds and conduct of Englishmen in the Renaissance and even to the present day, Erasmus can justly be considered as having done more for English humanism than the early scholars who traveled to Italy. Furthermore, his aim in education was far broader than that devised by the Italians since he held that it was to be a training for social service in Church, state and family, analogous to the program of Quintilian⁸.

It is safe to say that with Erasmus English humanism attained its form, that is, it did not add anything to the

6 Ibid., I, 118.

7 Ibid., I, 82-87.

8 Woodward, Studies in Education, p. 107-117.

norm which he devised. Throughout the sixteenth century the basic Erasmian brand of humanism was used by quite a few writers, some of whom we will consider. They used profane studies to reinforce their pleas and exhortations to high moral living of a life of service. In sum, a general survey of humanism in the sixteenth century supplies evidence of an abundance of zealous work which secured the future of classical studies in England⁹.

Humanism had been in England for something like a century before Erasmus but it was not a popular movement. From 1418 on it gradually spread outside ecclesiastical circles or the libraries of men who took little more than an antiquarian interest in classical letters. An examination of libraries of the fifteenth century shows that around 1445 a man named Grey had elegant copies of Cicero, "a clear indication that their owner shared the humanists devotion to this author"¹⁰. Similarly the shelves of leading English scholars and patrons abounded in grammatical treatises, epistolaries, translations from the Greek and collections of orations¹¹. Weiss quotes a statement from C.A. Sneyd's edition of Italian Relation of England, page 22, that "English learning during

⁹ R.C. Jebb, "The Classical Renaissance", Cambridge Modern History, New York, Macmillan, 1934, I, 582.

¹⁰ R. Weiss, Humanism in England, Oxford, Blackwell, 1941, p. 94.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 182.

the fifteenth century was practically the monopoly of ecclesiastics"¹². This would indicate that either the Renaissance had started in England before Petrarch in Italy (otherwise it would hardly have been a "monopoly" in the fifteenth century) or that the Patristic tradition had continued from the time of its coming with the missionary Augustine in 596.

It was not until the Renaissance that a rather significant change came into educational theory. Then writers on the theory of poetry carried over Cicero's three-fold aim of the orator and made it apply to the poet and defined the art as "imitation endeavoring to inculcate morality"¹³.

In England the notion of public service seems to have had considerable currency. The literature which the leading writers of sixteenth century England produced is largely devoted to instructional matters. The work of Elyot and Ascham in this field is particularly significant and will be given special treatment elsewhere. Besides these two there is a host of lesser writers who delve into the problem occasionally while nearly every writer gives evidence of its influence. From earliest times, birth in the aristocratic sense of wealth was the sole requirement for the office of a ruler or guide to one's fellow-men. But by Chaucer's time

¹² Ibid., p. 179.

¹³ D.L. Clark, Rhetoric and Poetry in the Renaissance, New York, Columbia Univ. Press, 1922, p. 7 and 120.

the notions of spiritual, intellectual and moral qualities had been added. Moreover, the idea of a noble character went so far as to include one who acted with gentleness or cultural refinement¹⁴. Barker treats in detail the educational programs required of the "gentleman" which will fit him for his way of life. Throughout the various chapters it is evident that writers on the subject were but following Cicero. He (Barker) says:

It will lead us to survey the idea of the special obligation of the gentleman, not only in the intellectual sphere, but also in the sphere which may be generally called the moral: not only in the way of education and training but also in the way of conduct and behaviour springing from, and corresponding to, such education and training.¹⁵

The idea comes in the sixteenth century to be that of scholar-governor-gentleman. But, as Clark says, "the historical, philosophical, pedagogical and dramatic literature of the Renaissance cannot be accurately understood except in the light of the Greek and Roman authors whose writings inspired them"¹⁶. A propos of this same matter, Weiss says:

If we examine the careers of the great majority of the exponents of classicism in England from about 1440, we shall find that they were often employed by the crown . . . and the conclusion forced on us by this is that a high standard of classical Latin constituted a sure avenue to a brilliant political or diplomatic career, and eventually to high preferment in the Church.¹⁷

14 E. Barker, Traditions of Civility, Cambridge, Univ. Press, 1948, p. 125-126.

15 Ibid., p. 130.

16 Clark, Rhetoric and Poetry, p. 3.

17 Weiss, Humanism in England, p. 181.

During the late fifteenth century the course of diplomatic relations brought England into contact with the courts of Italy, France and Spain where humanism flourished. Speechmaking in Ciceronian Latin was a necessity in such a relationship and the high point of every embassy was the oration. The grace of an ambassador consisted, not in the message he bore nor the gifts he carried but in the way he made the court oration. It is related that an emissary of the king of England got lost in the midst of a congratulatory speech at the papal Curia and had to retire in confusion¹⁷.

The English king was forced to patronize the fashionable kind of orator, letter writer, historian, poet and teacher of Latin. All these men had a certain common denominator in spite of their disparate employment; they were proficient in the disciplines of grammar and rhetoric. These studies, then, were not simply keys to the study of ideas, as the patristic period used them, but rather ends in themselves. Symbolic of the unity of these studies is the fact that the words "orator" and "poet" were understood to be almost synonymous¹⁸.

What the Renaissance "poets", in the broadest sense took chiefly from the ancients was the traditional view "that by persuading the reader to adhere to the good and shun the

¹⁷ J. Wegg, Richard Pace, London, Methuen, 1932, p. 22-28.

¹⁸ J. Nelson, John Skelton, Laureate, New York, Columbia Univ. Press, 1939, p. 10.

evil, the poet achieves the proper end of poetry - moral improvement"¹⁹. This notion is simply a re-statement of principles laid down by Aristotle and Horace in their works on poetry. Horace claimed that, aside from his bid for popularity, the poet does have an educational value in the training of youths by presenting in an attractive manner examples of noble conduct which the young may desire to emulate²⁰. Aristotle takes it a step closer to what the Renaissance writers had in mind. He held that imitation in unmetrical language is still poetry; that meter is not the characteristic element of poetic²¹. Sidney will make this a major issue in his Defence of Poesie which will receive treatment in the next chapter. English writers received their cue from the Italians of the Renaissance who were the richest source of poetic theory available in 1600²². Spingarn gives a survey of the Italian forerunners of the English Renaissance in his Literary Criticism in the Renaissance²³. Here he notes that between 1527-1600 there were twenty-five important critical works

19 Clark, Rhetoric and Poetry, p. 100.

20 Ibid., p. 113.

21 Ibid., p. 13.

22 Leah Jonas, The Divine Science, New York, Columbia Univ. Press, 1940, p. 4.

23 New York, Columbia Univ. Press, 1930,

published by the Italians, twelve by the French and twelve by the English²⁴. In the discussion of poetry in general he says:

It is as an effective guide to life that poetry was chiefly valued. Even when delight was admitted as an end, it was simply because of its usefulness in effecting the ethical aim.²⁵

Evidence of the continuity of the Ciceronian concept of eloquent wisdom is the long tradition of statesman's manuals. Many of these are cited by L.K. Born in the useful introduction to his translation of Erasmus' Education of a Christian Prince. "That there is a continuous line of succession at least from the time of Isocrates with his Ad Nicoclem to the twentieth century is beyond question"²⁶. Unfortunately Born does not see that the Ciceronian - Augustine concept of the doctus orator is what really gives consistency to the tradition. He offers no insight into the matter of education as eloquence plus morality and fails to see how Rabelais' Gargantua, while a blow at dialecticians, is also a defence of Cicero's concept of princely education. He unconsciously attests to the continuity of the encyclopedic tradition by showing that Isadore of Seville and Alcuin

24 Ibid., p. 312-313.

25 Ibid., p. 58.

26 New York, Columbia Univ. Press, 1936, p. 99.

contributed to this type of literature²⁷, and that Peter Damian and John of Salisbury were notable representatives²⁸. Discussing the place of the arts of grammar, dialectic and rhetoric in the educational program of the Renaissance, McKeon says that when properly arranged for the needs of rhetoric,

. . . one has the Ciceronian ideal of doctus orator, the man of political prudence, the wise councillor of princes, the courtier ideal of the Renaissance, the ideal of the epic poet as eloquent moral guide and political philosopher, joining wisdom and delight as the ideal of Spenser and Sidney.²⁹

More's Utopia really belongs in the same tradition, quite as much as Elyot's Governour, Castiglione's Courtier, Ascham's Schoolmaster or Sidney's Defence of Poesie. In this connection, almost the whole of Ruth Kelsos' Doctrine of the English Gentleman in the Sixteenth Century is relevant³⁰.

She reviews the conventional matters:

Service to country became, not leadership in war, but counsel in peace, and the dispensing of justice. . . This idea must be traced to the classical ideal of citizenship. . .³¹

27 Ibid., p. 102-104.

28 Ibid., p. 109-114.

29 R. McKeon, "Renaissance and Method in Philosophy" Studies in the History of Ideas, New York, Columbia Univ. Press, 1935, III, 81.

30 Urbana, Univ. of Illinois Press, 1929, University of Illinois Studies, Vol. 14.

31 Ibid., p. 39-40.

The combination of warrior and scholar was first presented in the ideal of the courtier which arose in the Italian city-states during the Renaissance. It was a fusion of the Christian knight and the pagan orator when Italian nobles alternated periods of devotion to the clash and science of arms with periods of devotion to the study and imitation of Ciceronian dialogues.³²

Moral Philosophy then, was the generally accepted guide of the gentleman in the formation of those virtues that seemed most requisite.³³

Of the books to appear in England devoted to the preparation of the gentleman, the first of any great importance is Elyot's Governour³⁴. After a general discussion of governance, Elyot states what he proposes to write and why. Since all noble authors agree that where governors are virtuous and learned the state is most honourable, he will show how the children of noblemen can best be trained for their duties in handling the public weal³⁵. His purpose is unselfish for he says he wishes, "only to declare the fervent zeal that I have for my country, and that I desire only to employ that poor learning, that I have gotten, to the benefit thereof"³⁶. What he speaks of as his "poor learning" was regarded in a

32 Ibid., p. 49.

33 Ibid., p. 75.

34 Barker, Traditions of Civility, p. 133.

35 Thomas Elyot, The Boke Named the Governour, Foster Watson, ed., London, Dent, 1907, p. 18-19.

36 Ibid., p. 17-18.

different light by Roger Ascham some few years later when he says that Elyot was "a man which surelie for his learning in all kynde of knowledge bringeth much worshyp to all the nobilitie of Englande"³⁷.

In the pursuit of his program of education, Elyot gives ample evidence of a thorough knowledge of the classics and classical education. First of his directives for the child is that he should be allured to study with praises and small gifts, as Quintilian prescribed³⁸. When the child is taken away from the nurse, he is to be put into the hand of a competent tutor, "which should be an ancient and worshipful man . . . such one as the child by imitation following may grow to be excellent"³⁹. He adds, by way of after-thought that if the tutor be learned also, he is to be more commendable. But the essential quality of the man is his moral excellences, which he is to instil into his pupil and praise him for having them while if there be any contrary disposition he will disapprove very strongly⁴⁰. The whole of the Ninth Chapter of Book One, is devoted to the care which should be taken in the choosing of the tutor.

³⁷ Roger Ascham, "Toxophilus" The Whole Works of Roger Ascham, Dr. Giles, ed., London, Smith, 1864, II, 77.

³⁸ Elyot, The Governour, p. 21.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 23-24.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 24.

Since the English governor was felt to need first of all the virtues, the chief ground for advocating education was the relation which the humanists believed to exist between knowledge and virtue. English humanists seldom went so far as to hold with the ancients that to know good was to be good, as did Cicero - they were too good Christians for that - but they did believe that knowledge was an aid to virtue in that it at least taught what was good and what was evil, and thus allowed intelligent choice. Elyot felt that there was a natural goodness but "where good instruction and example is there to added, the natural goodness must there with needs be amended and be more excellent"⁴¹.

When he comes to consider curriculum he lays the foundation in the parallel studies of Greek and Latin. "I am of the opinion of Quintilian that I would have him learn Greek and Latin authors both at one time"⁴². The beginnings of Greek are made with the Fables of Aesop because their vocabulary is instructive, the sense is easily grasped and they contain much moral and politic wisdom⁴³. This regard for edification in the choice of authors is a notable aspect of the humanist view that classical writers are to be used for subject-matter, language practice and moral instruction.

41 Ibid., p. 34.

42 Ibid., p. 34.

43 Ibid., p. 36.

He says the same substantially of the Odyssey and the works of Horace although he believes that to save time the tutor should explain the moral⁴⁴. His purpose in such study is to inflame the courage of the child to attempt the imitation of great deeds and that they have only such instruction in books that they may take some profit from it⁴⁵. The section devoted to the studies after the fourteenth year is almost a reprint of the studies in Cosmography and History as laid down by Rabelais in Gargantua which were mentioned in the preceding chapter. For Elyot too, History was to be studied for facts certainly, but the moral instruction derived was a far more important purpose of the study, i.e. "the good and evil qualities of them that be rulers, the commodities and good sequel of virtue, the discommodities and evil conclusion of vicious licence"⁴⁶. Oratory was to be the chief study at about the seventeenth year and Demosthenes and Cicero were to be used as models. Here too, the subject-matter is only of secondary importance; in its mastery "may be attained not only eloquence, excellent and perfect, but also precepts of wisdom and gentle manners, with most commodius examples of all noble virtues and policy"⁴⁷. The direct teaching of moral principles

44 Ibid., p. 39.

45 Ibid., p. 40.

46 Ibid., p. 47.

47 Ibid., p. 42.

was not neglected either, for Elyot says that at the age of seventeen years "it is needful to read unto him some works of philosophy, specially that part that may inform him unto virtuous manners, which part of philosophy is called moral"⁴⁸. He recommends Aristotle, Cicero and Plato for this, "wherein is joined gravity with delectation, excellent wisdom with divine eloquence, absolute virtue with pleasure incredible . . . almost sufficient to make a perfect and excellent governour"⁴⁹. In conclusion he especially commends the little book of the most excellent doctor Erasmus called the Institution of a Christian Prince, "for there was never book written in Latin that in so little a portion contained of sentence, eloquence, and virtuous exhortation, a more compendious abundance"⁵⁰.

Like ancient Cicero or contemporary Castiglione, Elyot agrees that the ideal he has in mind is not easy to attain and so in his day there are not sufficient masters and teachers⁵¹ and consequently the gentlemen of the age are not equal in doctrine to the ancient noblemen. He likewise identifies the terms, orator, poet and teacher, recalling what Cicero and Tacitus required of their model.

48 Ibid., p. 47.

49 Ibid., p. 48.

50 Ibid., p. 48.

51 Ibid., p. 49.

Wherefore in as much as in an orator is required to be a heap of all manner of learning: which by some is called the world of science, by others the circle of doctrine, which is in one word of Greek "Encyclopedia": therefore, at this day may be found but a very few orators. . . . For the name of a poet . . . was in ancient time in high estimation: in so much that all wisdom was supposed to be therein included, and poetry was the first philosophy that ever was known: whereby men from their childhood were brought to the reason how to live well.⁵²

Elyot's own objective is a lawyer, trained by a virtuous and learned master; a lawyer "in whom should then be found the sharp wits of logicians, the grave sentences of philosophers, the elegance of poets, the memory of civilians, the voice and gesture of them that can pronounce comedies"⁵³. It would be pointless to attempt to assemble all that Elyot had to say regarding encyclopedic learning and virtuous action. Actually it would amount to reproducing nearly two-thirds of the Governour.

The fusion of poet and orator at least in the very essentials of their function is clearly brought out in the work of Thomas Wilson. In his Arte of Rhetorique⁵⁴, he speaks of poet and orator as though the two offices were identical; he also holds to the position that it is the office of the orator and writer to teach, delight and persuade by

52 Ibid., p. 56-57.

53 Ibid., p. 66.

54 G.H. Mair, ed., Oxford, Clarendon, 1909.

appealing to the emotions⁵⁵. He defends his use of allegory as a device for teaching virtue through the portrayal of characters by saying that even "brute beasts minister great occasion of right good matter, considering many of them have shewed unto us the patterns and images of divers virtues"⁵⁶. He likewise clings to the didactic purpose of poetry: "There is no tale among all the poets but under the same is comprehended something that pertains to the amendment of manners, to the knowledge of the truth. . . ."57 He calls the poets "wise men" who wished the redress of evils but since they feared to call attention to them openly, had recourse to "colours". Wilson's account of the orator sounds almost as though Cicero and Quintilian were speaking again in the sixteenth century.

First needful it is that hee, which desireth to excell in this gift of Oratorie, and longeth to prove an eloquent man, must naturally have a wit, and an aptness thereunto: then must he to his Booke and learn to bee well stored with knowledge, that he may be able to minister matter for al causes necessaire. The which when he hath got plentifully, he must use much exercise, both in writing and also in speaking.⁵⁸

In his comprehensive study of English literary criticism, J.W. Atkins mentions that Wilson had been a student at King's

55 Ibid., p. 2.

56 Ibid., p. 191.

57 Ibid., p. 195.

58 Ibid., p. 4.

and had come under the influence of Ascham and perhaps as a consequence, designed his work especially for those destined for public life. He states too, that in the Arte, "the larger conception of rhetoric, the rhetoric of Cicero and Quintilian, was for the first time recaptured and presented to English readers"⁵⁹. While it may be true that Wilson did present this matter in English for the first time it is far from true to speak of his work as a first recapturing of the Ciceronian ideal as though it had been fugitive and in hiding since the classical period.

Some forty years after Elyot's Governour, Roger Ascham gave his Schoolmaster (1570) to the world. It too, was a book on education, containing what he believed was the most desirable training for one destined to teach. While the particular object of his interest was not the orator of Cicero and Quintilian, not the courtier of Castiglione, nor the governor of Elyot, his method of training and his immediate personal objectives were the same as theirs. He proposed to produce an educated man, highly virtuous and devoted to the service of others. His objective, stated in his own words, is a system of education whereby the children "should easily be brought to honesty of life and perfectness of learning. . ."⁶⁰

⁵⁹ J.W.H. Atkins, English Literary Criticism: The Renaissance, London, Methuen, 1951, p. 74.

⁶⁰ Roger Ascham, The Schoolmaster, London, Cassell, 1909, p. 42.

Later in the book he states it a little more fully, thus:

. . . the youth in England . . . should be by good bringing up so grounded in judgement of **learning**, so founed in love of honesty, as when they should be called forth to the execution of great affairs, in service of their prince and country, they might be able to use and to order all experiences, were they good, were they bad, and that according to the square rule, and line of wisdom, learning and virtue.⁶¹

It is evident from the passages cited that Ascham had the same view as other humanist writers - the service rendered by a morally sound well-educated man. His anti-Catholic attitude is evident throughout the book, especially in the parts dealing with Italy. In spite of his intense feeling in the matter he recognizes that Italy is the home of learning:

. . . time was when Italy and Rome have been, to the great good of us that now live, the best breeders and bringers up of the worthiest men, not only for wise speaking, but also for well-doing in all civil affairs, that ever was in the world.⁶²

From Italy too came the book which no doubt inspired his work and he refers to it almost apologetically as a book that if diligently studied and followed for one year in England would serve the young Englishman better than risk the corruption of three years' travel spent in Italy⁶³. He means Castiglione's Courtier.

61 Ibid., p. 61.

62 Ibid., p. 72.

63 Ibid., p. 65.

The course of study recommended by Ascham is typical of the curriculum based on Cicero's concept of training for public office. He calls for the study of Cicero, Plautus, Terence, Caesar, Livy, Plato, Xenophon, Isocrates, Demosthenes, Aristotle and the other classical authors which have been already cited many times as furnishing the student with great knowledge and the principles of morality. In true Christian fashion, with a great similarity to Erasmus he states that, "these books be not many, nor long, nor rude in speech, nor mean in matter, but next the majesty of God's Holy Word, most worthy for a man, the lover of learning and honesty, to spend his life in"⁶⁴. The title of The Schoolmaster hardly indicates the immediate object of Ascham's interest. It is not so much the schoolmaster as the scholar that he intends to produce. He declares that he will not leave him until he has seen him through the school, into the University "to become a fit student of logic, and rhetoric" and then, "to physic, law or divinity"⁶⁵. Here we note that he is in accord with the plan that uses the classics for basic study, leading to the study of philosophy and rhetoric and thence to one of the three major professions. Furthermore, he is in the encyclopedic tradition, seeking such a one in the school to follow,

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 149.

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 92.

"who is able always, in all matters, to teach plainly, to delight pleasantly and to carry away by force of wise talk all that shall hear or read him"⁶⁶.

We can well imagine that the texts which Ascham would use for the instruction of the young would be carefully edited since he attacks the work of Malory as having an evil influence on children⁶⁷. Still in line with his Puritan outlook, his remarks on Doctor N. Metcalf, Master of St. John's College present a somewhat amusing commentary on Ascham's high ideals of scholarship. He says of the Doctor, "He was a Papist indeed, but would to God amongst all us Protestants I might once see but one that would win like praise in doing like good for the advancement of learning and virtue"⁶⁸.

Ascham's classical scholarship was not an isolated case. If we can judge his words as true, he tells us in addressing Cicero, that for learning, beside the knowledge of all learned tongues and liberal sciences, his books are as well read, and his eloquence is as well liked and loved and as truly followed in the sixteenth century as at any time or place in Italy⁶⁹.

66 Ibid., p. 161.

67 Ibid., p. 92.

68 Ibid., p. 156.

69 Ibid., p. 177-178.

Ascham's man is quite as versatile as his prototypes in regard to accomplishments related to the field of "civility". He is as much at home in riding, archery or cock fighting as with his books. Elyot and Ascham agree that until about the end of the teen-age period of life, the student should be increasing his knowledge of tongues and learning. Elyot would integrate physical exercise along with the intellectual pursuits but Ascham prefers to devote the time after the seventeenth year to such native disciplines as riding, tilting, the use of weapons, musicianship of several kinds, running, jumping, swimming, dancing, singing, hawking and hunting⁷⁰.

During the sixteenth century the tide of opposition was rising against stage plays but it was indirectly to touch the province of poetry as well. It took the form of attacks by Puritan hands, led in 1577 by John Northbrooke. But the best known and perhaps the most representative of the group was Stephen Gosson, whose School of Abuse (1579) was dedicated to "Master Philip Sidney". The attack brought forth a series of replies or "Defences", first of which was Thomas Lodge's Defence of Poetry (1579). It took the form of a pamphlet⁷¹, defending poetry in general, but its main interest consists

70 Barker, Traditions of Civility, p. 150-151.

71 G. Gregory Smith, Elizabethan Critical Essays, Oxford, Clarendon, 1904, I, 61-86.

in showing how many of the post-classical and patristic notions of medieval times still persisted. He begins by defending the allegorical method:

Did you never read that under the persons of beasts many abuses were disciphred? Have you not reason to waye that whatsoever ether Virgil did write of his gnatt or Ovid, of his fley was all covertly to declare abuse?⁷²

He cites Lactantius' reply to those who hold poetry as a liar, saying that even in the reading of Scripture, we must sometimes look beyond the mere words to discover the writer's meaning. Josephus, Origen, Jerome, St. Paul, Cassiodorus and Bede are also brought forward in defence of the poetic form as a teaching device⁷³.

We must here pass over Sidney's Defence, the most significant reply to Gosson because it will receive fuller consideration in the next chapter.

The procedure of the present work might be used profitably to throw some light on Spenser's Fairie Queene, but that would be a major study in itself. Here it will suffice to cite a passage from Spenser's Letter to Sir Walter Raleigh, (1589) showing that he too was very much aware of his position as poet, and that what he was attempting to do in his monumental work was nothing more than a continuation of a centuries-old tradition.

72 Ibid., p. 65.

73 Ibid., p. 68-75.

The generall end thereof of all the booke (The Faerie Queene) is to fashion a gentleman or noble person in vertuous and gentle discipline To some I know this Methode will seeme displeasaunt, which had rather have good discipline delivered plainly in way of precepts, or sermoned at large, as they use, then thus clowdily enwrapped in allegoricall devises.⁷⁴

In 1589 appeared The Arte of English Poesie, attributed generally to George Puttenham⁷⁵. Of interest to the present study is Book I, Of Poets and Poesie. Speaking of poets as the first philosophers, astronomers, historiographers, orators and musicians, he says:

. . . they did altogether endeavor themselves to reduce the life of man to a certaine method of good maners, and made the first differences between vertue and vice, and then tempered all these knowledges and skilles with the exercise of a delectable Musicke.⁷⁶

He holds with others of his age that the subject matter of poetry, aside from its references to the gods, deals with the deeds of noble princes, great deeds, "the praise of vertue and reproofe of vice, the instruction of morall doctrines. . ." ⁷⁷ Recounting the history of poetry he comes to the pastoral and says, "The Eglogues came after to containe and enforme morall

⁷⁴ Edmund Spenser, The Works of Edmund Spenser, Greenlaw, Osgood and Padelford, eds., Baltimore, Johns Hopkins Press, 1932, I, 167-168.

⁷⁵ Smith, Elizabethan Critical Essays, II, 1-193.

⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 9.

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 25.

discipline, for the amendment of mans behaviour"⁷⁸. Next to Sidney, Puttenham's Arte is perhaps the most valuable contribution to literary criticism at this date, bringing together as it does the traditions of the classical, post-classical and medieval periods as well as the individualistic spirit of the Renaissance⁷⁹.

The work of Samuel Daniel was not destined for so high a place in the history of English literature as that of some of his contemporaries, but as a Humanist, poet, and courtier he justly takes his place beside them. His major work, A Defence of Ryme is rather too technical for the purpose of the present study but some portions of a poem Musophilus⁸⁰ (1602) bear upon the subject at hand. It, like other pertinent works already referred to, such as Cicero's De Oratore and Castiglione's Courtier, is in the form of a dialogue and through the speeches of a courtier, Philocosmus, and a man of letters, Musophilus, we have a plea for the refining and ennobling influence of literature in general. Castiglione had commended letters as useful for courtly life, Daniel goes so far as to present them as a valuable adjunct to life as a whole. Philocosmus presents the objections - a busy age has no use for

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 25.

⁷⁹ Atkins, English Literary Criticism: Renaissance, p. 176-178.

⁸⁰ Samuel Daniel, Poems and a Defence of Ryme, Cambridge, Harvard Univ. Press, 1930, p. 69-98.

ungainful letters, critics are factious and writers can hope for no glory, the ignorant are opposed to the learned, the world calls for action, not words. Musophilus answers each in turn. Of particular notice is his joining of knowledge with action, a theme often referred to before.

Soule of the world, knowledge, without thee,
 What hath the earth that truly glorious is?
 Why should our pride make such a stir to be,
 To be forgot? what good is like to this,
 To do worthy the writing, and to write
 Worthy the reading, and the world's delight?⁸¹

After presenting a rather gloomy aspect of the state and fortune of learning, Philocosmus clears the way for Musophilus to give a speech of nearly five hundred lines in the defence of letters, and especially of poetry. Philocosmus ends his part of the dialogue saying:

Yet do I not dislike that in some wise
 Be sung the great heroycall deserts
 Of brave renowned spirits, whose exercise
 Of worthy deeds may call up others hearts,
 And serve a modell for posterities
 To fashion them fit for like glorious parts:
 But so that all our spirits may tend hereto
 To make it not our grace, to say, but do.⁸²

In reply to his friends' hope, Musophilus reviews the matters generally covered in a "defence" and towards the end of his

81 Ibid., p. 74, ll. 195-200.

82 Ibid., p. 84, ll. 514-521.

last speech he specifically pays tribute to eloquence:

Powre above powres, O heavenly Eloquence,
That with the strong reine of commanding words,
Dost manage, guide, and master th' eminence
Of mens affections, more then all their swords:
Shall we not offer to thy excellence
The richest treasure that our wit affords?⁸³

He goes on in this vein for a score or more lines and finally comes to Poesie which he holds as the highest form of the expression of eloquence.

And as for Poesie (mother of this force)
That breeds, brings forth, and nourishes this might,
Teaching it in a loose, yet measured course,
With comely motions how to go vpright:
And fostring it with bountifull discourse
Adorns it thus in fashions of delight.⁸⁴

Oddly enough the name of William Shakespeare does not lend authority to any poetic tradition because no treatise on the art came from his hand. Whatever scholars glean from his plays on the subject of poetry is all we have. However, his name cannot be passed over without mention of the work of T.W. Baldwin. In his two stout volumes, Small Latine and Lesse Greeke⁸⁵, he assembles a vast amount of evidence relative to Shakespeare's education. It is of importance here since it proves conclusively that the ideals of classical training in the encyclopedia of the arts was very much in vogue in sixteenth century England. The

83 Ibid., p. 96, ll. 939-944.

84 Ibid., p. 97, ll. 969-974.

85 Urbana, Univ. of Illinois Press, 1944.

object of such an education was undoubtedly moral. Speaking of Shakespeare's training in Moral Philosophy, Baldwin devotes considerable space to the regimen of the grammar school of Stratford and the grammar schools of England generally. He concludes:

In fact, grammar school training as a whole might be regarded simply as a phase of religious training. All these materials were supposed to be taught in such a way as to make the boys moral and more religious.⁸⁶

Later he states that the upper grammar school "aimed to use the classics so to teach rhetoric (including logic) and poetic as to increase morality"⁸⁷. From the examination of the records at St. Paul's during the reign of Elizabeth we learn that the curriculum of the upper forms consisted of the study of the Greek and Latin poets, the orators, historians, and grammarians. But most noteworthy is the list required for the study of the humanities:

Officia Ciceronis or eny pt of his philosophie
Eiusdem orationes
Epistolas familiares ejusdem
Epistolas ad Atticum.⁸⁸

It is abundantly evident that English grammar school studies in Shakespeare's day followed the curriculum set for

86 Ibid., I, 578.

87 Ibid., I, 667.

88 Ibid., I, 417.

St. Paul's by Erasmus⁸⁹ and, according to Baldwin, whose authority is not to be called into question, what Shakespeare was taught was the only formal literary training provided by society in his day⁹⁰. It presents a parallel to the type of education available to students during the patristic period which has been treated elsewhere.

The literary and critical opinions of Ben Jonson are to some extent scattered throughout his dramatic work. But we can get a closer look by an examination of his rambling jottings on various subjects edited under the title of Timber or Discoveries. However, the author of a recent study is very helpful by assembling a resume of Renaissance poetic theory garnered especially from the works of the dramatists⁹¹. She places Jonson in relation to this group in words which might be said of any of them:

. . . like others in his age he uses the word "poet" interchangeably with "comic poet" and "playwright". He refers to one of his comedies as "this Poeme" . . . and the dedication of Volpone which contains one of his strongest statements with regard to the purpose of comedy, is a defense of the art of poetry quite as much as the comedy it prefaces.⁹²

89

90 Ibid., I, 662.

91 Helena Watts Baum, The Satiric and the Didactic in Ben Jonson's Comedy, Chapel Hill, Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1947, Chapter I.

92 Ibid., p. 22.

In the Dedication just mentioned, Jonson speaks of the poet just as we have been speaking of him: "the interpreter and arbiter of nature, a teacher of things divine no less than human, a master in manners, and can alone, or with a few, effect the business of mankind. . ."93

Turning to the first-hand information of Timber or Discoveries Made Upon Men and Matter⁹⁴ we find that Jonson must have felt very strongly about poetry and its function since he devotes much of this rather slender volume to a consideration of it. Much of what he has to say is not original with him and Schelling has traced most of it to its probable sources. It but remains now to show simply that a man of Jonson's literary stature saw fit to put in writing, views on poetry which he must have felt were the correct ones. Throughout there is the echo of Sidney, his predecessor by some sixty years.

I could never think the study of wisdom confined only to the philosopher, or of piety to the divine, or of state to the politic; but that he which can feign a commonwealth (which is the poet) can gown it with counsels, strengthen it with laws, correct it with judgements, inform it with religion and morals, is all these. We do not require in him mere elocution, or an excellent faculty in verse, but the exact knowledge of all virtues and their contraries, with ability to render the one loved, the other hated, by his proper embattling them.⁹⁵

93 J.E. Spingarn, Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century, Oxford, Clarendon, 1908, I, 12.

94 Felix E. Schelling, ed., Boston, Ginn, 1892.

95 Ibid., p. 34.

Perhaps the best known of the whole work is Jonson's estimate of the poet and poetry. He holds with Sidney and others that versification is not essential to a poem. The true essence lies in what is done rather than in how it is done.

Hence he is called a poet, not he which writeth in measure only, but that feigneth and formeth a fable, and writes things like the truth. For the fable and fiction is, as it were, the form and soul of any poetical work or poem.⁹⁶

He continues, with Aristotle, to speak of poetry as supplying mankind with the rule and pattern for living well, not merely with the materials for fine thoughts and sentiments. His purpose is functional.

. . . And Whereas they (scholars) entitle philosophy to be a rigid and austere poesy, they have on the contrary, styled poesy a dulcet and gentle philosophy which leads on and guides us by the hand to action with a ravishing delight and incredible sweetness.⁹⁷

His treatment of what he calls the art of poetry is restricted to justifying it as the queen of the arts. In traditional fashion he concedes that it is of divine origin, was first received by the Hebrews, then treasured by the Greeks and by them it was transmitted to the Latins and the civilized world. Everywhere it was hailed as a beneficent influence.

96 Ibid., p. 73.

97 Ibid., p. 75.

Jonson quotes at length Cicero's familiar statement regarding the manifold benefits it conferred on mankind under all sorts of conditions⁹⁸.

Our final interest in Jonson is his discussion of the poet. Wishing to show the requirements of the poet, he brings together various pronouncements of ancient authorities. These he sums up as native genius, constant practice, help derived from the earlier masters, wide reading and a knowledge of art⁹⁹. His familiarity with Cicero must have been foremost at this point for he says:

I would lead you to a knowledge of our poet by a perfect information what he is or should be by nature, by exercise, by imitation, by study, and so bring him down through the discipline of grammar, logic, rhetoric, and the ethics, adding somewhat out of all, peculiar to himself, and worthy of your admittance or reception.¹⁰⁰

One thus endowed by native talent and duly inspired was capable of the highest flights into the realms of thought. But such perfection was rare enough for he says, again echoing Cicero, "Every beggarly corporation affords the State a mayor or two bailiffs yearly; but solus rex, aut poeta, non quotannis nascitur"¹⁰¹.

98 Ibid., p. 74-75.

99 Ibid., p. 75-79.

100 Ibid., p. 75.

101 Ibid., p. 76, also Cicero, De Oratore, I, 3, 11.

What John Milton thought of poetry was not made the subject of any one of his learned works under that title. What we can learn of his views must be gained from a scattered sampling of his prose. In his Treatise on Education, he placed poetry on a high pedestal indeed when he stated that rhetoric should follow the study of Logic, designed to cultivate accurate thinking, and then, with its teaching of the graces of expression, it should in turn lead to the study of poetics¹⁰². For him, poetry is more than simple versifying. It required an inspiration, a gift of God, rarely bestowed but yet to some in every nation¹⁰³. It was, moreover, a gift to be obtained "by devout prayer to that eternal Spirit who can enrich with all utterance and knowledge"¹⁰⁴. The poetic function was of a prophetic kind, to instruct, move and ennoble, to imbue the seeds of virtue and ease the perturbations of the mind¹⁰⁵. Much of the critical matter concerning Milton is devoted to his dedication of his talents and time to the acquiring of the necessary skills which might prepare him for the sublime office of poet. It is not possible to reproduce this vast amount of study but a few samples will suffice to show that he held the traditional views of his contemporaries but in

102 Spingarn, Critical Essays, I, 206.

103 Ibid., p. 197.

104 Ibid., p. 199.

105 Ibid., p. 197.

addition, he had a firmness and determination of spirit to carry his ideals to completion.

In his Second Defence of the People of England, (1654) he gives a brief account of his life. He tells us that he had a voracious appetite for knowledge which he desired to satisfy even from the age of twelve years. He attended the grammar school, had tutors at home and spent far into the night at private study. After mastering "various languages" and becoming proficient in philosophy he went to Cambridge to get his Master's degree. "Then", he says, "I retired to my fathers house (where) I enjoyed an interval of uninterrupted leisure, which I entirely devoted to the perusal of the Greek and Latin classics"¹⁰⁶.

The seventh Academic Exercise provides us with a deeper insight into Milton's concept of preparation for his great task in life, to be a poet. He says he unwillingly tore himself away from his books to deliver this talk to the university students; and then he continues:

¹⁰⁶ John Milton, Prose Works, ed. by J.A. St. John, London, Bohn, 1848, I, 254-255.

. . . for I have learned from books, and from the deliverances of the most learned men, that no more in the orator than in the poet can anything common or mediocre be tolerated, and that whoever would truly be and be reputed an orator must be instructed and finished with a certain circular subsidy of all the arts and of all science, so, my age not permitting this, I would rather be working with severe study for that true reputation by the preliminary acquisition of that subsidy than prematurely snatching a false reputation by a forced and precocious style.¹⁰⁷

One final quotation from Milton himself in support of his program of preparation, the fruit of which was to be the great English epic poem.

I began to assent . . . to an inward prompting which now grew daily upon me, that by labor and intent study . . . joined with the strong propensity of nature, I might perhaps leave something so written to aftertimes as they should not willingly let die . . . I applied myself . . . to fix all the industry and art I could unite to the adorning of my native tongue, not to make verbal curiosities the end . . . but to be an interpreter and relater of the best and the sagest things . . . that what the greatest and choicest wits of Athens, Rome or modern Italy and those Hebrews of old did for their country, I . . . might do for mine.¹⁰⁸

Douglas Bush says of him that he belongs to that "great tradition which stretches back through Spenser and Dante to the writers of Greece and Rome, the tradition of the poet who is an active citizen and a leader of his age"¹⁰⁹. Supporting

¹⁰⁷ David Masson, The Life of John Milton, London, Macmillan, 1859-1894, I, 279.

¹⁰⁸ Milton, Prose Works, II, 477-478.

¹⁰⁹ Douglas Bush, The Renaissance and English Humanism, Toronto, Univ. Press, 1939, p. 110.

Milton's critics, Ainsworth remarks that the mental and moral regeneration and preparation for the duties of life which were so much a part of Milton's personality were but the essence of all humanistic education which cared little for virtue apart from practice. His support amounts to more than a hundred pages from Milton's own work on his love of study and learning¹¹⁰.

By way of taking leave of the Renaissance writers in England it will be profitable to refer again to Erasmus, with whom this chapter began. D.L. Clark asks us to bear in mind,

that the contributions of Erasmus to the theory and practice of the humanistic grammar school Milton attended were not alone his own inspired invention nor dependent alone on his original studies of the educational practices of antiquity. They were also firmly grounded on the enlightened medieval practices of the celebrated school at Deventer, to which he went at the age of nine.¹¹¹

In this chapter we have shown that the leading literary figures of Renaissance England were quite aware of the status of "poetry" as a moral teacher and of the Poet's intense program of learning which would furnish the knowledge necessary for the proper execution of his office. Our study,

110 Oliver M. Ainsworth, ed., Milton on Education, Yale, Univ. Press, 1928, p. 52, 55, 65-169.

111 Donald Lemen Clark, John Milton at St. Paul's School, New York, Columbia Univ. Press, 1948, p. 166.

however, did not always refer to the poet by that name; he was called governor or schoolmaster and in a work not discussed he was called a gentleman. In 1622 Henry Peacham produced a treatise called The Complete Gentleman in which he showed the harmonious union of religion, virtue and letters. The word "apology" was used in connection with those explanations of the poetic art which occupied the attention of several writers of the period. The word "defence" was sometimes used for the same thing. There were several of such works in the Renaissance and it was impossible to investigate all of them, especially since a survey of the whole period was attempted. In all fairness to the authors, however, passing reference should be made to William Webbes's Discourse of English Poetrie (1586) and John Harington's A Preface or rather a brief Apology of poetry and of the author and translator (1591). Both these works follow the lead of the early writers and offer little of what is new. They do show nevertheless, that the views treated in the present chapter were not entertained by an isolated author or two but rather were held quite generally.

J.W.H. Atkins refers to Milton as "the last voice" of the Renaissance in England, and we shall not contest the point. The survey must end somewhere and by the middle of the seventeenth century the poetic ideal was firmly established

but by no means had it reached its fullest development. For example, in the work of Addison, many years later, our poet emerges as a critic, but the pursuit of that subject must be left to other hands.

Earlier in this chapter it was stated that the work of Sir Philip Sidney would be treated later. Now we must retrace our steps by some seventy years to center our attention on what is perhaps the first piece of literary criticism in English that is literature itself, Sidney's The Defence of Poesy.

CHAPTER VII

RENAISSANCE ORATOR - POET

In the thesis thus far a survey has been made of the various forms in which Cicero's concept of the training and function of an orator has appeared. At one time it took the form of a treatise on the place of the statesman; at another it appeared as applied to the apologist, or the scholar, the courtier or the gentleman. Regardless of the guise it assumed the doctrine was basically the same - encyclopaedic learning directed to some service of mankind. The dominant note of that service was the moral improvement of the group to which the work was addressed. It was shown that by the period of the Renaissance, the orator of Cicero had become known by the name of poet.

The emergence of the poet in the Renaissance was the particular interest of the preceding chapter. There it was shown as it manifested itself in England at the hands of the great literary figures of the day. The survey extended, for historical completeness, nearly to the middle of the seventeenth century. It now becomes the purpose of the present work to investigate the doctrine at the hands of Sir Philip Sidney whose Defense of Poesy is generally regarded as the most significant treatment of the function of poets and poetry.

Interesting and useful as it might be to review even the highlights of his brilliant and exciting career, such a venture must be passed by for the sake of the matter at hand. Sidney's life has been treated in detail by numerous hands and the curious are directed to one of these. First in point of time is the account by his close friend Fulke Greville, published in 1652 but written some years earlier. Since then, various others have appeared, most notable is that by Fox-Bourne (1862) which served as the standard life for more than fifty years until supplanted by Wallace's Life of Sir Philip Sidney in 1915. This latter has assumed the place of authority to the present time. The work of T. Zouch, W. Gray, J. Lloyd, A.B. Grosart and P. Addleshaw can also be consulted, as well as the introductory essays of the editions of the Defense by J. Churton Collins, Evelyn Shuckburgh and A.S. Cook and the Memoir prefixed to Steuart Pears' volume of the Correspondence of Sidney and Languet.

Setting aside the events of Sidney's life, a point of departure may be taken by mention of the regard in which he was held by those who knew him. Collins¹ tells us these interesting facts: Spenser dedicated the Shepherd's' Calendar to him and at his death honored him with Astrophel. Gabriel

¹ Churton Collins (ed.), Sidney's Apologie for Poetrie, Oxford, Clarendon, 1907, p. vii-viii.

Harvey says of him that he possessed every virtue under heaven. Richard Hakluyt dedicated the first series of his Voyages to Sidney as 'the Secretary of eloquence, the breath of the Muses and the honie-bee of the daintiest flowers of wit and art'. He was made the subject of the first good biography in our language by Fulke Greville. Ben Jonson calls him 'one in whom all the Muses met'. Even caustic Thomas Nash says of him:

Well could'st thou give every virtue his
encouragement, every wit his due, every writer
his desert, 'cause none more virtuous, witty,
or learned than thyself.

At his death there were more than two hundred elegies composed to celebrate his noble passing². From the accounts of Sidney's life itself there stand out certain features which have a close relationship to the ideals set forth in the previous sections. Speaking of his friend, Greville writes:

. . . I will report no other wonder but this,
that though I lived with him and knew him from a
child, yet I never knew him other than a man; with
such staidness of mind, lovely and familiar gravity,
as carried grace and reverence above greater years.
His talk ever of knowledge, and his very play tending
to enrich his mind. . .³

Besides the extract from Greville's Life we know practically nothing of Sidney's early years beyond the facts that

2 Ibid., p. xxi.

3 Quoted by M. Wallace, The Life of Sir Philip Sidney, Cambridge Univ. Press, 1915, p. 45.

he attended school at Shrewsbury and Oxford. His education at Shrewsbury must have been the type discussed in the section on Shakespeare. It must have been the Erasmian system then prevalent in England.

The course of instruction for Shrewsbury boys, like that provided in all other grammar schools of the period, was almost exclusively the classics. The statutes prescribed the study of Cicero, Caesar's Commentaries, Sallust, Livy and "two little books of Dialogues drawn out of Tully's Offices and Ludovicus Vives by Mr. Thomas Ashton", for prose, and for verse, Virgil, Horace, Ovid and Terence; in Greek the text-books were Cleonardes' grammar, the Greek Testament, Isocrates ad Demonicum or Xenophon's Cyrus.⁴

At the age of twelve years young Philip wrote letters to his father in French and Latin and his later correspondence with Hubert Languet was in Latin⁵. In a letter to his brother, Robert, October 18, 1580, Sidney covers some of his important views on history which he later incorporated into the Defense⁶. He advises Robert to read history and to pay attention to story matter and fictions as examples of good and evil, success and failure. He shows how the poet, as a writer of things that might be is superior to the orator and the historian. Furthermore, he stresses the study of mathematics and Latin for speaking and writing, along with the

⁴ Wallace, Life, p. 42.

⁵ Evelyn Shuckburgh, (ed.) Sir Philip Sidney: An Apology for Poetrie, Cambridge, Univ. Press, 1951, p. xvii-xviii.

⁶ Steuart Pears, The Correspondence of Sir Philip Sidney and Hubert Languet, London, Pickering, 1845, p. 199-202.

study of music, horsemanship and the use of all weapons. The vein on this letter greatly resembles the fatherly letter of Gargantua to Pantagruel with its cycle of studies but an earlier letter of uncertain date, probably 1579, stresses the moral aspects of study. He writes:

I think you have read Aristotle's Ethics, if you have, you know it is the beginning and foundation of all his works, the end, to which every man doth and ought to bend his greatest and smallest actions.⁷

These letters to Robert are but the echo of the letters Philip himself received from his father while a student at Shrewsbury. The same counsels appear:

Let your first action be the lifting up of your mind to Almighty God, by hearty prayer . . . Apply your study to such hours as your discreet master doth assign you, earnestly . . . Be humble and obedient to your masters . . . Use exercise of body . . . Study and endeavour yourself to be virtuously occupied . . . and think that only by virtuous life and good action you may be an ornament to that illustrious family.⁸

His friend Languet also wrote to him in the same vein: "Next to the knowledge of the way of salvation . . . I believe that nothing will be of greater use to you than to study that branch of moral philosophy which treats of justice and injustice"⁹. Philip's reply is that he will learn Greek

7 Ibid., p. 195.

8 H. Fox-Browne, Sir Philip Sidney, New York, Putman, 1891, p. 28-30.

9 Pears, Correspondence, p. 26.

in order to read Aristotle because he does not trust translations. He writes:

Of the works of Aristotle, I consider the politics to be most worth reading; and I mention this in reference to your advice that I should apply myself to moral philosophy.¹⁰

The tremendous scope of Sidney's learning is the usual burden of a critical edition, and several of these have occurred, as mentioned above. The most recent study of this nature is a work devoted to showing that Sidney gives evidence of Latin, Philology, Greek, French, Italian, Spanish, German, all English since Chaucer, Logic, Philosophy, Music and Art. Each subject is verified by specific references to Sidney's works¹¹.

About the time that Sidney wrote his second letter to his brother Robert he had composed his famous prose work, the Arcadia. Keeping in mind the contents of the letter regarding the function of poetry, it is safe to disregard most of the controversy which has raged over the purpose Sidney had in mind when writing the Arcadia. It seems certain that he intended his treatise to be a moral guide. This notion had currency among his contemporaries. Most significant is the testimony of his schoolmate and life-long friend,

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 28.

¹¹ Michel Poirier, "Sir Philip Sidney", Travaux et Mémoires de L'université de Lille, No. 26, 1948, p. 147-163.

Fulke Greville. There was a version of the Arcadia circulated in manuscript during Sidney's lifetime. He had written it for his sister Mary, the Countess of Pembroke. In November 1586, just after Sidney's death, Greville wrote to Sir Francis Walsingham, Sidney's father-in-law, that a man named Ponsonby had approached him regarding the printing of the Arcadia. Greville told him there had been no authority given for such a project and now asks Sir Francis not to allow it. His reason is this:

Sir, I am loath to renew his memory unto you, but yet in this I must presume, for I have sent my lady, your daughter, at her request, a correction of that old one, done four or five years since, which he left in trust with me, whereof there is no more copies and fitter to be printed than the first which is so common: notwithstanding, even that to be amended by a direction set down under his own hand. . .¹²

Since Greville had been Sidney's friend and he had left the revision of the Arcadia in Greville's possession, it is safe to presume that he may have discussed the matter with him and Greville therefore knew Sidney's mind in the matter. He assumes at the very beginning of his discussion of the Arcadia that it is a work of didactic power and intention, useful in the practical affairs of government and life and concludes his remarks with this:

¹² Quoted by Wallace, Life, p. 232.

To be short, the like, and finer moralities offer themselves throughout that various and dainty work of his, the sounder judgements to exercise their spirits in; so that . . . if this excellent Image-maker had lived to finish, and bring to perfection this extraordinary frame of his own commonwealth . . . what a large field an active spirit should have had to walk in.¹³

The section continues at considerable length, with Greville repeating time and again his conviction that Sidney intended the betterment of peoples' lives by the reading of his Arcadia. Under Greville's publicity Sidney emerges in the company of Ascham's schoolmaster or Castiglione's courtier, not in any theoretical sense but in the very concrete words of his own production. Greville tries still more emphatically to convince the reader of his point:

Especially if he please to take knowledge that in all these creatures of his making, his intent, and scope was, to turn the barren Philosophy precepts into pregnant Images of life . . .

(Here Greville treats of the virtues and vices of the Monarch and then of the subjects.)

In which traverses (I know) his purpose was to limn out such exact pictures, of every posture in the minde, that any man being forced in the straines of this life, to pass through any straights, or latitudes of good, or ill fortune, might (as in a glasse) see how to set a good countenance upon all the discountenances of adversitie, and a stay upon the exorbitant smilings of chance.¹⁴

¹³ Fulke Greville, Life of Sir Philip Sidney, Oxford, Clarendon, 1907, p. 14-15.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 15-16.

At the risk of burdening this part of the thesis with quotations from Greville, it is nevertheless necessary to do so. When the treatment of Sidney's theoretical treatise, his Defense of Poesie, is under discussion it will be helpful to recall that Sidney himself practiced what he preached. Again the intimate of Sidney must tell us of his friend's ideals.

But the truth is: his end was not writing, even while he wrote; nor his knowledge moulded for talks, or schools; but both his wit, and understanding bent upon his heart, to make himself and others, not in words or opinion, but in life, and action, good and great.¹⁵

Speaking of Sidney's purpose in accomplishing an epic, which indeed his Arcadia proved to be, and his part in the Alençon trouble, he continues:

Neither was this in him a private, but a publique affection; his chief ends being not Friends, Wife, Children, or himself; but above all things the honour of his Maker, and service of his Prince, or Country.¹⁶

Greville's final comment on the nature of the Arcadia is but a restatement of what he has been insisting upon:

. . . his end in them (Arcadian Antiques) was not vanishing pleasure alone, but moral Images, and Examples, (as directing threds) to guide every man through the confused Labyrinth of his own desires and life.¹⁷

15 Ibid., p. 18.

16 Ibid., p. 40.

17 Ibid., p. 224.

This kind of testimony from the hand of Sidney's close friend is not to be lightly regarded because if subsequent scholarship, working on contemporary Renaissance pieces as a norm, has arrived at essentially the same conclusions, Greville's work has the added authority of Sidney's own sanction. The thorough compilation made by Marcus Goldman attests to the agreement of scholars in the didactic purpose of the Arcadia¹⁸. The evidence need not be repeated here but it should be noted, however, that Goldman dismisses the disparaging remarks of Sidney's own Preface, (wherein he treats the work as a product of his idle moments) as a typical instance of "sprezzatura", that off-hand attitude in which every gallant soul regarded his own accomplishments. Every disciple of Castiglione was affected by it¹⁹. Furthermore, Goldman cites the passage from the Defense in which Sidney declares that an heroic poem need not be written in verse - it is the treatment of the subject that makes a proper poem. By this token Sidney's Arcadia takes its place with Xenophon's Cyrus and the Theagenes of Heliodorus²⁰.

18 Marcus S. Goldman, "Sir Philip and the Arcadia", Illinois Studies in Language and Literature, Vol. 17, 1934.

19 Ibid., p. 148, cf also, Hoby's translation of the Courtier, p. 46.

20 Ibid., p. 150.

At this juncture it is advisable once again to get our bearings before proceeding with the subject of Sidney's Defense of Poesy. For this it is expeditious to turn to Ruth Kelso's study of the doctrine of the English gentleman. In the section devoted to a consideration of the gentleman's responsibility to prepare himself for public service, she says that this idea must be traced to the classical ideal of citizenship which the revival of learning had again made familiar²¹. We first saw this ideal in Cicero and have seen it appear from time to time in the course of this thesis. Miss Kelso adds something to this notion a few pages further:

Neither could a gentleman serve his country fully who was merely a soldier. He must be fit for both war and peace, and particularly for peace, and to make him fit for the offices of peace special training was as clearly necessary as for the offices of war. The addition of learning, education in the liberal arts, to the requirements of a gentleman was the most conspicuous contribution of the renaissance . . . This combination of warrior and scholar was first presented in the ideal of the courtier which arose in the Italian city-states during the renaissance. It was a fusion of the Christian knight and the pagan orator in a time when Italian nobles alternated periods of devotion to the clash and science of arms with periods of devotion to the study and imitation of Ciceronian dialogues.²²

This we saw in the work of Castiglione especially, and, since our attention will be directed to matters concerning

21 Ruth Kelso "The Doctrine of the English Gentleman in the Sixteenth Century," University of Illinois Studies, Urbana, 1929, p. 39-40.

22 Ibid., p. 49.

moral philosophy by Sidney, it is worth noting that Miss Kelso draws attention to the fact that moral philosophy was the generally accepted guide of the gentleman in the formation of those virtues that seemed most requisite and most ornamental to his station²³. Sidney will show how poetry is so closely allied to moral philosophy as to be almost identified with it.

A propos of these considerations, a recent work of Douglas Bush is indeed interesting. He makes such observations as these:

Renaissance history was not an analysis of power politics . . . but ethical philosophy, teaching by examples, a panorama of God's judgments upon rulers and empires.²⁴

. . . the basic aim of Renaissance education is summed up in the words of twelfth century John of Salisbury, "the knowledge of virtue that makes a good man". Everywhere in the Renaissance treatises on education we find the twin ideal, virtue and good letters.²⁵

Specifically on the point of the relationship of Cicero to Sidney, Bush's remarks that Cicero was the chief ethical teacher and civilizer of Europe²⁶ and that in the Renaissance, the art of the poet was associated with that of

23 Ibid., p. 75.

24 Douglas Bush, Classical Influences in Renaissance Literature, Harvard University Press, 1952, p. 16-17.

25 Ibid., p. 19.

26 Ibid., p. 30.

the orator²⁷, help to keep in focus the picture of poet as ethical spokesman which we have been viewing in the process of evolution.

Should there be any question of the importance of Sidney's Defense of Poesy as being the most representative work in its time, no doubt the testimony of such men as J.E. Spingarn and D.L. Clark will lend considerable authority to its selection at this point. Writing in 1922 Clark calls the Defense, the best and most consistent argument for the moral purpose of poetry that appeared in England²⁸. Spingarn, centering his study on criticism of the period says of it:

. . . a veritable epitome of the literary criticism of the Italian Renaissance . . . So thoroughly is it imbued with this spirit that no other work, Italian, French, or English can be said to give so complete and noble conception of the temper and the principles of Renaissance criticism.²⁹

Nearly every study of Sidney makes much of the point that the Defense of Poesy was intended as a reply to Stephen Gosson's School of Abuse. It would seem, in the light of other evidence, to be a point of doubtful importance if not of actual error. An examination of the text of Gosson shows

27 Ibid., p. 31.

28 D.L. Clark, Rhetoric and Poetry in the Renaissance, New York, Columbia University Press, 1922, p. 146.

29 J.E. Spingarn, Literary Criticism in the Renaissance, New York, Columbia Univ. Press, 1930, p. 268.

that the two men were generally in accord regarding the true nature of the poetic art and also regarding certain abuses existing among literary men. On the first point, the true function of poetry, Gosson says,

The right use of auncient Poetrie was too have the notable employtes of woorthy Captaines, the holesome counceles of good fathers, and vertuous lives of predecessors set downe in numbers, and song to the Instrument at solemne feastes, that the sound of the one might draw the hearers from kissing the cupp too often; the sense of the other put them in minde of things past, and chaulk out the way to do the like.³⁰

Spencer wrote a letter to Gabriel Harvey in 1579 saying that although Gosson had dedicated his School of Abuse to Sidney, he was scorned for it³¹, yet Wallace does not attach much importance to this statement since Gosson also dedicated a second edition of the work to Sidney, in 1586. At least Gosson did not regard the Defense as a reply to his work³².

We now turn our attention to the text of the Defense of Poesy noting in it the passages wherein Sidney states his notion of what poetry is and what it stood for in the life of the community³³.

³⁰ Quoted by J. Bronowski, The Poet's Defence, Cambridge Univ. Press, 1939, p. 25.

³¹ Shuckburgh, Sir Philip Sidney, p. xxxiii.

³² Wallace, Life, p. 238.

³³ Subsequent references to the Defense of Poesy will be from the edition of A.S. Cook, Boston, Ginn & Co., 1890 and will be noted as simply, Defense.

Sidney's work can conveniently be divided into four major sections:

1. Why poetry should be valued.
2. The nature and usefulness of poetry.
3. Answers to objections made against poetry.
4. The present state of English poetry.

Our chief concern will be his treatment of the second of these sections although some attention will be given to pertinent matter that occurs elsewhere in the treatise.

First of all he establishes the nobility of poetry by showing that the most ancient of the Greek writers were poets. The same is true of all writers who, he claims, "made pens deliverers of their knowledge to their posterity"³⁴. But this claim to antiquity is not enough. Sidney claims that in addition to priority in time, poetry served as a cause to draw untamed wits to an admiration of knowledge³⁵. He cites examples from Greece, Rome, Italy in general and even England which served by way of delight and encouragement to incite others to beautify their mother tongue by the literary art.

Sidney is at pains to strengthen his point in favor of poetry by explaining that certain basic subjects are taught in poetry. In the field of natural philosophy he mentions the works of Thales, Empedocles and Parmenides; in moral philosophy, Pythagoras and Phocyclides; in the science

34 Defense, p. 2.

35 Defense, p. 3.

of war, Tyrtaeus; in politics, Solon³⁶. He makes an additional point of stating that even Plato's method of writing was the use of dialogue as a teaching technique³⁷. It is a literary means, a feigning of images for instruction, such as was seen in Cicero and Castiglione. Lastly Sidney mentions that even though historians are bound by fact, they use the invention of poetry to describe passions and specific scenes as well as putting brave oratory in the mouths of kings and captains³⁸. Further it is his contention that both philosophy and history were made more palatable to the reading public because of the use of poetic devices³⁹. It is especially true of dull-witted nations that they must be led on to a desire for knowledge by experiencing the delights of knowledge as it is presented in poetic form. Beyond this property of poetry, there is a quality which Sidney does not name, but his explanation of it is such that it might be said that poetry is co-natural to man. In evidence he states that in Wales, even after concerted effort on the part of Roman, Saxon, Danish and Norman barbarians to destroy learning, poetry still persists⁴⁰.

36 Defense, p. 3.

37 Ibid.

38 Defense, p. 4.

39 Ibid.

40 Defense, p. 5.

Sidney's next step is to associate poetry with religion, be it pagan or Hebraic. This he does by showing that the Romans attached great religious significance to the office of poet by calling him "vates" or prophet, and by using poetic quotations in consulting the oracles⁴¹. The Psalms of David are then included since they are songs. This use of poetry is a departure from the notion which is fundamental to the Defense. Here Sidney is identifying poetry and verse, whereas his later attitude is that verse is only accidental to poetry. But such a ruse must be allowed to Sidney in such circumstances. Here he is poet and orator, with the orator to the fore momentarily.

Very cleverly then Sidney swings to the concept he intends to develop - the Greek concept - the poet as a "maker"⁴². Lest the reader be suspicious of his devices, Sidney at once resorts to showing that all branches of knowledge employ embellished nature. He names astronomy, geometry, arithmetic, music, natural and moral philosophy, law, grammar, rhetoric, logic and metaphysics, as knowledges which are used by man to impose his ideas on others⁴³. The subject matter is interpreted by the one exercising in it but he is nevertheless bounded by the nature of his study. The poet, on the

41 Defense, p. 6.

42 Ibid.

43 Defense, p. 7.

other hand, is not so restricted. Only he,

. . . lifted up with vigor of his own invention, doth grow, in effect, into another nature, in making things either better than nature bringeth forth, or, quite anew, forms such as never were in nature . . . so as he goeth hand in hand with nature, not enclosed within the narrow warrant of her gifts, but freely ranging within the zodiac of his own wit.⁴⁴

Especially when dealing with the subject "man", Sidney claims great respect for the office of poet. He claims that the chief skill of any artificer lies in the fore-conceit of his work, and the poets fashion ideal people, not wholly factual nor yet wholly imaginative:

. . . not only to make a Cyrus, which had been a particular excellency, as nature might have done, but to bestow a Cyrus upon the world to make many Cyruces, if they will learn aright why and how that maker made him.⁴⁵

Having introduced his subject and shown its excellence Sidney again turns to the Greeks; this time to Aristotle. He wants eventually to demonstrate that poetry is a moral teacher using fiction and so he uses Aristotle's definition:

Poesy, therefore, is an art of imitation, for so Aristotle termeth it in his word mimesis, () that is to say, a representing, counterfeiting, or figuring forth; to speak metaphorically, a speaking picture, with this end, - to teach and delight.⁴⁶

44 Ibid.

45 Defense, p. 8.

46 Defense, p. 9.

Of these, that is, the delighting teachers, he recognizes three general kinds, the religious poets, the philosophical poets and the "right" poets, i.e. the imitators⁴⁷.

Among the first he names scriptural writers of the Old and New Testaments, as well as the religious writers of pagan Greece and Rome. With these he has no argument since they simply declare theological matter. The second group, the philosophers, he divides into moral, natural, astronomical and historical. These are bound by the laws of their own subjects and have not the free course of invention, so Sidney dismisses them from the lists by saying, "whether they be poets or no let grammarians dispute"⁴⁸. It is to the third class of poets, the "right" poets as he terms them, those who deal imaginatively with life, that Sidney calls special attention. He compares them to painters who, avoiding the pictorial likeness of Lucretia, paint the beauty of her virtue⁴⁹. He continues:

For these third be they which most properly do imitate to teach and delight; and to imitate borrow nothing of what is, hath been, or shall be; but range, only reined with learned discretion, into the divine consideration of what may and should be . . . For these, indeed, do merely make to imitate, and imitate both to delight and teach, and delight to move men to take that goodness in hand, which without delight they would fly as from a stranger.⁵⁰

47 Defense, p. 9-10.

48 Defense, p. 10.

49 Ibid.

50 Ibid.

This may be said to be the core of Sidney's doctrine of poetry, the making of images in order to delight and teach. He goes on to say, however, that most poets used verse although verse is not essential to poetry. Under this title he places Xenophon who gave the picture of the perfect empire in his Cyrus, and Heliodorus who depicted true love in his Theagenes and Chariclea although both wrote in prose.

Which I speak to show that it is not riming and versing that maketh a poet - no more than a long gown maketh an advocate, who, though he pleaded in armor, should be an advocate and no soldier - but it is that feigning notable images of virtues, vices or what else, with that delightful teaching, which must be the right describing note to know a poet by.⁵¹

Sidney then narrows his field of discussion by gathering all knowledge under three principle heads, history, philosophy and poetry. He says that no matter what the name or immediate end of any branch of learning might be, the final end is the highest perfection of our human nature. The end of all knowledge is "to know", and by knowledge to lift up the mind from the dungeon of the body to the enjoying his own divine essence; in the knowledge of a man's self, in the ethic and politic consideration, with the end of well-doing, and not of well-knowing only⁵². Having established this, Sidney then says that the subject which makes this perfection most easily realized

51 Defense, p. 11.

52 Defense, p. 12.

by man is the prince of knowledge and he intends to show that poetry is that subject.

First he deals with the moral philosophers and the role they play in advancing man to his highest goal. Even though philosophy teaches what virtue is, its essence, causes, effects, contraries and adversaries, it is dry precept and has not the power to penetrate into men's souls and urge them on to the practice of any virtue. The historian is accorded little more consideration than the philosopher, but Sidney puts the rejection of philosophy and the praise of history into the mouth of the historian himself. History tells the facts, it shows virtue in operation, as it has been lived by actual people⁵³.

Sidney's next move is to say that some one must be found to decide the issue of the excellence of these subjects for teaching mankind. He proposes the poet, not only as the moderator of the dispute but as the one to bear the palm itself. To protect himself against arguments which would render his defense of poesy useless, Sidney again declares that Theology of its very nature must be accorded first place without dispute. Law, too is eliminated because, as Sidney says, it seeks to make men good by means of fear of punishment, rather than by love of virtue⁵⁴. This narrows the field

53 Defense, p. 13-14.

54 Defense, p. 15.

again to a struggle between philosophy, history and poetry as the best agent for the achievement of man's perfection, which for Sidney, as for Aristotle, is action and not mere knowledge, even though ethical teaching is of great importance.

He simplifies the argument by stating that philosophy tries to reach its goal by precept but history by example⁵⁵. Both of these are fruitless as far as causing man to act is concerned, but the poet supplies what is lacking. What the philosopher says should be done, the poet presents as being done by someone and so he joins the general notion with the particular example⁵⁶. Sidney then goes to great length in proving the point that the precepts of the philosophers will lie dormant unless illuminated by the imagination of the poet and directed towards good actions. His example from Sophocles is particularly convincing. He says:

Let but Sophocles bring you Ajax on a stage,
killing and whipping sheep and oxen, thinking them
the army of Greeks, with their chieftains Agamemnon
and Menelaus, and tell me if you have not a more
familiar insight into anger, than finding in the
schoolmen his genus and difference.⁵⁷

Such direction does the poet give to virtues, vices and passions, that we seem not to hear of them, but clearly to see through them. The poet makes them vivid. This is

55 Ibid.

56 Ibid.

57 Defense, p. 16.

true not only in the portrayal of an individual person, such as Aeneas, but also of the type of good ruler found in the Cyrus of Xenophon and the model of a perfect commonwealth as found in Sir Thomas More's Utopia⁵⁸. Lastly Sidney appeals to the parables of Christ, saying that He could have given the moral commonplaces of uncharitableness and humility but rather chose the stories of Dives and Lazarus as and the prodigal son as being much more effectual⁵⁹.

Turning next to history, Sidney first invokes the authority of Aristotle for saying that poetry deals with universal considerations while history is concerned with particular cases; poetry with what is fit to be done, history with what was actually done⁶⁰. This superiority of the universal over the particular he uses as the basis for his contention that an imaginative piece of writing which can cover many cases is preferable to a piece of factual reporting, whether it be the delineation of a character or some general remarks on a virtue or vice. Not contesting the necessary choice of truth over falsehood, Sidney says that "when it is a question of our own use and learning, the feigned or fictional is far superior to the factual⁶¹. Hence, he

58 Defense, p. 17.

59 Defense, p. 17-18.

60 Defense, p. 18.

61 Defense, p. 19.

declares, poetry is superior to history which must report things as they were, leaving the reader to his own discretion in determining what is right and what is wrong. If the historian should attempt to point out a cause or an error, he then assumes the role of poet⁶². Furthermore, history often shows the prosperity of the wicked and can thus be misleading except to the discerning, but poetry can so present evil that no one would be attracted to it, and can present virtue so that all become enamored of it⁶³. He closes his discussion of this point by saying:

I conclude, therefore, that he (the poet) excelleth history, not only in furnishing the mind with knowledge, but in setting it forward to that which deserveth to be called and accounted good; which setting forward, and moving to well-doing, indeed setteth the laurel crown upon the poet as victorious, not only of the historian, but over the philosopher, howsoever in teaching it may be questionable.⁶⁴

The "moving" spoken of here is Sidney's next topic. He grants that in methodical teaching the philosopher may excel, but when it is a question of moving, the poet excels. He maintains that the end of all teaching or knowledge is action, and so poetry is both the cause and the effect of learning. His argument is this: no one will undertake to be taught unless he first be moved or inspired to learn; the

62 Defense, p. 20.

63 Defense, p. 21.

64 Defense, p. 22.

fruit of knowledge or teaching or learning is to put into action what was learned⁶⁵. Again he appeals to Aristotle that the ultimate end of all learning is virtuous action, not mere ethical teaching. Moreover, he declares that what the philosophers teach about the doing of good and avoiding of evil is really in our very natures and need not come by study. "But", he says, "to be moved to do that which we know, or to be moved with desire to know, hoc opus, hic labor est"⁶⁶. Of all the sciences, poetry does this best, for he not only shows the way, but also gives prospect of success, thus enticing the reader to practice what is taught.

Nay, he doth, as if your journey should lie through a fair vineyard, at the very first give you a cluster of grapes, that full of that taste you may long to pass further . . . he cometh unto you, with a tale which holdeth children from play, and old men from the chimney-corner, and, pretending no more, doth intend the winning of the mind from wickedness to virtue.⁶⁷

To lend weight to his argument, Sidney tells two stories. First he tells how a rebellion was put down by the device of a tale wherein the members of the body were shown that their plan to deprive the belly (since it devoured the fruit of their labors) would lead to their own destruction. Secondly, how the prophet Nathan won David to repentance by

65 Ibid.

66 Defense, p. 23.

67 Ibid.

the simple fiction of a lost lamb⁶⁸. A significant point that is all through this section is the "delight" or pleasantness with which these stories are told. It is the delightful aspect which leads men to the study and ultimately to the practice of virtue. Sidney's conclusion is:

that as virtue is the most excellent resting-place for all worldly learning to make his end of, so poetry being the most familiar to teach it, and most princely to move towards it, in the most excellent work is the most excellent workman.⁶⁹

This is Sidney's basic doctrine. The remainder of the Defense is concerned with other problems of poetry although the basic issue is brought in from time to time.

The next section deals with the various "kinds" of poetry, the pastoral, elegiac, comic, iambic, satiric, tragic, lyric, and epic. In each of these Sidney shows his position, that is, that no matter which type one may choose, the element of moral teaching is present to varying degrees. Of importance to the present study, perhaps only four need be mentioned, the comic, the tragic, the lyric and the epic.

Concerning comedy, Sidney holds that it is a representation of the common errors of life. The poet presents these in such a way that no one would be content to be accused of having any of them. The evil that is thus presented is but

68 Defense, p. 25-26.

69 Defense, p. 26.

a foil by which to perceive the beauty of virtue⁷⁰. Likewise the tragic, "that openeth the greatest wounds and showeth forth the ulcers that are covered with tissue"⁷¹.

It is in the passage on the lyric that Sidney makes some personal references, showing that his Defense is not entirely an academic exercise. The lyric gives praise, the reward of virtue, to virtuous acts, gives moral precepts, and raises its voice to heaven in the praise of God⁷². Then he says, "I never heard the old song of Percy and Douglas that I found not my heart moved more than with a trumpet"⁷³, and concludes that the lyric is most capable and most fit to awake the thoughts from the sleep of idleness, to embrace honorable enterprises⁷⁴.

The form, however, which seems to summarize all that Sidney could claim for poetry is the epic, or as he terms it, the heroical:

who doth not only teach and move to a truth, but teacheth and moveth to the most high and excellent truth; who maketh magnanimity and justice shine through all misty fearfulness and foggy desires . . . For as the image of each action stirreth and instructeth the mind, so the lofty image of such worthies (Achilles, Cyrus, AEneas, etc.) most inflameth the mind with desire to be worthy, and informs with counsel how to be worthy.⁷⁵

70 Defense, p. 28.

71 Ibid.

72 Defense, p. 29.

73 Ibid.

74 Defense, p. 30.

75 Ibid.

Sidney devotes the next section of the Defense to the answering of objections against poetry. These objections and their answers do not particularly strengthen the argument of the thesis and so they will be passed over very briefly. One of the objections is that rhyming and versing are consequent upon poetry. Sidney's reply repeats what has been said before, viz., that verse is not essential to poetry. Speech is the greatest gift of nature, next to reason and so, that which polishes speech, i.e. metrical form, is praiseworthy. Furthermore, it brings in verbal harmony, measure, order and proportion which are pleasing, and pleasure is one of the major ends of the art. Lastly, versification is a great aid to the memory and not to be scorned⁷⁶.

Another objection, that poetry is a waste of time and a useless pursuit, Sidney feels he has adequately answered in the body of the Defense. He repeats it in capsule form, thus:

For if it be, as I affirm, that no learning is
so good as that which teacheth and moveth to virtue,
and that none can both teach and move thereto so
much as poesy, then is the conclusion manifest that
ink and paper cannot be to a more profitable purpose
employed.⁷⁷

To the charge that poetry is the mother of lies, Sidney replies that to lie is to affirm that to be true which is false.

⁷⁶ Defense, p. 33-34.

⁷⁷ Defense, p. 35.

Poets do not affirm anything, he says, and therefore they never lie. Their office is simply to invent what should or should not be, and no one seriously takes their inventions as facts⁷⁸.

Having disposed of the objections to poetry, Sidney, in the last division of the Defense turns his attention to the problem of poetry in England. He laments the fact that England alone has been so harsh on poets and has produced so few⁷⁹. He commends Chaucer, the authors of the Mirror for Magistrates, Surrey and Spenser⁸⁰, as possessing merit as poets but he singles out the play Gorboduc for its excellence as a true poem in the sense of his treatise. He says of it that it is full of stately speeches and well-sounding phrases, that it approaches the height of Seneca's style, but above all it is "full of notable morality, which it doth most delightfully teach, and so obtain the very end of poesy"⁸¹.

A most fitting conclusion to this chapter on Sidney must be taken from the final pages of the Defense. Here he sums up, in a truly Ciceronian period, his views on the nature, beauty and function of poetry.

78 Defense, p. 35-36.

79 Defense, p. 44-45.

80 Defense, p. 47.

81 Defense, p. 47-48.

He says in part:

I conjure you . . . to believe, with Aristotle, that they were the ancient treasurers of the Grecians' divinity; to believe, with Bembo, that they were first bringers - in of all civility; to believe, with Scaliger, that no philosophers's precepts can sooner make you an honest man than the reading of Virgil; to believe, with Claunderus, the translator of Cornutus, that it pleased the Heavenly Deity by Hesiod and Homer, under the veil of fables, to give us all knowledge, logic, rhetoric, philosophy natural and moral, and quid non? to believe, with me, that there are many mysteries contained in poetry which of purpose were written darkly, lest by profane wits it should be abused.⁸²

Sidney, then, can be said to be the spokesman for the numerous writers mentioned in the previous chapters of this thesis, as well as the countless others whose works have been passed over. What they firmly believed and practised, he formulated into a treatise; he explained the theory of poetry. All of them were poets whether their specific end was poetry as such or not; Sidney spoke for all of them by writing the first significant "defense" of the place of poetry in the broad sense, to appear in English. He showed that the office of poet in the life of the community was an extremely important one because through the proper exercise of his lofty function he could produce better individuals, better rulers, better commonwealths and consequently a better world.

⁸² Defense, p. 57.

CONCLUSION

In the course of the thesis it has been shown that from the time of Cicero, to the end of the sixteenth century there had been a constant tradition concerning the function of certain men. These men were trained in the cycle of the arts and used their knowledge in various ways for the betterment of the fellow-men. They did not always have the same title, it is true, but there was at the very basis of their operation a common ideal. They sought to make their knowledge operative for the benefit of mankind. Cicero, the first one considered, ignoring the limitations of individual orators, conceived the perfect orator and outlined what this man should do in order to take his proper position in the Roman state. This fiction of man and office is the constant factor which is present in each of the succeeding manifestations of Cicero's orator. Quintilian created his ideal statesman using the same model. The apologist of the Patristic period too, was an "ideal" man, a learned defender of traditional Christian doctrine and morality, most capably created by St. Augustine as his citizen of the City of God, the perfect state. The Middle Ages, with John of Salisbury as spokesman, kept this ideal of political prudence and in its later stages returned to Cicero's notion of eloquence as the queen of the arts, modifying it a little by advocating

a written eloquence rather than a spoken eloquence. To the end of the Middle Ages the writers of the Christian era were largely churchmen, but with the coming of the Renaissance, a spirit of "this worldliness" came to the fore and the tradition produced "ideal" schoolmasters, governors and courtiers, all cut to the Ciceronian pattern. Lastly Sir Philip Sidney, gathering a host of authorities from the past, demonstrated that an ideal poet, exercising his poetic art in its proper fashion was the greatest artist of them all, since he performed his task of teaching delightfully.

It is true that the survey covered a period of some fifteen hundred years at the beginning of the Christian era and some four hundred years prior to our own time, yet the doctrine contained in the survey has need of revival today. Sidney's ideals were centered in the ideal poet and the function of poetry. Ideals and principles are timeless and we may well ask what has become of Sidney's ideals since his day. Schools of poetry have arisen that have tended to distract us from the traditional concept of poetry and put in its place ideals of a far less worthy nature. We have seen much modern poetry become a vehicle for political, social and economic propaganda or subjected to the judgment of pseudo-critics as mere form, or worse still, fantastic symbolism and exotic metrics. One seldom hears of an evaluation of poetry by the norm of its traditional

function; a concept of its educational importance now seems like a paradox rather than a truism.

The minds of the Angelic Doctor and his twentieth century apologist, Jacques Maritain, are in accord on the true nature of poetry. They maintain, like Sidney, that things are better in the mind than in themselves and acquire their full stature only when they are expressed, and thus are given a metaphysical existence where they live outside of time with a life that is universal. This divination of the spiritual in the things of sense is true poetry, and the poet's work is fully justified if it pleasingly represents intellectual and especially moral beauty, which, by the very force of its beauty can become the goal of the reader's will.

Such considerations as these, then, point to the necessity of a re-evaluation of much that has been written. This re-consideration can be done profitably not only in the field of Literature but in History and Education as well. The latter two can be, and should be seen in the revealing light of an unbroken Christian tradition, which has been carefully developed from what was worthwhile in pagan wisdom. In the field of letters, a return to fundamental values is very much in order, especially in the realms of literary criticism which can do much to evaluate what has gone before, and form the ideals on which to base a sound, moral and worthwhile literature in the future.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

Ascham, Roger, The Scholemaster, London, Cassell's, 1909, 192 p.

-----, Toxophilus, J.A. Giles, editor, London, Smith, 1864-65, Vol. 2.

Augustine, Saint, De Doctrina Christiana, H.J. Vogels, editor, Bonnae, Hanstein, 1930, vi-103 p.

Bacon, Francis, The Advancement of Learning, London, Dent, 1930, xii-244 p.

Bacon, Roger, Opus Majus, R.B. Burke, translator, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1928, 2 Vols.

Bede, The Venerable, Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation, London, Dent, 1913, xxxiv-370 p.

Bonaventure, Saint, On the Reduction of the Arts to Theology, C.G. Wallis, translator, Annapolis, St. John's Bookstore, 1938, 11 p.

Castiglione, Baldassare, The Book of the Courtier, Sir Thomas Hoby, translator, London, Dent, 1928, xviii-324 p.

-----, The Book of the Courtier, L. Opdyke, translator, New York, Scribner, 1903, xi-439 p.

Cicero, Marcus Tullius, De Oratore, Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, 1942, 2 Vols.

Comfort, W.W., translator, Arthurian Romances by Crétien de Troyes, London, Dent, 1928, xxii-378 p.

Cook, Albert S., editor, Sidney's Defense of Poesy, Boston, Ginn, 1890, xiv-143 p.

Coulon, Remi, editor, Lucula Noctis Beati Johnnis Dominici, Paris, Picard, 1908, cx-459 p.

Daniel, Samuel, Poems and a Defence of Ryme, A.C. Sprague, editor, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1930, xxxvii-215 p.

Dickinson, J., translator, The Statesman's Book of John Salisbury, New York, Crofts, 1927, xc-410 p.

Elyot, Thomas, The Boke Named the Governour, London, Dent, 1907, xxxii-308 p.

Greenlaw, Edwin, Charles G. Osgood, Frederick M. Padelford, editors, The Works of Edmund Spenser, Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins Press, 1932-38, Vol. 1.

Greville, Sir Fulke, The Life of Sir Philip Sidney, Oxford, Clarendon, 1907, xxv-279 p.

John, of Salisbury, Metalogicon, C. Webb, translator, Oxford, Clarendon, 1929, xxiv-240 p.

Jonson, Ben, Timber, or Discoveries Made Upon Men and Matter, Boston, Ginn, 1892, xxxv-166 p.

Migne, J.P., editor, Patrologia Latina, Paris, Gornier, 1844-55, Vols. 22, 98, 100, 101, 137.

Milton, John, Prose Works, J.A. St. John, editor, London, Bohn, 1848, Vols. 1 & 2.

Minucius, Felix, Octavius, Martin edition, Bonnae, Hanstein, 1930, 86 p.

Montaigne, Michel de, Works, O.W. Wight, editor, New York, Hurd and Houghton, 1864, Vol. 1.

Newman, John Henry, Cardinal, Apologia pro Vita Sua, New York, Longmans, 1908, xxx-395 p.

Osgood, Charles, translator and editor, Baccaccio's Genealogia Deorum Gentilium (Books 14 and 15), Princeton University Press, 1930, xlix-214 p.

Pears, Steuart A., editor, The Correspondence of Sir Philip Sidney and Hubert Languet, London, Pickering, 1845, lxxxii-240 p.

Petrarque, François, La Traité de sui ipsius et multorum ignorantia, Paris, Champion, 1906, 120 p.

Petrarca, Francesco, Le Familiari, V. Rossi, editor, Firenze, Sansoni, 1934, Vol. 2.

Petrarch, Francis, Letters to Classical Authors, M. Cosenza, editor, Chicago, University Press, 1910, xiv-208 p.

Pike, J.B., editor, John of Salisbury's Frivolities of Courtiers, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1938, x-436 p.

Quintilianus, Marcus, Institutio Oratori, Butler edition, New York, Putman, 1921-22, 4 Vols.

Rabelais, Francis, Works, London, The Navarre Society, 1931, Two volumes in one.

Saint John, Christopher, translator, The Plays of Roswitha, London, Chatto-Windus, 1923, xxxv-160 p.

Salutati, Coluccio, Epistolario, Novati edition, Rome, Forzani, 1905, Vol. 2, 3, 4.

Smith, G. Gregory, Elizabethan Critical Essays, Oxford, Clarendon, 1904, 2 Vols.

Spingarn, Joel E., Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century, Oxford, Clarendon, 1908-09, Vol. 1.

Tertullianus, Quintus, Apologeticum, Martin edition, Bonnae, Hanstein, 1933, 176 p.

Wilson, Thomas, Arte of Rhetorique, G.H. Mair, editor, Oxford, Clarendon, 1909, xxxiv-236 p.

Woodward, W.H., Desiderius Erasmus Concerning the Aim and Method of Education, Cambridge, University Press, 1904, xvii-244 p.

-----, Studies in Education During the Age of the Renaissance, Cambridge, University Press, 1906, xx-336 p.

-----, Vittorino de Feltre and Other Humanist Educators, Cambridge, University Press, 1921, xii-261 p.

Wright, William A., editor, The Complete Works of William Shakespeare, New York, Garden City, 1940, viii-1527 p.

Secondary Sources

Abelson, Paul, The Seven Liberal Arts, New York, Columbia University Press, 1938, viii-150 p.

Ainsworth, Oliver M., Milton on Education, Yale University Press, 1928, xi-369 p.

Arnold, E.V., Roman Stoicism, Cambridge University Press, 1911, ix-468 p.

Atkins, J.W., English Literary Criticism: The Renaissance, London, Methuen, 1951, xi-371 p.

Baldwin, T.W., Small Latine and Lesse Greeke, Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 1944, 2 Vols.

Bardy, Abbé G., The Christian Latin Literature of the First Six Centuries, London, Sands, 1930, viii-222 p.

Barker, Sir Ernest, Traditions of Civility, Cambridge, University Press, 1948, viii-370 p.

Baum, Helena W., The Satiric and the Didactic in Ben Jonson's Comedy, Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1947, vi-192 p.

Boissier, Gaston, La fin du paganisme, Paris, Hachette, 1891, 2 Vols.

Born, L.K., editor, Erasmus: The Education of a Christian Prince, New York, Columbia University Press, 1936, ix-277 p.

Bourne, H. Fox, Sir Philip Sidney, New York, Putman, 1891, xviii-384 p.

Boyd, William, The History of Western Education, London, Black, 1950, xii-474 p.

Bronowski, J., The Poet's Defence, Cambridge, University Press, 1939, iv-258 p.

Brubacher, John S., A History of the Problems of Education, New York, McGraw-Hill, 1947, xiii-688 p.

Bush, Douglas, Classical Influences in Renaissance Literature, Harvard, University Press, 1952, 60 p.

- , The Renaissance and English Humanism, Toronto, University Press, 1939, 139 p.
- Cassidy, Frank P., Rev., Molders of the Medieval Mind, St. Louis, Herder, 1944, viii-194 p.
- Cayré, F. Rev., Manual of Patrology and History of Theology, Paris, Desclée, 1936, Vol. 1.
- Clark, Donald L., John Milton at St. Paul's School, New York, Columbia University Press, 1948, x-269 p.
- , Rhetoric and Poetry in the Renaissance, New York, Columbia University Press, 1922, x-166 p.
- Collins, J. Churton, editor, Sidney's Apologie for Poetrie, Oxford, Clarendon, 1950, xxviii-111 p.
- Curoe, P.R., History of Education, New York, Globe, 1921, 189 p.
- Dawson, Christopher, Progress and Religion, London, Sheed and Ward, 1937, xvii-254 p.
- Duckett, Eleanor Shipley, Anglo-Saxon Saints and Scholars, New York, Macmillan, 1947, x-488 p.
- Gilson, Etienne, The Unity of Philosophical Experience, New York, Scribners, 1937, xii-331 p.
- Goldman, Marcus S., "Sir Philip and the Arcadia", Illinois Studies in Language and Literature, Vol. 17, Nos. 1 and 2, 1934, 236 p.
- Gwynn, Aubrey O., Roman Education from Cicero to Quintilian, Oxford, Clarendon, 1926, 260 p.
- Hight, Gilbert, The Classical Tradition, London, Oxford University Press, 1949, xxxviii-763 p.
- Howell, Wilbur, translator, The Rhetoric of Alcuin and Charlemagne, Princeton University Press, 1941, ix-175 p.
- Jaeger, Werner, Paideia: the Ideals of Greek Culture, G. Hight, translator, Oxford, Blackwell, 1939-44, Vol. 1.
- Jebb, R.C., "The Classical Renaissance", Cambridge Modern History, Vol. 1, New York, Macmillan, 1934, p. 532-584.

Jonas, Leah, The Divine Science, Columbia University Press, 1940, xii-292 p.

Kelso, Ruth, "The Doctrine of the English Gentleman", University of Illinois Studies, Vol. 14, Nos 1 and 2, 1929.

Labriolle, Pierre de, History and Literature of Christianity from Tertullian to Boethius, H. Wilson, translator, New York, Knopf, 1925, xxiii-555 p.

Lucas, Henry S., The Renaissance and the Reformation, New York, Harper, 1934, xviii-765 p.

McKeon, Richard, "Renaissance and Method in Philosophy", Studies in the History of Ideas, Vol. 3, New York, Columbia University Press, 1935, p. 35-114.

Mackail, J.W., Latin Literature, New York, Scribner, 1895, ix-289 p.

Maritain, Jacques, True Humanism, Margot Adamson, translator, London, Geoffrey Bles, 1938, xviii-304 p.

Marrow, Irene, St. Augustin et la fin de la cult antique Paris, De Boccard, 1938, xv-620 p.

Masson, David, The Life of John Milton, London Macmillan, 1859, 94, Vol. 1.

Nelson, William, John Skelton, Laureate, New York, Columbia University Press, 1939, vi-266 p.

Padelford, F.M., translator, Select Translations from Scaliger's Poetics, New York, Holt, 1905, xviii-96 p.

Paetow, L.J., The Arts Course at Medieval Universities, Urbana, Illinois, University Press, 1910, 134 p.

Phillips, Margaret M., Erasmus and the Northern Renaissance, London, Hodder, 1949, xxv-236 p.

Poirier, Michel, "Sir Philip Sidney (Le Chevalier Poète Elizabéthain)", Travaux et Mémoires de l'Université de Lille, No. 26, Lille, Bibliothèque Universitaire, 1948, 322 p.

Pollard, A.F., The History of England from the Accession of Edward VI to the death of Elizabeth 1547-1603, London, Longmans, 1910, xxv-524 p.

Roger, Maurice, L'enseignement des lettres classiques d'Ausone à Alcuin, Paris, Picard, 1905, xviii-457 p.

Sandys, John E., History of Classical Scholarship, Cambridge, University Press, 1903-08, Vol. 1.

Sayles, G.O., The Medieval Foundations of England, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1950, xxv-482 p.

Schmid, Bernard, Rev., Manual of Patrology, St. Louis, Herder, 1899, 351 p.

Shuckburgh, Evelyn S., Philip Sydney: An Apologie for Poetrie, Cambridge University Press, 1951, xxxv-192 p.

Slover, C.H., "Glastonbury Abbey and the Fusing of English Literary Culture", Speculum, Vol. 10, 1935, p. 147-160.

Smalley, Beryl, The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages, Oxford, Clarendon, 1941, xvi-295 p.

Smith, Preserved, A History of Modern Culture (The Great Renewal, 1543-1687), New York, Holt, 1930, Vol. 1.

Spingarn, Joel E., A History of Literary Criticism in the Renaissance, New York, Columbia University Press, 1930,

Taylor, H.O., The Medieval Mind, London, Macmillan, 1930, 2 vols.

-----, Thought and Expression in the Sixteenth Century, New York, Macmillan, 1920, 2 Vols.

Thompson, James W., The Medieval Library, University of Chicago Press, 1939, viii-681 p.

Thomson, J.A.K., The Classical Background of English Literature, London, Allen-Unwin, 1948, 272 p.

Tixeront, J. Rev., A Handbook of Patrology, St. Louis, Herder, 1920, 380 p.

Wallace, Malcolm W., The Life of Sir Philip Sidney, Cambridge University Press, 1915, vii-428 p.

Watson, Foster, editor, Vives on Education, Cambridge University Press, 1913, clvii-328 p.

Wegg, Jervis, Richard Pace, London, Methuen, 1932, ix-299 p.

Weiss, Roberto, Humanism in England, Oxford, Blackwell, 1941, xxiii-190 p.

West, A.F., Alcuin and the Rise of the Christian Schools, New York Scribner, 1892, vii-205 p.

APPENDIX I
AN ABSTRACT

AN ABSTRACT

The objective of this thesis is to show in general outline the doctrine of Cicero concerning his orator, to trace that doctrine from Cicero to the Renaissance and finally to demonstrate that Sir Philip Sidney's poet was the sixteenth century counterpart of Cicero's orator.

The proper name for the ideal which Cicero proposes to his orator is "eloquence" - the art of speaking according to the rules of rhetoric. But eloquence is dependent upon the trained skill of highly educated men, or on what we call general culture. It involves an encyclopedic knowledge; law, rhetoric, history and the poets, but especially moral philosophy. The ultimate purpose of such training is the use of the knowledge and skill for public service, for the exercise of political prudence.

Cicero further explains the dignity of eloquence as based on the development of the faculty of speech, a faculty that man possesses above brutes. Moreover, it is pleasing to the ear; and Cicero claims that the greatest of all human achievements is that the impulse of a crowd, the consciences of judges or the austerity of the senate should be transformed through the eloquence of one man. On a less general level it is the function of the orator to encourage individuals to virtuous conduct, to reclaim them from vicious

courses, to censure the wicked and praise the good. In ancient times, moreover, the same instructor was used to inculcate right conduct and eloquence in youth. Cicero states too that "the poet is the very near kinsman of the orator". This kinship is the objective of the present study.

Succeeding chapters show variations in the details of the doctrine but the essential elements persist. Nearly a hundred years after the writing of the De Oratore by Cicero, the Institutio Oratoria of Quintilian appeared. It followed the original plan quite closely but stressed the importance of morality, producing a statesman who was not only a gifted orator but, as he put it a "vir bonus dicendi peritus".

In the post-classical or Patristic period we find that the Fathers of the Church underwent an education according to this modified pattern of grammar and rhetoric because such an education was the only one available to them. When the establishment of the republic replaced the empire, a written eloquence replaced the spoken word and the apologists employed their skills in the combatting of heresies. The names of Tertullian, Hilary, Ambrose, Jerome and Augustine carry the tradition into the Middle Ages which utilized it in the establishment of schools and universities. The advent of a second Augustine in 596 brought the ideal to England where it became the basis for the monastery schools and whence it

returned to continental Europe through the influential Alcuin, under the patronage of Charlemagne.

About the year 1400, a resurgence of interest in the classics gave impetus to the study of the old masters and especially in Italy the tradition flourished at the hands of Salutati, Boccaccio and Petrarch. The strictly theological and philosophical aspects were generally set aside in favor of the "litterae humaniores", studies designed to produce useful gentlemen, courtiers, governors or schoolmasters. But even in these the fundamental notion of learning and goodness was always foremost. The great educators of the Renaissance in Italy as well as the secular writers in England kept to their models and alongside such men as Vittorino da Feltre, Palmieri, Patrizi and Guarino, in education, we find Castiglione, Erasmus, Thomas Elyot, Roger Ascham, Spenser, Jonson, Lodge and Daniel in other fields, all following the Ciceronian tradition.

Turning finally to the greatest exposition of Renaissance poetic theory, we find that Sir Philip Sidney in his *Defense of Poesy* is well aware of the kinship between orator and poet. He but follows the lead of his contemporaries in identifying the poet with the learned man interested in the betterment of his fellow-man. In his own words, "it is that feigning of notable images of virtues, vices, or what

else, with that delightful teaching, which must be the right describing note to know a poet by". The poet's use of a fiction in order to delight and teach places him in the same class with the orator who invents situations, colors them with the devices of rhetoric and so moves his audience to action. For both, the end of all knowledge is virtuous action.

With this tradition in mind and aware of the importance of the historical figures who were deeply imbued with it, we are in a position to re-evaluate much that has been written not only in the field of literature but in History and Education as well. In History, the tremendous part played by the monasteries in the preservation of documents and the vital part played by the monks themselves in the diffusion of learning can be invaluable in casting new light on the long-established and deep-rooted bias which has colored many texts. In Education, a return to tradition is in order, not in rejecting the great positive contributions made by newer techniques and methods, but in going back to a solid conviction of the "aims" of education. As an aid to material prosperity it has value, to be sure, but unfortunately that aspect has been over-stressed, while the knowledge and betterment of man's self has been lost sight of as an objective.

Most pertinent of all is the relation of the tradition to the reconsideration of literary productions. Many great pieces can be interpreted in the light of the didactic or moral value, especially the works produced during the period when the tradition still had vogue. Much modern poetry has little affinity with the ideal of delightful teaching, but is considered solely from the standpoint of political, social or economic propaganda, or as an exercise for the practice of involved metric, far-fetched symbolism or bizarre connotations. It is time for re-valuation, and this thesis points out not only a possible starting point but one that has considerable authority behind it.